RELIGIOUS BASIS OF THE FORMS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

INDIAN CULTURE AND ENGLISH INFLUENCE

EAST AND WEST

by

ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

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An Address to the Student's Religious Association,
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Whoe'er thou art, that to this work art born,
A chosen task thou hast, howe'er the world may scorn.

—JACOB BEHMEN, SIGNATURA RERUM

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I

THE RELIGIOUS BASIS OF THE FORMS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

A traditional social order, like that of India, is not a haphazard development but imitative of a theory or body of principles or values that are understood to have been revealed and of which the truth is taken for granted. Institutions represent an application of metaphysical doctrines to contingent circumstances, and take on a local color accordingly, changing with the times but maintaining throughout a high degree of stability, comparable to that of a living organism in which, by the repeated process of death and rebirth that we call "becoming" or "life," an existing order preserves a recognizable identity and produces order from order. In the traditional society one respects established institutions, and if anything goes wrong one does not assume that it can be put right by institutional revolutions, but only by a change of mind (μετάνοια, repentance), leaving the order itself unchanged; "reformation" can only imply, what the word itself imports, a <u>return</u> to some form from which a deviation has taken place. The monarchist, for example, does not think of increasing the people's well-being by a substitution of democracy for monarchy, but holds that such a betterment can only be brought about when the King, who may have come to be a tyrant "ruling in his own interest," remembers his vice-royalty and that his function is only to enact what the Spiritual Authority advises, and that, as the Book of the Science of Government expressly enunciates, "the whole of this science depends upon the ruler's own self-control."[1]

Every established custom has a metaphysical (rather than biological or psychological) raison d'être. For example, the whole pattern of marriage is founded upon the natural relations of the sun to the sky, or sky to earth, which is also that of the Spiritual Authority to the Temporal Power. Morality is a matter of correct or "skilful" procedure, and as in the case of art, a matter of <u>savoir faire</u>, of knowing what to do, rather

than of feeling; and where the cosmic pattern of "good form" is unanimously accepted, public opinion sufficiently controls the whole situation. No one can be convicted of the irrationality of a custom unless his metaphysic can first be shown to be at fault. For example, it is not enough to detest and recoil from war, for if that is all we are liable to be persuaded by other plausible arguments when the crisis comes: we must ask ourselves whether or not the concept of man as an economically rather than spiritually determined nature, and consequent way of life dependent on world trade, have not made total wars inevitable: whether we have not simply "desired peace, but not the things that make for peace."[2] Much too often, men of good will are all ready to attack an unfamiliar institution, such as the caste system in India or elsewhere: without first asking what are its intentions, or whether these intentions, which are the values by which the given society lives and belong to the essence of its "morale," are likely to be realised by the new institutions which it is proposed to introduce from outside. In such cases it is overlooked that the forms of a traditional society make up a closely woven texture that may unravel and become a mere tangle if one of its threads is pulled out; overlooked that styles of music cannot be changed without affecting the whole constitution. It is an illusion to suppose that "better worlds" can be made by combining the "best" in one culture with the "best" in others: considered as means, such "bests" are usually incompatible, and the actual effect of one's efforts is nearly always to combine the "worsts." We can only help one another to do better what each has already been trying to do; to demand of the other so to change as to be what we are is to destroy his morale. In the present discourse I have no intention to apologize for the Indian social system, but only to explain it: except that, before going farther, I shall quote the words of that very Christian gentleman and expert Indologist the late Sir George Birdwood, who said:

> "In that (Hindu) life all are but co-ordinate parts of one undivided and indivisible whole, wherein the provision and respect due to every individual are enforced, under the highest religious sanctions, and every office and

> calling perpetuated from father to son by those cardinal obligations of caste on which the whole hierarchy of Hinduism hinges. . .We trace there the bright outlines of a self-contained, self-dependent, symmetrical and perfectly harmonious industrial economy, deeply rooted in the popular conviction of its divine character, and protected, through every political and commercial vicissitude, by the absolute power and marvellous wisdom and tact of the Brahmanical priesthood. Such an ideal order we should have held impossible of realisation, but that it continues to exist, and to afford us, in the yet living results of its daily operation in India, a proof of the superiority, in so many unsuspected ways, of the hieratic civilization of antiquity over the secular, joyless, inane, and self-destructive, modern civilization of the West."[3]

I quote, also, the anthropologist, A. M. Hocart, who has pointed out that:

> "hereditary service has been painted in such dark colors only because it is incompatible with the existing industrial system."[4]

Against these judgments, those of men like Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, or H. N. Brailsford--based either on a second-hand knowledge derived from books, or upon egalitarian prejudice--carry very little weight. But since it is not my function here either to defend or attack, but only to explain, it is left to you to choose for yourselves between the different points of view. I shall only hope to make it a little easier for you to understand what you must, if you want to know what it is that we are discussing. I am glad to have the opportunity to do this for an audience that is not, as most are, theologically illiterate. For myself, I will only say that no day passes on which I do not search the Scriptures, and the works of the great theologians of all ages, so far as they are accessible to me in modern languages and in Latin, Greek, or Sanskrit, and that I am wholly convinced that Una veritas in variis signis

varie resplendeat, and that this redounds ad majorem gloriam Dei; a glory greater by far than could be circumscribed by any creed or confined by the walls of any church or temple.

Institutions may be defined as means to the perfectibility of the individual. They are to be judged accordingly by the standard of whatever are held to be the immediate and ultimate ends of life; as good if they conduce to their realization, or otherwise evil. By Hindus, the purpose of life, "man's end" (puruṣārtha) or raison d'être, is defined in a fourfold way and at the same time as regards the active and contemplative lives respectively. On the one hand, the purposes of life are the satisfaction of desire (kāma), the pursuit of values (artha), and the fulfilment of function (dharma, in the sense of duty); on the other hand, the final, and in this sense the whole purpose of life is to attain liberation (mokṣa), from all wanting, valuation and responsibilities. These immediate and final ends are listed in the order of their hierarchy, but should not be thought of as independent of or fundamentally opposed to one another. The last end of liberation is, nevertheless, in a manner contrasted with the three catagories of purpose proper to the active life; and this contrast is reflected in the fact that it is recognized both that a man has binding social responsibilities (often thought of as a debt to be repaid to his ancestors) and that he can have done with these responsibilities once and for all. Provision is made accordingly both for the life of the householder who practises a trade (whether sacerdotal, royal, pastoral or mechanic), and for the life of poverty, that of the mendicant Sannyāsī who "gives up" at the same time all social rites and duties and, having no possessions whatever, lives on "charity," in the purest sense of the word, that of the love of his fellow men, for whom it is a privilege to feed him.

These two ways of life, in the world and apart from it, have been aptly called the "ordinary" and the "extraordinary" norms of the cultural pattern;[5] and it is with a view to the fulfilment of both lives that the institution of the "Four Āśramas" developed. I say "developed" only because the categorical formula cannot be

traced as such from the very beginning; but it should be understood that as a formula it represents only a definition of the lives of the student, householder, retreatant, and religious that can be recognized from the first. One is, indeed, familiar with such "lives" in all cultures; for example, in Plato's assignment of the last years of one's life, when the soul is attaining maturity, to the contemplation of all time and all being, "if men are to crown the life they led here with a corresponding lot there";[6] and in Christian Europe, where the supreme vocation of the contemplative, justified by the example of Mary (who "hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her"), represents the "extraordinary" norm, and is contrasted with the "ordinary" norm of those who, like Martha, are "actives" ("cumbered about much serving," and "careful and troubled about many things" other than "the one thing needful"). It is almost exclusively from the modern, "Philistine," secular, and moralistic point of view that the extraordinary norm has come to be regarded in the West as nothing but an evasion of social responsibilities: it might well be argued in reply that without the example of those who have given up all values for the sake of a Worth that is not a value (one amongst others), the very values on which the order of the active life depends would be reduced to the level of mere preferences and at the same time very likely to be treated as absolutes.

We find it prescribed as an antidote for the soul's passibility, distress, and amnesia, that one should study the Scriptures and fulfil one's own proper functions (sva-dharma) in that one of the Āśramas in which one may be living at the time. One must, indeed be also a "fervent" or "incandescent" (tapasvī) if one is to know God or even achieve success in works; but one cannot excuse oneself from the duties of one's "station" merely by claiming to be such a "fervent."[7]

The root in the word āśrama is śram, to toil, whence also śramaṇa, monk or religious; and these are the exact semantic equivalents of ἀσκέω and ἀσκητής, "ascetic." It is of equal interest, in the same connection, that Sanskrit kuśalatā and Greek σοφία, both in the sense of skill, and similarly Hebrew hochmā, have all acquired

the meanings of wisdom or prudence regarding action in general, though their original application had been only to skill in technical operations. An āśrama, then, is a state or station of life to be regarded as a workshop, or as a stage of a continuous and always arduous journey; the āśramas are so many "sojourns," not in the sense of places of rest but in that of places of activity; the refrain of an ancient pilgrim song is always to "keep on going" (caraiva, caraiva). In a more specialised sense the word āśrama denotes an actual place of retirement, such as a hermitage, whether solitary or communal. Apart from this special usage, the Four Āśramas are those of the Student (brahmacārī, "one who walks with God," an expression having also a more general application), the Householder (gṛhastha, married and practising a trade), the Forestor (vānaprastha, living much as Thoreau did at Walden), and finally that of the Abandoner (sannyāsī, or "Truly Poor Man" who has no possessions, practises no rites, is without a roof, and for whom the funeral rites have been performed. Under normal circumstances these four ways of life are to be followed in their natural sequence, and in any case what is called a "premature revulsion" is considered very undesirable; but it is also recognised that where the vocation is irresistible, the transition from the home to the "homeless life" of the Wanderer (parivrājaka, "peregrin"), who "hath not where to lay his head," may be made at any age; just as, if you remember, it was a young man whom Christ invited to "sell all that thou hast, and come follow me." It would be impossible to exaggerate the honor and respect that are accorded by the laity to the religious, whether Hindu or Buddhist; it is the dream of every expectant mother to bear a son who shall be a religious. Every Hindu or Buddhist would endorse the words of Meister Eckhart respecting those roofless marksmen (sādhu):

> "Blessed is the kingdom wherein dwells one of them; in an instant they will do more lasting good than all the outward actions ever done"

and those of Plato, who points out that those whom the world calls "useless" are "the true pilots."

