

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

**SOME MODERN NON-INTELLECTUAL
APPROACHES TO GOD**

BY

SISTER AGNES TERESA McAULIFFE, M. A.
of the Congregation of
The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth
Nazareth, Kentucky.

A DISSERTATION

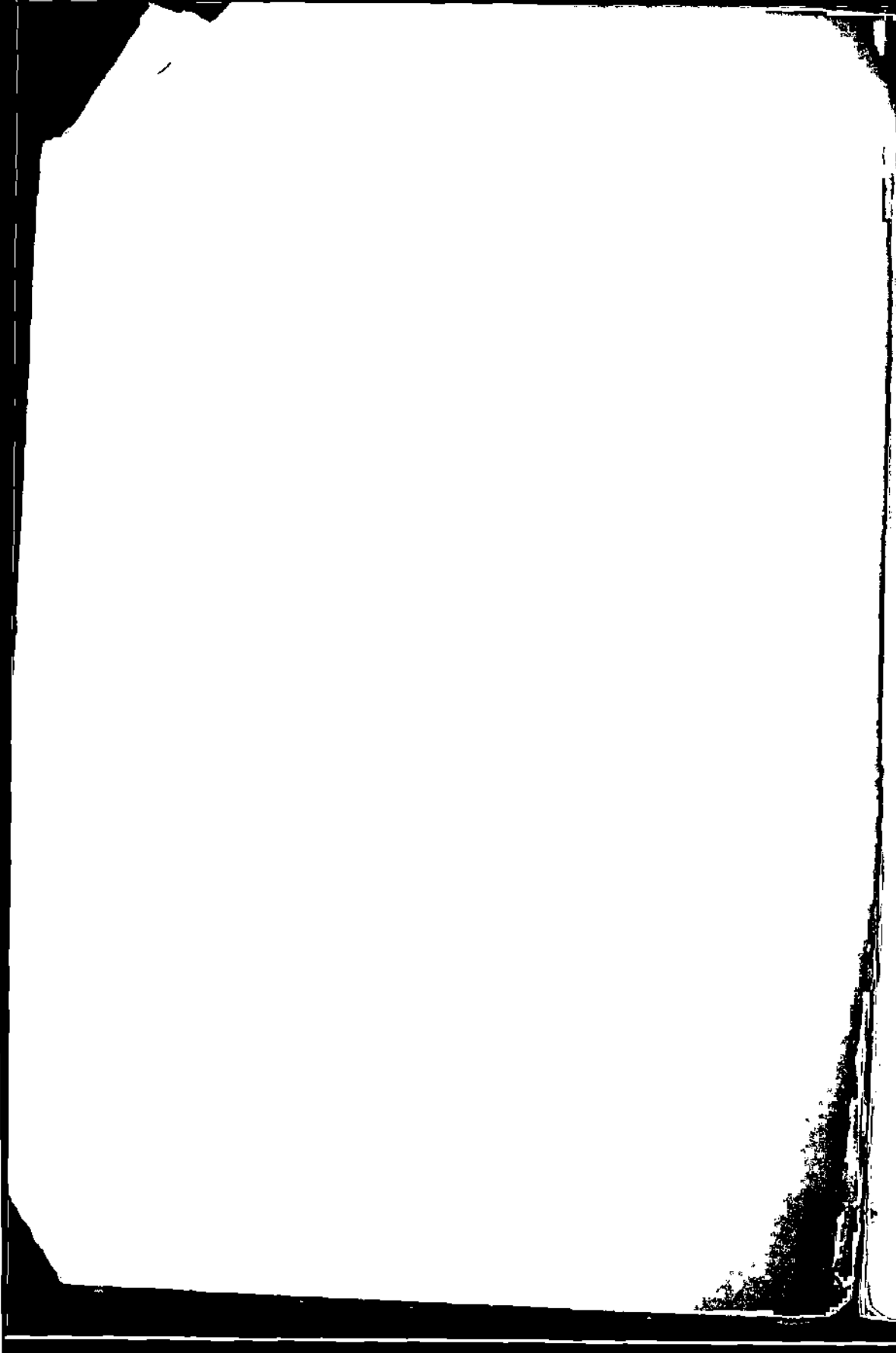
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON, D. C.