I was asked, as you know, to discuss the bearing of religion upon the forms of Indian society. The most general Hindu and Buddhist term for "religion," in the sense of ultimate Truth and hence also in that of true Doctrine, is Dharma. This word, present in Dhruva, the Pole Star, symbol of constancy, and of which the root is dhṛ, to support or sustain, is a cognate of Greek θρόνος, throne, Latin firmus, and perhaps also forma; it could be translated very literally by the now obsolete English word "firmity," the opposite of that state of unbalance and disorder that is implied by "infirmity"; or translated more freely by words such as "norm," "constant," "order," "law," or "justice." The concept is of particular value to us for the explanation of institutions, because, as we shall presently see, its fundamental meaning is that of Greek δικαιοσύνη, "justice" (in the N.T. generally rendered by "righteousness"), and that of lex in the expression Lex Aeterna. To build up the meaning of the word for ourselves it will be necessary to cite its uses in some representative contexts. The deity is the "supporter (dhartṛ) of every (sacrificial) operation":[8] him "both Gods and men have made their support" (dharman);[9] and in the plural, dharmāṇi are his inviolable Laws, of which he is the Overseer (dharmāṇām adhyakṣa).[10] In the oldest Upanishad, where the divine procession is described, the simple deity, single in principio, and being himself the Sacerdotium (Brahma), emanates the three other kinds or castes of deities, the angelic hierarchy of Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra, respectively the Principalities, the Hosts, and their common Provider of nourishment. But He is still not yet pervasive, not come forth, not yet ex-istent (na vyabhavat): that is to say not yet in act as regards the exercise of authority (vibhūti = ἐξουσία), and He therefore emanates from himself "the more splendid form of Dharma," Justice or Law,--"that by which a Lord is lordly, so that there is naught above the Law, and by it a weak man can control a stronger, as if by an appeal to Caesar; and, verily, this Justice is the same as Truth" (satyam).[11]

The ethical bearing of this equation of Justice

with Truth will be apparent at once if we recall that the earliest Scriptures already speak of Kings who "act out the Truth" (satyaṁ kṛṇvānāḥ, RV.X.109.6) or "take hold upon the Truth" (satyaṁ gṛhṇānāḥ, AV.V.17.10), and consider that it is precisely by "taking hold upon the Truth" (satya-graha), Plato's ἀληθείας ἔφαψις (Timaeus 90C), or in other words by an appeal to Caesar, the ruling Justice of the world, that Gandhi, our most trusted politician, to whom we have given the name of "The Magnanimous" (Mahātmā), has sought to liberate India from subjection and exploitation. That he could, to so large a degree, expect of his followers to follow him in this procedure, which calls for the strictest disciplines, reflects the fact that in India it has been really believed that "the truth shall make you free"; it has never been doubted that it is by "Acts of Truth" that one is, in fact, freed from whatever predicament one may be in, or that, finally, it is by a last and supreme "Act of Truth," and not as a matter of equity, that one "escapes altogether" and is admitted at the Sundoor; for the Sun himself--not the disk "that all men see, but Him whom few know with the mind," as an Indian scripture says--is himself the Truth, and cannot refuse anyone who knocks at the door in His own name. Him, then, as immanent Spirit (prāṇa), the Powers "made their Law," and "He alone is, today and tomorrow."[12] Furthermore, "this Justice is the elixir of all beings, and they are its elixir; that fiery-bright immortal Man--Brahma, the Sacerdotium--who is in this Law,--He, and this fiery-bright Immortal Man--Brahma, the Sacerdotium--born of this Law (dhārma-), is within you (adhyātmam), He is just this Self of yours, the Immortal, this Priesthood, this All."[13]

"This Self of yours," for in reality, "That art thou," rather than "that which thou callest 'I' or 'thyself'". "That" is to say, our spiritual Self as distinguished from the passible, psycho-physical individual; not this man so-and-so, but the "Self of all beings," "self's Immortal Self and Duke," ἀρχὴ ψυχῆς ἀθάνατος, ψυχὴ ψυχῆς, is qui intus est, "not I, but Christ in me," our Common Man or Reason, Inwyt, Conscience, Syneidesis, Synteresis; the Daimon of Socrates, who cares for nothing but the Truth, and whom you cannot contradict. These two selves are at war with one another,[14] until we have made

our peace with ourselves, until it has been decided "which shall rule, the better or the worse": then only, when "we" have submitted, "this self lends itself to that Self, and that Self to this self; they coalesce, and with this form he is united with yonder world, and with that form with this world."[15] Then only when the victory is His, can we recognize Him as our friend, then only are we liberated from the Law, being identified with it, and so "crowned and mitred above ourselves," and so become a "law unto ourselves," in the sense that "Christ was all virtue, because He acted from impulse and not from rules."

But those who are still "under the law," not yet emancipated, when in doubt about ritual acts (karma) or conduct (vṛtta), should behave as Brahmans would who are competent "lovers of Justice" (dharma-kāmāḥ).[16] The political concept is one of joint government by the Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power Cooperating as in marriage; it,is, in fact, a primary function of the High Priest, as the "Eye in the World," "to see to it that the King does no wrong."[17] And so, just as in China, and for Plato (for whom "the same castes--γένος = jāti--are to be found in the city and in the soul of each of us"),[18] this applies in the same way to the politics of our individual constitution, with its Inner Priest, Outer King, sensitive powers and physical organs of perception, "That holy world I fain would know, wherein the Priesthood and the Kingship move together in one accord."[19] In other words, "Thy kingdom come." The same conceptions survive in Buddhism: as the Wake himself tells us, "He who sees the Law (dhamma), sees Me; and he who sees Me, sees the Law."[20] A true "son of the Wake," one of his disciples, is "born of the Law (dhamma-ja), formed by the Law, an heir of the Law. How so? Because there are these synonyms of the Wake: 'Embodiment of Law' (dhamma-kāya), to wit 'Embodiment of Brahma' (brahma-kāya); and 'Law-become', which is to say 'Brahma-become'" (dhamma-bhūta).[21] We are told in the same context that why the King reveres the Wake is because he, the King, reveres the Law. In passing, let me say that Buddhism differs from Hinduism mainly in having a predominantly monastic application; although a morality is prescribed for laymen of all castes and classes, the Wake is calling upon men of

whatever age or station to abandon the household life (a "dusty path")[22] and all their possessions, to follow Him. Because he is thus calling them from the active to the contemplative life, it would hardly be possible to deduce the forms of Indian society, which in any case are older than Buddhism, directly from Buddhist premisses. Like Christ, the Wake did not attempt to alter the forms of society; his was a kingdom, indeed, but not of this world, in which he called himself a nobody. His position with respect to caste is not in the modern sense "egalitarian," but simply one that affirms that all men (and women) are of equal spiritual capacity and that sharply distinguishes the Brahman by mere birth from the Brahman rightly deserving the name by conduct and knowledge; and in these propositions there was certainly nothing novel, however necessary it may have been to reaffirm them. In Hinduism, in fact, as Professor Edgerton remarks, "a member of any caste, or of none, might become a truth-seeking mendicant"; no one, indeed, has a right to ask of a Hindu Sannyāsī, what he was in the world, for he has become a nobody, like the Spirit of God that "cometh not from anywhere, and has never become anyone."[23]

The Buddha himself was following an ancient Way, much older than the man that he is, perhaps wrongly, supposed to have been; he denies that his teachings are doctrines of his own devising, calling them only truths that he has realized and verified. Indeed, as Philo says, "No pronouncement of a prophet is ever his own" (Spec. IV.49). In this connection it will be pertinent to cite what has been well said in the Pali Text Society's Dictionary, s.v.dhamma:

> "The idea of dhamma as the interpreted order of the World. . .That which the Buddha preached, the Dhamma κατέξοχήν, was the order of law of the universe, immanent, eternal, uncreated, not as interpreted by him only, much less invented or decreed by him, but intelligible to a mind of his range, and by him made so to mankind. . .The Buddha (like every other great philosopher and other Buddhas. . .) is a discoverer of this order of the Dhamma, this universal logic, philosophy, or righteousness

> in which the rational and ethical elements are fused into one."

This Justice is, explicitly, the King of kings:[24] A 1.109. It is both timeless (akālika) and present (saṁdiṭṭhika).[25] The just man is dhammattha (as in Sanskrit, dharme-sthita); whatever takes place naturally and normally is dhammatā, whatever takes place properly is dhammena.

That the Law of life is both timeless and secular corresponds to the distinction of the absolute Dharma that is the ruling power of God himself from the immanent Law that is, within us, our own standard of truth and conduct. And this is also the distinction of Dharma from Sva-dharma, which corresponds to that of the All-worker (Viśvakarmā) by whom all things are done and made from the individual operator (sva-karma-kṛt) who goes about his "own" particular tasks. This doctrine about the active life is best and most fully developed in the Bhagavad Gītā, where the division of castes is from God, and made according to mens' natural (svabhāva-ja) diversity of qualities and corresponding functions, and it is said that:

> "Man reaches perfection (or success) by his loving devotion to his own work (sva-karma). And now hear how it is that he who is thus devoted to his own task finds this perfection. It is inasmuch as by this work that is his own he is praising Him from whom all beings (or, all his powers) are projected, and by Whom all this (Universe) is extended. More resplendent is one's own law (sva-dharma), however imperfectly fulfilled, than that of another, however well carried out. Whoever does not abandon the task that his own nature imposes upon him, incurs no sin. One's hereditary (sahaja) task should never be forsaken, whatever its defects may be; for every business is involved in defects, as fire is clouded by smoke."[26]

Herein, of course, "perfection" or "success" does not mean the accumulation of a fortune; we have already seen that in old age a man looks forward, not to

an economic independence, but to a being independent of economics. What is meant by "success" is the self-integration and Self-realization of the man who is Emeritus, one who has done what there was to be done (kṛtakṛtyaḥ), and now is "Brahma-become" (brahma-bhūta).[27] It should be noted, moreover, that what is meant by a devotion to one's work is what is meant by "diligence," the opposite of "negligence"; "diligence": implying a being fond of, and a caring for one's work,[28] is by no means the same as to be merely "industrious"; all this is not, in fact, a matter of working hard, but rather one of working easily, and naturally (sahajam), or, in the Platonic sense (the opposite of our ideal expressed in our concepts of the "leisure state" and "forty-hour weeks"), a working at leisure.

These ideas are of the essence of the Indian axiology; we find them echoed, for example, even in such a "secular" work as the Book of the Science of Hawking, where it is said: "The heavenward road is easily followed by the doing of what is prescribed by one's own nativity, or caste" (svajāty-ukthābhicaraṇāt).[29] This idea of doing one's duty in that station of life to which it has pleased God to call us, the idea of vocation, if not, indeed, "modern," is still not peculiarly Indian. Plato defined Justice (δικαιοσύνη, i.e. Dharma) as "the doing of one's own work, according to Nature" (τὸ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν, κατὰ φύσιν) and, he says, under these conditions, "more will be done, and better done, and more easily than in any other way,"[30] and Marcus Aurelius, in the same way, connects what is "right" with what is "natural":

> "A work that can be accomplished in accordance with that Reason that is common to Gods and men is free of fear. For there is no ulterior consequence to be looked for when it is simply a matter of serving our needs in the right way and according to the constitution of the forthgoing powers (with which we are endowed). . .Look not about thee at the norms of others (ἀλλότρια ἡγεμονικά = paradharmāṇi), but look only straight at this question, To what does Nature lead thee? the

> Nature, that is, both of the All, and that is thine own with respect to what thou has to do . . .Deem no word or deed that is in accordance with Nature unworthy of thee. . .Furthermore, this Nature is called the Truth."[31]

These are virtually paraphrases of the Indian texts, although quite independent of them; and many more could be cited. "Now say," says Dante, "would it be worse for man on earth were he no citizen? And may that be, except men live below diversely and with diverse offices?. . .And if the world down there took heed to the foundation Nature layeth, and followed it, it would have satisfaction in its folk."[32]

It is, in fact, the Christian doctrine that "as God has distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called everyone, so let him walk."[33] It is in this sense that our word "trade," etymologically a "treading," is a "walk," and métier a "ministry."

Caste is by no means synonymous with class, or in any sense a product of the race prejudices that are distinctive of Western, democratic peoples. It is very interesting to observe that in modern India, where the present ruling powers are anything but free from race prejudice, but as far as possible ignore caste, class distinctions have arisen in the services, where they are determined by the amount of salary received; and that a very high degree of social exclusiveness has developed there, as between men who may be doing the same kind of work, but are earning different salaries according to their "grade." It is hardly less instructive to observe that in the same services there is a discrimination by "quota" against Brahmans, lest they should, by their greater intellectual abilities, "usurp" all the most desirable positions; this is comparable to the American discrimination by quota against Jews; and in the same way tends to develope a sense of class conflict where none had existed previously.

Perhaps you have been asking, How can that be called a chosen work that is entailed? Well, in the first place, how is it entailed? We must not overlook the traditional conception according to which the father,

as regards his empirical personality or "character," is reborn in his son, who is to all intents and purposes identified with him and takes his place in the community when he retires or dies: and that this natural succession is confirmed by formal rites of transmission. The vocational function is a form of divine service, and the métier, i.e., "ministry," a work that at the same time honors God and serves man's present needs: and so it is that in India, as it was for Plato, the first reason because of which one "ought" to beget children is in order to carry on from generation to generation the "good work";[34] so that, as the Book of Wisdom says, one's descendants may "maintain the fabric of the world,"[35] our "social order." In the second place, it is a simple fact that no one, uncorrupted by the modern idea of "climbing," is ever ashamed of his profession, but on the contrary, proud of it. As Marcus Arelius points out, "those who love their own art wear themselves to a shadow with their labors over it, forgetting even to wash or eat";[36] and for such as these, questions of time and overtime are meaningless. All this is taken for granted; we find a dancing teacher protesting that "although everyone is fondly inclined to vaunt his own family art, the importance that I attach to dancing is not a prejudice (of that sort), but inasmuch as the Sages say that dancing is a sacrificial rite well pleasing in the eyes of the Gods."[37] It is from this last point of view that Hocart could say that in India "chaque occupation est un sacerdoce," every profession is a priesthood.[38]

In the passage cited from the Gītā you may have noticed the words "inasmuch as by his own work he is praising Him," which means that it becomes a sort of liturgy, and that Laborare est orare; or as the Book of Wisdom says, that "in the work of their craft is their prayer."[39] All peoples whose work has not been organized "for profit" have actually sung at their work, and in many cases the content of such songs is religious or metaphysical: but in "civilized," that is to say mechanized, societies these songs survive only as drawing-room accomplishments, with piano accompaniments. What urbanism has done to the traditional cultures and their manufacturers (using this word in its literal and proper sense)

was done first to its own workers, "We have robbed them of the possibility of producing masterpieces. We have erased from their souls the need of quality; and made them want nothing but quantity and speed."[40]

Can you imagine a factory "hand" striking for the right to consider the "good of the work to be done" and not for higher wages and a bigger share of his master's profits: to consider which good, in Christian doctrine, the workman is "naturally inclined by justice"?[41] If not, it means that the industrial, economically determined and therefore irresponsible human being has been denatured. As the Earl of Portsmouth says, "It is the wealth and genius of variety among our people, both in character and hand, that needs to be rescued now."[42] All that is a part of the price that must be paid for the never-ending process of "raising the standard of living," the price that every guinea pig has to pay for the insatiable greed to which all modern salesmanship appeals so successfully. If poverty consists of never having had enough, the industrial world will for ever be found wanting.

The "sanctification of craftsmanship" has been called "the most significant contribution of the Middle Ages to the world"; it might better have been said, significant heritage of a world-wide past that has been sold for a mess of pottage, and has no longer any meaning in our world of "impoverished reality." From the Hindu point of view, the castes are literally "born of the Sacrifice": that is to say from the "breaking of bread," the primordial Sacrifice of the One whom Gods and men made many; and therefore also from the ritual that reenacts the original Sacrifice and that corresponds to the Christian Mass. The deity who is and at the same time makes the first Sacrifice, "dividing himself to fill these worlds" with his total and omnipresence, is called, in his capacity as the Demiurge through whom all things were made, the "All-worker," Viśvakarmā: and he, indeed, performs all those diverse works, viśvā karmāṇi, that the Sacrifice, the Mass, itself requires, if it is to be correctly celebrated. But the individual is not in the same way the Jack of all trades. "I," as Śrī Krishna says, "emanated the Four Castes, distributing qualities and

operations":[43] and so "there are diversities of operations, though it is the same God that worketh all in all."[44]

We have seen that "Nature" has been mentioned in numerous Indian and Christian contexts as the basis of all right conduct; and before going on to our conclusions, it must be clearly understood that this Nature is not the environment in which we find ourselves and of which we are a part, not the Nature that modern science investigates, but that Mother Nature by whom all things are natured, so that men are human and horses horsey: the distinction, with which we are now unfamiliar, is that of Natura naturans, Creatrix universalis, Deus: from Natura naturata. The Nature that has been spoken of as a standard of action is Plato's "ever-productive Nature" and that Indian Virāj and Brahma-womb whence all things "milk" their specific qualities; this is the Nature that all the Greek philosophers, from the Ionian "physicists" to Philo, have sought to know, and that which is implied in the Christian definition of all sin (whether moral, artistic or spiritual) as a departure from the order to the end, from the good that is proper to anyone, according to his own nature or natural bent, and as "whatever is opposed to the rule of Nature, Reason, or the Eternal Law."[45] It is Nature in this sense, and not the world around us, that is properly to be understood when we speak of "truth to nature" in art, or of a "return to nature" in our manner of life, or of Natural Law as the norm of man-made law.[46]

To this must be added a word on "equality" and one on "liberty." It is well to remember that our modern egalitarianism, and idealization of mob-rule by count of noses, differ widely from the classical and traditional notion of the equality or justice that properly subsists in an organically integrated society; that kind of equality with reference to which Oliver Goldsmith could still exclaim, "I'm for Monarchy, for the sake of equality." Our modern conception of equality is arithmetical, the other "proportionate," or "analogical." Thus, in a just State, "administrative offices and honors are to be distributed as equally as possible by an unequal symmetry," and not, as Plato so often insists, by the mere ability to buy or catch votes. The best kind of

justice is that which distributes to each according to his own nature; and it is this kind of natural equality or political justice that the State requires, if class conflicts are to be avoided.[47] An arithmetical equality, on the other hand, is just only within a group of peers: and that is precisely what is found in the Indian trade gilds, which are more or less coincident with the castes, and comparable in some respects to modern trade unions, except that the powers and functions of the latter are very much more limited. From this point of view, and from that of the "village councils": it can be said that no country has been better than India acquainted with democratic procedure.

In a vocational hierarchy it is never a question of "doing what one likes," but of liking what one does, "for all must be accounted pleasure that it is in a man's power to put into practice according to his own nature."[48] To be President of the United States is not in my power, nor would it give me any pleasure; on the other hand I am one of the few whose work is their delight, I am contented; and having this experience, I say that any civilization stands self-condemned in which men have to earn their living in any other way than by doing what they would rather be doing than anything else in the world.

Let me give you now some examples of "proportionate equality" in a vocationally integrated society. Here, of course, the liberty of choice is more and more restricted the higher one's status: noblesse oblige. Consider the freedom of speech that is granted to the kept Press, to the agitators in Hyde Park, and to every dishonest politician, lobbyist, and propagandist. A King has no such freedom: in the caste system "the King is not empowered to say anything or everything, but only what is correct" (sādhu).[49] Many things are allowed to the Śūdra that a Brahman or the wife of a Brahman may not do; a Śūdra's wife can remarry, a Brahman's never; and furthermore, in Hindu Law, a Brahman's punishment is very much heavier than a Śūdra's for the same offence. The whole position is analogous to that of a family: as Aristotle says, "Everything is ordered together to one end; but just as in a household, the free have the least authority to act at random, and have most or all of their

actions arranged for them, whereas the footmen and animals have but little common (responsibility) and act for the most part at random."[50] The distinction is of the liberty of spontaneity that belongs to the free from the liberty of choice that is, in fact, only a subjection to our own ruling passions, or being governed by "hunger and thirst"; and what, after all, is "free will" but the law of obedience to the dictates of one's own conscience, as the mediator of Eternal Law? Was not Socrates free, although condemned to death, in that he would not disobey his own Daimon? Freedom can be thought of as nothing more than the right to pursue conflicting interests; but that is not justice, and only leads to unstable balances of power and to international and class conflicts. However, I think there can be no doubt that if one could imagine the pattern of a hierarchy suddenly imposed upon the proletarian peoples, most Americans would choose to be Śūdras, or even Casteless, for the sake of the freedoms that they value most.

I shall only mention the Casteless or so-called Untouchables briefly, and because you are likely to have wondered about them. In the first place, the problem exists at all only from the standpoint of the "ordinary" norm; "men of true learning look alike upon Brahmans perfected in science and conduct, oxen, elephants, dogs and foul-feeders. . .He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me, never shall I be lost of him, nor shall he lose Me."[51] In the second place, the problem can only be understood in its historical context: throughout the ages, there has been going on a process of the acculturation by example of aboriginal peoples, and their gradual absorption into the social hierarchy. It is only the sudden impact of modern conditions and the consequent development of political and class conflicts (often deliberately exploited, if not provoked by those whose principle of government is divide et impera) that have made the situation acute. It may help to clarify the problem as it exists if I point out that you, and I too, are from the orthodox point of view "untouchables." The feeling of ritual contamination that is felt by those whose life is disciplined and reserved, when brought into contact with those whose way of life and diet are much

more promiscuous, is perfectly natural; it is not, like your color prejudice, a denial of common humanity. It would be as unreasonable to expect the orthodox Hindu to admit all and sundry to their sacred precincts as it would be to expect them to admit you. You may be able to employ a Brahman cook; but that will not enable you to marry his daughter, or even to enter your own kitchen without removing your shoes; and that is as it should be. The best answer to the problem was made by Swāmi Vivekānanda; if the casteless or Outcastes want to improve their position, "let them learn Sanskrit," which means, adopt the higher and colder standards of thinking and living that have only been preserved for millennia because those who practised them would not mix.

Mahatma Ghandi, universally regarded as a great spiritual force in the world, would like to resolve the Untouchables' problem, but still believes in the theory of the caste system. To do away with caste, to reduce all men to the condition of the modern proletarians who have no vocations but only "jobs," would not be a solution, but much rather a dissolution.

By this time, I hope, we have been able to build up a not altogether inadequate picture of the concepts of Dharma and Sva-dharma that are the basis of the forms of Indian society. The one is the universal pattern and law of all order under the Sun; the other is that share of this Law for which every man is made responsible by his physical and mental constitution. It will serve to illustrate the "massive agreement" of the common tradition that has been all men's heritage if we point out that it is in the same way that in Scholastic philosophy the distinction is made of Eternal from Natural Law. In the words of St. Thomas Aquinas, "all things under Providence are regulated and measured by the Eternal Law, but those of the individual, who participates in this Law, by the Natural Law: not that these two are different Laws, but only the universal and the particular aspects of one and the same Law." In either sense, the participation determines the part that the creature "ought" to play in the world. Omnia participant aliqualiter legem aeternam, scilicet ex impressione ejus habent inclinationes in

proprios actus et fines; and it is only one example of this that the craftsman is "naturally inclined by justice to do his work faithfully."[52]

There remains to be made, in conclusion, a final synthesis that is explicit in the Indian sources and that may enable us to reconcile some of the conflicting positions that have already been defined. You may have remarked the terms Karma and Sva-karma employed above as the correlatives of Dharma and Sva-dharma. The literal meaning of the word karma is "action," "work," or "making." Now, just as in Latin facere and operare had an original reference to ritual performance and so implied a "making sacred," or "making holy (sacra facere, "sacrifice"), so the primary reference of karma (never entirely lost) is to the performance of sacrificial rites that are the paradigms of all operations. This is a point of view of the most far-reaching significance: it implies in the Comprehensor a reduction of the whole distinction of sacred from profane and of the opposition of spirit to matter, a perception of all things at the same time in their temporal and their eternal significance; it makes it possible to provide for the needs of the body and soul at one and the same time, as in savage societies, and as demanded by Plato for the ideal Republic. This indistinction of sacred from profane activities and functions is characteristic of all traditional cultures, however primitive, of certain monastic orders and of such groups as the Shakers, and it is often achieved by individual mystics who, like the Angels, are able to pursue very active and practical lives without breaking away from their contemplation. Thus, for the Shakers:

> "The idea of worship in work was at once a doctrine and a discipline. . .the ideal was variously expressed that secular achievements should be as 'free from error' as conduct, that manual labour was a type of religious ritual, that godliness should illumine life at every point";[53]

and this last is what it really means to be a whole or holy man. On the other hand, where all work is economically determined and leisure is devoted to the hectic

pursuit of the pleasure that was not found in the work, the common functions of life and thought are profaned, and only some things and some times--if any--are held sacred; and that double or half life is the outward symptom of our modern schizophrenia and amnesia, Jam scio morbi tui maximam causam; quid ipse sis, nosse desisti![54]

In the more unified life of India it is not only in special rites that the meaning of life has been focussed; this life itself has been treated as a significant ritual, and so sanctified. Perhaps we can best explain this sacrificial interpretation of life by quoting the doctrine itself as expounded by Ghora Āngirasa to Krishna the son of Devakī:

> "When one hungers and thirsts and has no pleasure, that is his initiation. When one eats and drinks and takes one's pleasure, that is his participation in the sacrificial-sessions. When one laughs and feasts and goes with a woman, that is his participation in the liturgy. When one is fervent, or generous, or does right, or does no hurt, or speaks the truth; these are his fees to the priests. Wherefore they say: He will beget, he has begotten--and that is his being born again. Death is the final ablution"[55]--unum ex vitae officiis, mori![56] "Thy vision to the Sun, they spirit to the Gale!" Farewell!

This is the philosophy of work (karma) taught by Krishna, the son of Devakī, in the Bhagavad Gītā. Krishna himself, who has nothing whatever to gain by any working, nevertheless "worketh still" to keep the world and all its children in being, "who would perish if all men went My way." So ought men to work, for the preservation of their own lives and of society. It is true that whoever does anything whatever produces effects, or fruits, which may be good or evil, and of which he and others must taste; this is the causal aspect of karma. But there is no escaping this by merely doing nothing, which is anyhow impossible. The world is enchained by whatever is done, unless it be made a Sacrifice, and offered up as such in the fire that is kindled

by gnosis; better so than to sacrifice any concrete things. So, then, we are to do whatever Nature bids us do, whatever ought to be done; but without anxiety about the consequences, over which we have no control. We are to surrender all activities to Him, that they may be his and not ours; they will no more affect Him than a drop of water sticks to the shiny lotus leaf. There is no liberation by merit, but only by working without ever thinking that "I," that which I call "myself," is the actor. "Inaction" is not a matter of doing nothing, but of "acting without acting"; whoever so sees is a bridled man, a Yogī, even though doing everything. King Janaka, you know, attained to perfection, though his was an active life. So battle, and so act. "Yoga is skill in action."[57]

This metaphysic of action underlies the whole Indian vocational system. But let us now for a moment forget that your ways of life and ours are superficially so different. Is there anything in the intentions of these lives, anything in the concepts of justice, dignity and felicity that differs in the same way? Is there anything in this philosophy of work to which the individual cannot subscribe in either context? It is true that in an industrial system of production for profit and where the "law of the sharks" prevails envy and class conflicts may be inevitable: but this is a dying system even now, however catastrophic its last convulsions. It will last only for so long as you still believe in it; and I think your faith in an automatic progress is not quite what it was fifty or even twenty years ago. What is to follow will depend on what you are looking for; life is your material, but the form that you impose upon it preexists in the mind, and it is that form that will prevail. So it is your thinking now, your looking before you leap, that matters. In the midst of chaos you are at least free to entertain, as we have done, the idea of a society of men all earning their living by doing what each would rather be doing than anything else in the world, and therein would be thinking with us; and is it not self-evident that an agreement about ends is indispensible if there is to be effective cooperation in the choice and use of means?

There is "An Alternative to Death." I quote from the end of the Earl of Portsmouth's book of which that is the title:

> "We have much to learn from the East, from high farming to high philosophies. We have committed a crime against the Oriental countries by the arrogant superimposition of doubtful alien techniques and ideologies. Sooner or later this can bring the bitterest war in history. . .It may be that we can avert it even now by generosity and wisdom, in acknowledging our mistakes. . .We cannot do it merely by material and technical superiority without faith or high example. . .to the East, and the impact of our world has brought inhuman and mechanistic usury, misery and heavy industry. Spiritually we have been iconoclastic,. . . and for that, far more than the fact that we have appeared as conquerors we shall not lightly be forgiven. We have produced the physical means of revenge. . .If we want to avert a great race war. . .we must. . .make an end to European fratricide by regaining health both physical and spiritual. Whatever forms of gods we worship, the renewal of Christendom is no ignoble task."[58]

It has been said, not without substantial truth, that at the present day all Oriental peoples either fear or hate the white man; very certainly they do not and cannot trust either his intentions or his promises. Our greatest fear of Christendom arises from the fact that your Christian civilisation is not a Kingdom of God in anything but name. Refrain from your missionary zeal! We have no desire to impose our characteristic institutions on you; our function is only to remind you of the forgotten Man, our Common Man, whose name you take in vain when you come to us with the Bible in one hand and laissez-faire in the other--

> "We think it a grand thing to make everyone happy. But there is not a worse egotist than the man who wants to make everyone happy by

force. He seems to be sacrificing himself for others; but really he is sacrificing the others to his own needs, without pity."[59]

I say, let us understand one another before we try to put each other right.

Notes

1 Kauṭilya, Arthaśāstra I.6.
2 "No one looking for peace and quiet has any business talking about international trade" (G. H. Gratton and G. R. Leighton, "The Future of Foreign Trade," in Harpers Magazine, 1944). "Free enterprise and the market economy mean war" (Harold Laski, in The Nation, December 15, 1945).
3 Sir George Birdwood, Sva, Oxford, 1915, pp. 76 and 83-84.
4 A. M. Hocart, Les castes, Paris, 1938, p. 238. Hocart's words are practically the same as Buddha's, who says that "men belittle the doctrine of caste (jātivādam niramkatvā) only when they are overcome by greed" (Sutta Nipāta 314,315).
5 Franklin Edgerton, "Dominant Ideas in the Formation of Indian Culture," JAOS62, 1942, pp. 151-156.
6 Plato, Republic 498 C,D.
7 Maitri Upaniṣad IV.3.
8 Ṛgveda I.11.14.
9 Ṛgveda X.92.2
10 Ṛgveda VIII.43:44
11 Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad I.4.11-14.
12 Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad I.5.23; Kaṭha Upaniṣad IV.13. The "Powers" or "Deities" referred to are those pneumatic forms or "powers of the soul" of which the names are those of His acts rather than of ours.
13 Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad II.5.11.
14 Bhagavad Gītā VI.5,6; Dhammapada 66; Ep.ad Romanos VII.22,23.
15 Aitareya Āraṇyaka II.3.7.
16 Taittirīya Upaniṣad III.2
17 Jaiminīya Brāhmana III.94.
18 Plato, Republic 551 C.
19 Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā XX.5; cf. Plato, Republic 473 D. and see my "Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power in the Indian Theory of Government," American Oriental Series, New Haven, 1942.
20. Saṁyutta Nikāya III.120.

21 Saṁyutta Nikāya II.221; Digha Nikaya III.84.
22 Saṁyutta Nikāya II.221; Digha Nikaya I.62,250.
23 Kaṭha Upaniṣad II.18.
24 Aṅguttara Nikāya I.109.
25 Sutta Nipāta 1139.
26 Bhagavad Gītā, Chs. IV and V, summarised.
27 Bhagavad Gītā XVIII.49,54. In Buddhist contexts brahma-bhūto = buddho.
28 On this diligence and care cf. Hermes Trismegistus as cited in my Why Exhibit Works of Art? p. 53, note 9.
29 Śyainika Śāstra I. 25.
30 Plato, Republic 433 A-D, cf. Charmides 161 B; Republic, 370 C, 441 D; Protagoras 322-323 and Laws 689 C.D.
31 Marcus Aurelius V.3, VII.53-55 IX.1. On our real needs, as the proper occasion for art, cf. Plato, Republic 369 D, f.
32 Dante, Paradiso VIII.115 f.
33 I Cor. 7.17. Cf. Bhagavad Gītā XVIII.41, karmāṇi pravibhaktāni.
34 See references in my Hinduism and Buddhism, p. 41, note 146 with Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa I.8.1.30,31; Philo, Conf. 94, Dec. 119 etc.
35 Ecclesiasticus XXXVIII.34.
36 Marcus Aurelius V.1.
37 Kālidāsa, Mālavikāgnimitra I.30
38 A. M. Hocart, Les castes, p. 27.
39 Ecclesiasticus XXXVIII.34.
St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, III.135 "Homo autem ex spirituali et corporali natura conditus est. Necessarium est igitur, secundum divinam ordinationem, ut et corporales actiones exerceat et spiritualibus intendat: et tanto perfectior est quanto spiritualibus intendit."
40 Jean Giono, Lettre aux paysans sur la pauvreté et la paix, 1938:

> "When nations grow old, the arts grow cold, and commerce settles on every tree" (William Blake): "to-day the machine has become a thing of terror. It stalks here and it stalks there; in the field, in the farm, in the office, in the shop, in the factory. And wherever it stalks falls a shadow--the shadow of unemployment and under-consumption" (R. D. Knowles, Britain's Problem, 1941); "Man's labour, too, has ceased to afford him spiritual support; he is never alone with tasks endeared to him by slow and toilsome progress, sometimes extending over many years or even a lifetime. . .Thus the personal contact, enjoying an almost religious intimacy, between work and worker has been almost destroyed, the 'moving belt' permitting only an impersonal contact with thousands of

unfinished parts of the whole; and the craftsman's devotion to quality has been replaced by considerations of mere quantity" (Betty Heimann, Indian and Western Philosophy, 1937, p. 134).

41 St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica II-II.57. 3 ad 2.
42 Earl of Portsmouth, Alternative to Death, 1944, p. 30.
43 Bhagavad Gītā IV.13.
44 I Cor.12.6.
45 St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica I.63.1, I-II.109.2, II-II.133.1, etc.
46 St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica I-II.93.3.
47 On "proportionate equality," Plato, Laws 744 C, 757C: Philo, Spec.IV. 165,166,231, and passim.
48 Marcus Aurelius X.33.
49 Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa V.4.4.5.
50 Aristotle, Metaphysics, XII.10.3.
51 Bhagavad Gītā V.18.
52 St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica II-I.91.2, etc. Note especially that the Natural Law is that share of the Eternal Law which directs each creature to its own proper activities and ends.
53 E. D. and F. Andrews, Shaker Furniture, New Haven, 1937.
54 Boethius, Philosophiae consolationis.
55 Chāndogya Upaniṣad III.17.1-5. For the sacrificial interpretation of the act of kind cf. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad VI.2.13, VI. 4.1-28, Chāndogya Upaniṣad V.8, Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa I.17, etc. The sacrificer's rebirth is either physical from the domestic "altar" or spiritual from the sacrificial altar, and this is the ultimate significance of the distinction of the once-born from the twice-born, cf. John III.3-8.
56 Seneca, Ep. 77, ad fin.
57 This paragraph is a summary of Chs. IV and V of the Bhagavad Gītā. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Contra Gentiles III-135,

> "Praecipit ergo Dominus nos non debere erse sollicitors de eo quod ad Deum pertinet, scilicet de eventibus nostrarum actionum: non autem prohibuit nos esse sollicitos de eo quod ad nos pertinet, scilicet de nostro opere," almost exactly as in Bhagavad Gītā II.47, IV.20, VI.1, etc.

58 Earl of Portsmouth, Alternative to Death, 1944, p. 179.

59 Jean Giono, Lettre aux paysans sur le pauvreté et la paix, 1938, p. 67. Cf. William Law, The Spirit of Love:

> "You are under the power of no other enemy, are held in no other captivity and want no other deliverance but from the power of your own earthly self. This is the one murderer of the divine life within you. It is your own Cain that murders your own Abel. Now everything that your earthly nature does is under the influence of self-will, self-love, and self-seeking, whether it carries you to laudable or blameable practises; all is done in the nature and spirit of Cain and only helps you to such goodness as when Cain slew his brother."

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II

INDIAN CULTURE AND ENGLISH INFLUENCE

Sir George Birdwood, who knew our Indian Motherland so well, says of Indian society that "such an ideal social order we should have held impossible of realization, but that it continues to exist, and to afford us, in the yet living results of its daily operation in India, a proof of the superiority, in so many unsuspected ways, of the hieratic civilization of antiquity over the secular, joyless, inane, and self-destructive, modern civilization of the West"; adding that modern politicians do not distinguish between the prosperity of a country and the felicity of its inhabitants, and asking whether it is the case that Europe and America want to reduce all Asia to the level of their own slums. One need to go no farther than to Bombay or Calcutta to see that that is what is really happening, and must happen wherever "commerce settles on every tree."

Professor La Piana of Harvard has said that "what we (Americans) call our civilization is but a murderous machine with no conscience and no ideals"; Professor Whitehead that "there remains the show of civilization, without any of its realities"; and Professor Foerster of Princeton that this is "an acquisitive society, materialistic in its interests, unhealthy in its pleasures, disillusioned in its ideals" and moving blindly towards disaster. Mary Everest Boole, writing to Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose in 1901, said that "English thought is now so rotten that it gives way under any firm grasp" and that "instead of trampling on Hindu culture we had better improve our own." Criticism of this kind could be cited ad infinitum, and I shall add only those of a few of the anthropologists who have affirmed almost unanimously that the effects of modern civilization on what it calls primitive or backward peoples is always and inevitably destructive of their highest values. As Diedrich Westerman says, the effect of Western invasions (his word "Einbruch" really means "burglary") is different for different

peoples, "but what invariably happens is that it involves destruction and cultural impoverishment." It can easily be understood why this must be so if, as many philosophers have thought, the modern Western culture itself is that of a "world of impoverished reality" from which the higher values have been emptied out. To give one concrete example: Dr. E. S. Dodge of the Peabody Museum in Salem says of the Marquesas Islanders that modern civilisation has wrought havoc with them: "they are now depleted in numbers, sick in person, and slovenly in their habits. This is in strong contrast with the descriptions of the early voyagers, who sang the praises of their godlike bodies, their cleanliness, and the dignity of their carriage. Few primitive peoples can withstand the impact of civilization and the unaccustomed diseases and corruption which inevitably follows." What the white man calls his "burden" others have called his shadow. What, after all, have the Allies got against the Japanese morally? This primarily, that the Japanese have imitated only too successfully their own imperialistic and commercial tactics.

All of the foregoing represents a critique of modern Western civilization in the words of some of its own most cultured natives. And having heard them, perhaps those of Professor Beni Prasad of Allahabad will not surprise you. "Is there not," he asks, "something radically wrong with civilization whose exponents and leaders practise or acquiesce in sordid and inhuman materialism? Will its touch pollute the current of Indian life? True, science has mastered nature, but man in the West has neglected the more difficult enterprise of mastering human nature." Nor will Professor Radhakrishnan surprise, when he says that "civilization is not worth saving if it continues on its present foundation." Long before this, Dinesh Chandra Sen had exclaimed: "From the lofty spiritual idea permeating the Hindu home, the visions of beatitude which it was the aim of every great Hindu to attain, to the matter of fact world and the observation of things that are taking shape and changing all around. . .from the pursuit and acquisition of Yoga

to the knowledge of a geographical catechism. . .the descent is as great as from the Himalayas to the plains."

If one is to speak of English influence on Indian culture, it must be premised that such an influence has been only accidentally English, and even only accidentally Western in the geographical sense. A modern American influence would have been no different. It should also be noted that there are always and everywhere individual exceptions to whatever can be said. What we are really, then, discussing is the effect of modern and self-styled "progressive" cultures on the ancient and once worldwide type of civilization that has survived in India.

With these reservations, it can be observed that the early English educators in India had no other end in view than to train clerks to perform the routine and menial tasks of the administrative offices. Lord Macaulay, who maintained that the whole of Indian literature was not worth a single shelf of a good European library, was the main influence in the setting up of an educational system that was admittedly designed to form a class of persons "Indian in colour, but English in tastes, in opinion, in morals and intellect."

And that is what all too many of us have really become. For, to quote again Dinesh Chandra Sen, we Indians "became willing disciples of the new teachers. . . thoroughly anglicised in spirit," and learned to despise our own country at the same time that we called ourselves nationalists: while Sir George Birdwood saw already forty years ago that "Our (English) education has destroyed their love of their own literature. . .and worst of all, their repose in their own traditional and national religion. It has disgusted them with their own homes, their parents, their sisters, their very wives. It has brought discontent into every family so far as its baneful influences have reached." Its "sinister shadow," he continues, involves a "slow poisoning of the spiritual life, "and there was no necessity for anticipating, by a direct attack on the ancestral faiths of the people of India, led as it is by professedly Christian missionaries, the inevitable catastrophe that has everywhere dogged the steps of exclusively material civilizations, and at last

involved them in self-destruction." More recently the Marquis of Zetland has deplored the fact that it is only in externals that British rule has affected India, while it has added nothing to her cultural legacy. Much rather, English influence and education have robbed us of much that we had, so that we no longer know or trust ourselves and are like to become a generation of spiritual bastards, discontented with our own and no longer possessed of any treasure that could be offered to our guests.

I suppose there could be no better proof of all these things than is afforded by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's pathetic confession that "I have become a queer mixture of East and West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere." These are not the words of a freeman, as Gandhi's always are, but the marks of a terrible soul-sickness. It has been said that "only the wise man is a freeman": and if in fact we have already fallen between two stools, and do not know our own mind, I cannot but wonder whether, indeed, a merely political freedom, or what is nowadays called "prosperity," will suffice to stand us up again.

It is true that we cannot isolate ourselves, and that only a want of confidence in ourselves could make us wish to do so. If we are to be a free people in any worthwhile sense of the words, the issue is one that must be faced and resolved: and I will say that if only we do not cut ourselves off at the roots, it is and it will be, come what may, entirely possible to find ourselves in place anywhere and everywhere at home, though it will never be possible for those who are no longer Indians first. Short of that, it is better to be a "one well frog" than to have no home at all.

A slightly different problem is presented by Western Oriental scholarship, about which one cannot but have rather mixed feelings. The study and teaching of Sanskrit in England were really begun under Christian missionary auspices and in order the better to be able to cope with the beastly devices and false gods of the heathen and after that, the study of Vedic philosophy fell into the hands of rationalists whose only equipment was linguistic and whose lack of theological training prevented them

from understanding what they translated. This double handicap still persists, and it is responsible for much of the current misunderstanding of and prejudice against the supposedly "mysterious" East; it was really in spite of both the missionaries and the scholars that men like the English De Morgan and George Boole, the American Emerson, and the contemporary Frenchmen René Guénon and Jacques De Marquette were able to make a real and vital contact with Indian metaphysics, which became for them a transforming experience.

On the other hand, the situation has backfired: the edition of texts on the one side, and their inadequate translation on the other, stimulated a revival of scholarship in India. And now, in a sense, the tables are turned; the Indian Sanskritist has begun to familiarise himself with the Greek and Latin sources of Classical and Christian philosophy. But not as the missionaries studied Indian scriptures, in order to refute them; on the contrary, using one tradition to illuminate the other, and so as to demonstrate ever more clearly that the variety of the traditional cultures, in all of which there subsisted until now a polar balance of spiritual and material values, is simply that of the dialects of what is always one, and the same language of the spirit and of that Perennial Philosophy to which no one people or age can lay an exclusive claim. Our position in relation to Christian and other faiths can be stated by saying that "even if you are not on our side, we are on yours; and that is something all your zeal cannot take away from us." The recent publication in America of such an important work as Swāmi Nikhilānanda's version of the Gospel of Śrī Rāmakrishna may well be regarded as the sign of the beginning of a new and more fruitful era in "cultural relations," a field that has hitherto been one of wishful thinking rather than of accomplishment.

II

We spoke of becoming citizens of the world. No one can aspire to do that who has nothing of his own to contribute to the constitution of a cosmopolitan society

and will not lay a brick of its structure but only wants to live in it. An aggregate of slums is not a city; and there was never a city built without a plan, and those who have taken no part in the work of building have no right to expect to share in its life otherwise than in some menial capacity. We cannot stand aloof; merely to accept the real or supposed blessings of industrialism and democracy would be to do just that. The very notion of a "better world" proclaims that no one is satisfied with the world as it is, and that there is work to be done.

The greatest immediate problem of which the solution is indispensible for the making of a better and happier world is that of the relation of men's lives to their life-work. In this question are involved the problem of the contrasted notions of a manufacture for profit and manufacture for use, and that of the "standard" of living, whether it shall be quantitative or qualitative. One does not approach such problems as this by a guesswork or trial and error, but with some conception of the purpose of life and the meaning of "success," and therefore with what may be called a "philosophy of work." It so happens that the Christian philosophy of work and ours are the same; work is the natural means of personal development. It is certain that when work and culture are divorced, and nothing but the task remains, hours of leisure, however many, will not save what has been lost in hours of unintelligent labor, however few; and it is to hours of unintelligent labor that industrialism necessarily condemns the majority. It is precisely at this point that it is most essential, equally for ourselves and for the welfare of all humanity, that we should stand our ground, the vocational ground, that is to say, upon which all the traditional and truly civilized societies and the highest forms of art have grown. The lines are sharply drawn as between these feudal societies based on the principle of mutual responsibility, and the industrial and so-called democratic societies organized, or much rather disorganized, on the basis of "free enterprise," or what we call in India "the law of the sharks," in which every man's hand is against his neighbour's, and every man's hand against him.

The theory in the case of the vocational societies puts the Man first; the work was made for him, not he for it; the primary end in view is to provide at one and the same time for the development and fruition of the workman's own potentialities and at the same time for the needs of society. The perfecting of the work to which a man devotes himself and which he would rather be doing than anything else in the world, rather than even eat or sleep, as Marcus Aurelius says, that and his own process of growth and self-perfecting, his own entelechy, are inseparably connected. Under these conditions every occupation is a profession with its appropriate professional ethics; and this is justice, or equality, that every man should do that work for which he is naturally fitted. "Seek first this justice," and the needs of society will be provided for, "more easily and better" than in any other way; for however "equal" men may be from some points of view, they are not identically gifted, and the diversity of talents corresponds to that of the things that men require for their good use.

The professions are hereditary, both by nature and by formal transmission; occupations are not merely "jobs," but incumbencies or responsibilities, and the primary reason for begetting children, in whom their father's character is reborn--and that is what is normally meant by "reincarnation"--is in order that the sacred social obligations may be uninterruptedly fulfilled from generation to generation. Status is never a matter of wealth; that everyone loves his own work, and loves to talk about it, is proverbial. In such societies, in which it might at first sight appear that the individual is suppressed, what actually arises is the greatest possible variety of individual types.

Under such conditions one does not meet with discontented or frustrated personalities. It is true, nevertheless, that discontent can be induced by an appeal to personal ambitions such as are usually made by the professional respresentatives of Western equalitarianism. But the satisfaction of personal ambitions is the last thing that Indians have ever of themselves identified with the purpose or meaning of life. In

our philosophy, the ultimate purpose, man's last end, is to be free; if possible here and now, or if not now, then by a process of further ripening to be completed in some other state of being and before the end of time. The liberty in view is one that transcends every sort of specific freedom; all such other liberties, however desirable, are only partial aspects of an absolute freedom to be not only as, but also when and where one will; and we hold that it is only by a knowledge and practise of a no less absolute truth that such an absolute liberty can ever be attained; and therefore, with Gandhi, that any attainment of lesser liberties must also be achieved by means of a strict adherence to truth.

I spoke of equality just now; and if we are to understand the contrast of feudal and democratic forms of society, both of which are based on concepts of justice and equality, we must first understand the distinction of the liberty of choice from the liberty of spontaneity, and that of an arithmetical from a proportionate equality. In the modern democracies the concept of equality is arithmetical: "I'm as good as you are"--however good you may be; every vote is of identical value; public opinion is not an accepted norm but only an average of notions often quite abnormal; and the "Common Man" who was originally the immanent divinity in everyman, the Self in all beings--sarvānam bhūtānām ātmā--has now become the "forgotten man" indeed, for he has been reduced to the dimensions of Tom, Dick and Harry. So that in such proletarian societies as the American or Russian what remains is only, in Guénon's words, "the pure and 'inorganic' multiplicity of a kind of social atomism, and can logically only lead to the exercise of a purely mechanical activity in which nothing properly human persists." This is so true that one actually sees in a current advertisement the picture of a workman who is made to say that "I and my machine are one," and Archbishop Cushing, in his recent and most remarkable address to the Boston Chamber of Commerce, cites the case of a chain-belt worker--I had almost said chain-gang, for that is what it comes to where all occupation is economically determined, and

man is completely submerged in his fate--who, being asked to identify himself, replied: "I am nut 39." The British Government has just published a pamphlet on the subject of Community Centres to be set up "for the rational and enjoyable use of leisure"; it is pointed out that "to-day hosts of men earn their living by doing monotonous work which demands relatively little skill and contributes hardly at all to the worker's all round development as a human personality"; it is evident that all hope of earning one's living by "rational and enjoyable" work has been abandoned, so far as the majority is concerned.

What an admission! It is hardly surprising that under these conditions, and despite the fact that the value of individuality is so much insisted upon, what we find is uniformity rather than variety. Nowhere are men more alike than in America, where it amounts to treason to speak of any such a thing as "superiority," and a "serene highness" is inconceivable. It has, indeed, been generally overlooked that the very idea of a "kingdom of God on earth" presupposes the Oriental concept of Kingship, with its hierarchy of delegated powers, extended in the last analysis to the head of every household. This is a concept of government according to justice or equality, pro bono publico, and by no means in the ruler's own private interest; autonomy, svarāj, meaning primarily a self-government in the sense of self-control, as the sine qua non for the exercise of ruling powers over others. Compared with this concept of government, the mob-rule of majorities representing the interests of particular classes corresponds exactly to the classical definitions of tyranny, the tyrant being one who governs in his own interest, and is thus to be distinguished from a king. It is really just because where everything is decided by count of noses, opinion is created by a kept press and by advertisement, and thinkers are the exception, all men are so much alike, because of their very lack of individuality, that it has become so necessary to talk of being "different" and to boast of "thinking for oneself." Monotonous occupations make monotonous men. "Never before," as Mr. Mumford says, "have machines been so perfect, and never have men sunk

so low"; and these are not unrelated facts, but the coincident effects of man's preoccupation with externals and forgetfulness of himself.

Can you wonder that some of us are not impressed by ex-Vice-President Wallace's well-meant hope to make of all of us "productive mechanics," so that our "standard of living may double or treble"? Standards may be qualitative or quantitative; mechanism generally means a quantitative standard. Professor Plumer of Ann Arbor lately remarked that one could do no more deadly hurt to China than to give, sell or lend-lease her the American standard of living. Can you wonder that the Pasha of Marrakesh exclaimed that he did not want "the incredible American way of life, but the world of the Koran"? Why do you suppose it is that, as Rabindranath Tagore so truly said, "there is no people in the whole of Asia that does not look upon Europe with fear and suspicion"? Have we not seen and already tasted of the Dead Sea fruits of the modern philosophy of life, the desperate attempt of modern men to live by "bread alone"? We see all too clearly that Western civilisation, in which no more than the traces of a genuine Christianity still survive, is still busily sowing the seeds of bigger and better wars to come. It will be true tomorrow, as it was when the last peace was signed, that "now we are all brothers, like Cain and Abel."

On the other hand, in a feudal society, where the concepts of mutual responsibility and proportionate equality obtain, aristocracy, which simply means the power of quality, is available to everyone. For there the artist is not a special or specially sheltered kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist, and, as the Earl of Portsmouth has lately so well said, "the craftsman who will not do shoddy work. . .the ploughman and the miner are all aristocrats in their sphere, just as much as the duke"; whereas in a social order based on money values and the saleability rather than the utility of goods, the best virtues are lost "because the sense of partnership and obligation becomes lost in a welter of legal without moral contract. . .the villein of the Middle ages was a freer man and had more security and dignity of status than the wage-slave of

today." Indeed, "the economic slavery of Detroit may be contrasted, not entirely favorably, with the medieval serfdom in which the serf could not be deprived of his tools. . .there were no forgotten men in the Middle Ages" (Milton Mayer). Trade today--the word itself means "tread" or way of life, whether of priests, kings or cooks--is always in some way thought of as a form of exploitation, and it is as such that it is fostered by imperialistic governments; the modern advertisement, the people's dope, makes us take it and like it, blinds us to the fact that, as Albert Schweitzer says, "when trade is good, permanent famine reigns in the Ogowe region."

The modern world is afraid of the caste system and of monarchy, not because it could not understand their theory, but because a vocational order is inconsistent with the competitive basis of its way of living by money standards. As Hocart says, "hereditary service has been painted in such dark colours only because it is incompatible with the existing industrial system; so that, as our good friend in the political sense, H. N. Brailsford, continues, "the caste line will have to be broken, if industrial work is to be provided for the superfluous cultivators." In the traditional societies "every vocation is a priesthood"; but the modern world can no longer understand the sanctity of a secular vocation, or that to "make" and to "make sacred" were once one and the same thing.

For us, insofar as we have not yet accepted the modern Western Equalitarianism, the principles underlying the caste system are still the moral basis of our criticism of the competitive societies, whether democratic or totalitarian, and whether politically or economically imperialistic.

It is on the basis of this morality that we have developed a civilization in which there is no real opposition of sacred to profane, and in which it was really true that laborare est orare. Still, it may be that justice and proportionate equality can be realised in some other way; it is not so much the forms of societies as the spirit in which they are lived that makes for felicity. The modern world is only too ready to believe

that better societies are to be had for the asking if only we make bigger and better plans; and everyone's Utopia, whether democratic, technocratic, totalitarian, hieratic, monarchic or anarchic is planned to suit himself. This may only mean that bad workmen are simply grumbling at the tools they already possess?

For the one thing needful, but which no one dares to propose, is a change of heart. If such a thing is suggested, one is told that human nature is unchangeable and that we must not put back the hands of the clock. As for the first of these propositions, it need only be said that there are tried and known ways of altering the bias of human wills, and that this can be done not only for the worse, but also for the better; and as for the second, it only need be pointed out that when one finds himself on the brink of a precipice, further "progress" in the same direction is undesirable.

The Platonic and Augustinian City of God has never been thought of as an environment attainable by a simply experimental or sociological planning; much rather, as Plato says, "that city can never otherwise be happy unless it is drawn by those painters who follow a divine original." It is significant, above all, that in the Indian Utopias, of which descriptions abound in the literature, nothing whatever is changed in the outward form of the traditional life; in the City of Wisdom there are still priests and kings, teachers, merchants, craftsmen, actors, servants and even prostitutes as before, but all is transformed because a change of mind--that is quite literally a "repentance," metanoia--has taken place. It is precisely in this sense that in Plato's myth the lover of wisdom, who has seen the light, returns to the "cave" to play his part in the life of the world, but "thinking otherwise than men do now," and for example, "accepting political office only as an unavoidable necessity, but in the opposite temper from that of the present rulers in our cities." It is in the same sense that the Bhagavad Gītā teaches a philosophy of work in terms of "acting without acting," that is, without attachment to the outcome, and not with a view to profit or for any other why than because each of us has a part to play in a common economy of which the total pattern is divine. It is by

no means an accident that the designation "actor" can be applied equivocally to those who participate in the everyday "active" life of the world, and to those who "enact" a role on the stage; the world is a stage, and they are the best "actors" and at the same time the least entangled in their own fate, who best fulfil their vocations, which are their allotted "parts."

So I say that if we are to weather the storm of the world's flow we must stand our ground, above all in this matter of the relation of man's life to his life-work. And if in face of the practical and immediate problem presented by the present crisis and conflict of cultures, you ask me what can be done, my answer would be to adapt from the Chinese what has been called the slogan of the later Manchu dynasty, and to say: Make Indian culture your foundation, and Western technique (in so far as it makes for quality, and not merely for quantity) your means. Beg, buy, borrow or steal modern inventions, if you must in self-defence, but do not imitate modern ways of thinking or forget that however novel these ways may seem to us, they are already stale in their own environment. I warn you, to invert the well-known Indian and Stoic parable, that what you take for a rope may be really a snake, and that to weaken, however little, is to play with fire in a forest.

III

EAST AND WEST

"East and West" imports a cultural rather than a geographical antithesis: an opposition of the traditional or ordinary way of life that survives in the East to the modern and irregular way of life that now prevails in the West. It is because such an opposition as this could not have been felt before the Renaissance that we say that the problem is one that presents itself only accidentally in terms of geography; it is one of times much more than of places. For if we leave out of account the "modernistic" and individual philosophies of today, and consider only the great tradition of the magnanimous philosophers, whose philosophy was also a religion that had to be lived if it was to be understood, it will soon be found that the distinctions of cultures in East and West, or for that matter North and South, are comparable only to those of dialects: all are speaking what is essentially one and the same spiritual language, employing different words, but expressing the same ideas, and very often by means of identical idioms. Otherwise stated, there is a universally intelligible language, not only verbal but also visual, of the fundamental ideas on which the different civilizations have been founded.

There exists, then, in this commonly accepted axiology or body of first principles a common universe of discourse; and this provides us with the necessary basis for communication, understanding and agreement, and so for effective cooperation in the application of commonly recognized spiritual values to the solution of contingent problems of organization and conduct. It is clear, however, that all this understanding and agreement can be reached and verified only by philosophers or scholars, if such are to be found, who are more than philologues and to whom their knowledge of the great tradition has been a vital and transforming experience; of such is the leaven or ferment by which the epigonous

and decaying civilizations of today might be "renewed in knowledge." I quote St. Paul's "in knowledge," not with reference to a knowledge of the "facts of science" or any power to "conquer nature," but as referring to the knowledge of our Self which the true philosophers of East and West alike have always considered the sine qua non of wisdom; and because this is not a matter of anyone's "illiteracy" or ignorance of "facts," but one of the restoration of meaning or value to a world of "impoverished reality." East and West are at cross purposes only because the West is determined, and quite "economically determined," to keep on going it knows not where, and calls this "progress."

It is far more, of course, by what our ideal philosophers and scholars, functioning as mediators, might be, far more by the simple fact of their presence, as of a catalyst, than by any kind of intervention in political or economic activities that they could operate effectively; they would have no use for votes or wish to "represent" their several nations at Geneva; and remaining unseen, they could arouse no opposition. At the present moment I can think of only two or three of this kind: René Guénon, Frithiof Schuon, Marco Pallis; one cannot consider from this point of view those who know only the West or only the East, however well.

On the other hand, no mere good will or philanthropy will suffice; and while it is true that correct solutions will necessarily be good ones, it by no means follows that what to the altruist seems to be good will also be right. There is no room here for the proselytising fury of any "idealists." What "the century of the common man" actually predicates is the century of the economic man, the economically determined man whose best and worst are equally unprincipled, a man who is far too common for our ends. How many of our "communists," I wonder, realise that the reference of "the common man," communis homo, was originally not to the man in the street as such, but to the immanent deity, the very Man in everyman! In the meantime, what "free enterprise" means is "his hand--the common man's in our sense--against every man's, and every man's hand against him": and there lie the seeds of future wars. What we demand is

something other than a quantitative standard of living; a form of society in which, in the words of St. Augustine, "everyone has his divinely coordinated place, and his security, and honour, and content therein; and no one is envious of another's high estate, and reverence, and happiness; where God is sought, and is found, and is magnified in everything"; one in which, in the words of Pius XII, "all work has an inherent dignity and at the same time a close connection with the perfection of the person," an almost literal summary of the true philosophy of Work as it has been propounded by Plato and in the Bhagavad Gītā.

In the meantime, we have got to reckon with the fact that almost all Western nations are either feared or hated by almost all Eastern peoples, and to ask ourselves why this should be so, and whether the former are unchangeably of such a sort as to seem to be destroyers everywhere, makers of deserts and calling them peace. Already in 1761 William Law asked men to "look at all European Christendom sailing round the globe with fire and sword and every murdering art of war to seize the possessions and kill the inhabitants of both the Indies. What natural right of man, what supernatural virtue, which Christ brought down from Heaven, was not here trodden under foot? All that you have ever read or heard of heathen barbarity was here outdone by Christian conquerors. And to this day, what wars of Christians against Christians. . .for a miserable share in the spoils of a plundered heathen world." Written immediately after a year of British military triumphs "in every quarter of the world," these words, like those of the concluding chapters of Gulliver's Travels, might have been written twenty years ago when the news of the Amritsar massacre had first leaked out, or today when it is officially admitted that since the beginning of the present war British soldiers have repeatedly fired on unarmed crowds, flogging is a common punishment for political offenses, and thousands of elected representatives and other "political offenders" (most of them committed to the employment of only "non-violent" means) have been long in prison without charge or trial, and no man knows when he may not be arrested and detained incommunicado in the

same way. And all that because "the loss of India would consummate the downfall of the British Empire," and the British Government, the "holdfast" (Namuci) of the present age, means to "hold its own" ill-gotten gains in the name of a "moral responsibility" to peoples who may have been divided against themselves (divide et impera), but are certainly not divided in wanting to be freed to solve their own difficulties. It is no wonder that the heathen rage; not in their "blindness," but because they see only too clearly that Empire is a commercial-financial institution having theft as its final object.

But politics and economics, although they cannot be ignored, are the most external and the least part of our problem; it is not through them that understanding and agreement can be reached, but on the contrary through understanding that the political and economic problems can be solved. The first spiritual problem in the solution of which there must be a cooperation (if we are thinking of anything better than a mere imposition of our own manners and customs on other peoples), and with respect to which a common theory has been entertained, is that of the elimination of the profit motive by which capital and labor are nowadays equally dominated and inhibited. In other words, the problem is that of the restoration of the concept of vocation, not as a matter of arbitrary "choice," or of passive determination by monetary needs or social ambition, but of occupations to which one is imperiously summoned by one's own nature and in which, accordingly, every man can be working out at the same time the perfection of his product and his own entelechy. For it is inevitably true that in this way, as Plato says, "more will be done, and better done, and more easily than in any other way," a proposition of which the command "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη = dharma) and the promise that "all these things shall be added unto you" is an almost literal paraphrase.

In a vocational order it is assumed that every trade (i.e., "walk" of life) is appropriate to someone, and consonant with human dignity; and this means in the final analysis, that if there are any occupations that are not consistent with human dignity, or any things

intrinsically worthless, such occupations and manufactures must be abandoned by a society that has in view the dignity of all its members. This is, then, the problem of the use and abuse of machines: use, if the instrument enables the workman to make well what is needed and in the making of which he can delight, or abuse if the instrument, in which some other party has a vested interest opposed to the workman's own, itself controls the kind and quality of his product. The distinction is that of the tool (however complicated) that helps the man to make the thing he wants to make, from the machine (however simple) that must be served by the man whom it, in fact, controls. This is a problem that must be solved if the world is to be made "safe for democracy" and from exploitation; and that can be solved by agreement only when the intentions of the traditional "caste" systems have been understood, and it has been fully realised that these intentions can never be fulfilled within the framework of a capitalist industrialism, however "democratic," and can only be fulfilled where production is primarily "for good use." Nor is this a matter to be regarded only from the producer's point of view; there are values also from a consumer's point of view, and who is not a consumer? It must be recognized (the proofs are ready to hand in any good museum) that machines, as defined above, are not the equivalents of tools, but substitutes for tools, and that whatever is made by such machines directly for human use is qualitatively inferior to what can be made with the help of tools. I have observed the standing advertisement of a dealer in used carpets; up to $50 is offered for "Americans" and up to $500 for "Orientals." It is ultimately for the consumer to decide whether he wants to live on a $50 or a $500 level; and no society organised upon the basis of "the law of the sharks" can expect to do the latter. The combination of quality with quantity is a chimera in the likeness of the service of God and Mammon. Where we shall not be able to agree is in thinking that "wealth" or "high standards of living" can be measured in terms of quantity and competitive pricing.

Failing an understanding and agreement on the higher levels of reference, there is the imminent danger

that in bringing forth a brave new world in which all men shall fraternise, this may amount to nothing more than, if even to so much as, that they may eat, drink and be merry together in the intervals of the so-called peace that occasionally interrupts the wars of acquisition, pacification and education. The work of "missionaries," whether of a given religion, of scientific humanism, or industrialism, is a levelling rather than an elevating force, fundamentally incompatible with anything but a reduction of the cultures of the world to their lowest common denominator: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" Merely to have set up elsewhere replicas of the modern institutions in which the West for the most part still believes, although these are the very ways of living that have already bred disaster, merely to dream of mixing the oil of "economic justice" with the acid of a competitive "world trade," is not enough for felicity; the backward East, in so far as it is still "backward," is very much happier, calmer and less afraid of life and death than the "forward" West has ever been or can be. To have set about to "conquer" nature, to have thought of discontent as "divine," to have honored the discoverers of "new wants," to have sacrificed spontaneity to the concept of an inevitable "progress," these positions of the "Social Gospel" are none of those that the East has ever thought of as making for happiness.

It emerges from what has been said above that motion towards a raprochement must originate in the West; if only because it is the modern West that first abandoned the once common norms, while the surviving East that is still in a majority, however diminished and diminishing, still adheres to them. It is true that there is another and modernised, uprooted East, with which the West can <u>compete</u>: but it is only with the surviving, the "super-stitious" East--Gandhi's East, the one that has never attempted to live by bread alone--that the West can <u>cooperate</u>. Who knows this East? It is from our philosophers, scholars and theologians that we have a right to expect such a knowledge; and it is actually, in the first place, upon our western universities and churches, our "educators," that the responsibility of

the future of international relations rests, however little they are presently and really able to play their part in "dissipating the clouds of ignorance which hide the East from the West." We need scholars (and that in the pulpit, in college classrooms, and "on the air") to whom not only Latin and Greek, but also Arabic or Persian, Sanskrit or Tamil, and Chinese or Tibetan are still living languages in the sense that there are to be found formulations of principles pertinent to all men's lives; we need translators, bearing in mind that to translate without betrayal one must have experienced oneself the content that is to be "carried across." We need theologians who can think no more or less in terms of Christian than of Islamic, Hindu or Taoist theology, and who have realised by a personal verification that, as Philo said, all men, "whether Greeks or barbarians," actually recognize and serve one and the same God, by whatever names, one and the same immanent "Son of Man," the Son of whom Meister Eckhart spoke when he said that "he who sees me, sees my child." We need anthropologists of the calibre of Richard St. Barbe Baker, Karl von Spiess, Father W. Schmidt and Nora K. Chadwick and such folklorists as were the late J. F. Campbell and Alexander Carmichael; the value of such men as the late Professor A. A. Macdonell and Sir J. G. Frazer being only that of hewers of wood and drawers of water for those who "understand their material."

We need mediators to whom the common universe of discourse is still a reality, men of a sort that is rarely bred in public schools or trained in modern universities; and this means that the primary problem is that of the reeducation of western literati. More than one has told me how it had taken him ten years to outgrow even a Harvard education; I have no idea how many it might take to outgrow a missionary college education, or to recover from a course of lectures on Comparative Religion offered by a Calvinist. We need "reactionaries," able to start over again from scratch--from an *in principio* in the logical rather than any temporal sense, and very surely not merely in the *ante quo bellum* sense, nor from the point at which the education of the amnesic "common man" of today begins. I mean by

"reactionaries" men who, when an impasse has been reached, are not afraid of being told that "we cannot put back the hands of the clock" or that "the machine has come to stay." The real intention of my reactionaries, for whom there is no such thing as a "dead past," is not to put back the hands but to put them forward to another noon day. We need men who are not afraid of being told that "human nature is unchangeable"; which is true enough in its proper sense, but not if we are under the delusion that human nature is nothing but an economic nature. What should we think of a man who having lost his way and reached the brink of a precipice, is too stupid or too proud to retrace his steps? And is it not "down a steep place into the sea" that European civilisation, for all its possibly good intentions, is gliding now? Who, indeed would not now retrace his steps, if he only knew how! The proof of this can be seen in the multiplicity of the current "plans" for a better world that men pursue, never remembering that there is only "one thing needful." The modern West must be "renewed--in knowledge."

Again, we must beware; for there are two possible, and very different consequences that can follow from the cultural contact of East and West. One can "become a queer mixture of East and West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere"; or, being still oneself, one can learn to find oneself "in place" anywhere, and "at home" everywhere, in the profoundest sense, a citizen of the world.

The problem is "educational," or in other words one of "recollection"; and when it has been solved, when the West has found her Self again, which is also the Self of all other men, the problem of understanding the "mysterious" East will have been solved at the same time, and nothing will remain but the practical task of putting into practise what has been remembered. The alternative is that of a reduction of the whole world to the present state of Europe. The choice lies finally between a deliberately directed movement towards a foreseen goal or "destiny," and a passive submission to an inexorable

progress or "fate"; between an evaluated and significant and a valueless and insignificant way of living.*

*"Our choice is (as it always was) between metanoia and paranoia"***

* A part of this essay was published in The Biosophical Review, vol. 8, 1945.

** Reginald Snell, in the New English Weekly, May 3, 1945.