1934

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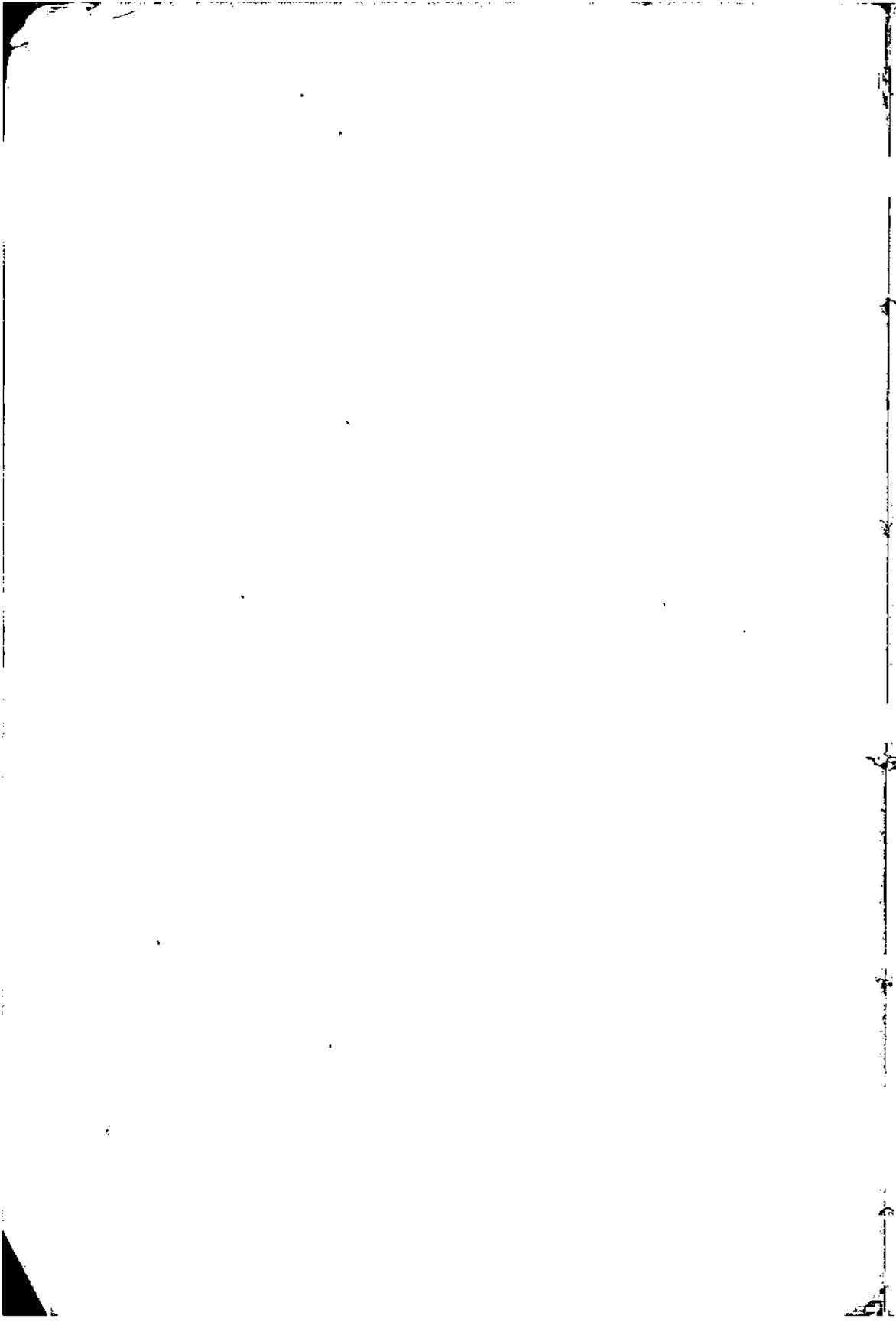
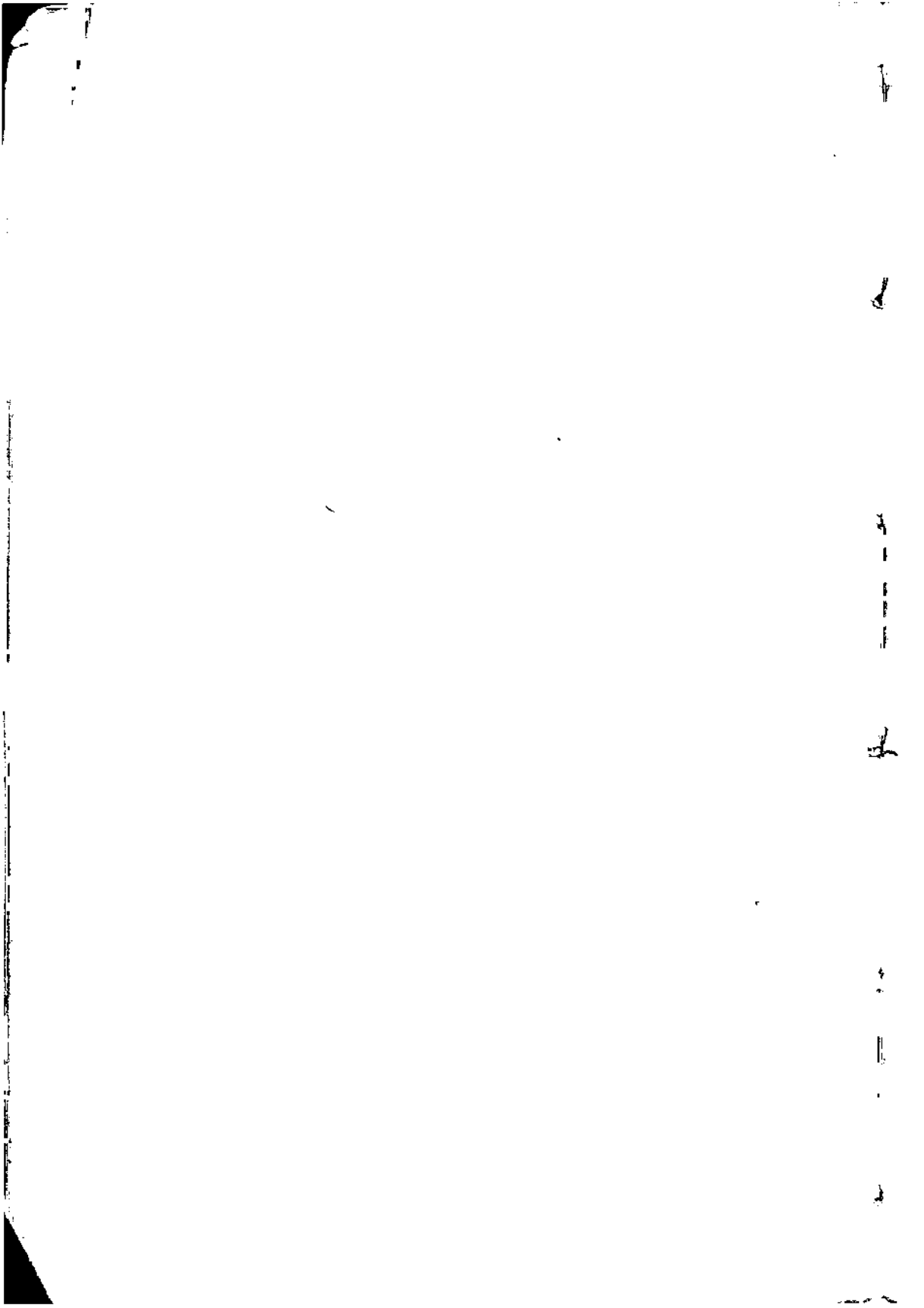


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PREFACE

In the field of Philosophy of Religion where nature, science and philosophy lead to the problem of the knowability of God, there have been marked changes in content and meaning. Through the discoveries of science, a new knowledge of God and of the ways of revealing Himself is reached. Knowledge by reason is replaced by consciousness; first principles, by descriptions; metaphysics, by physical sciences; static belief in the object of knowledge, by dynamic religious flux; cause is thought of as representing a functional equation, a mere correlation between variables; the First Cause of the universe, is at best, in the nature of a cause that needs another cause to explain it; reason is distrusted for mere feeling; doctrines are tested by their working values, cosmic force is accepted as a deity; figments of the imagination are born into every new theory that makes working approximation satisfy for truth.

The purpose of this dissertation is to present and critically discuss three kinds of non-intellectual approaches to God which are in recent terminology "mystical": first, the infra-intellectual mysticism of religious experience, second, the supra-intellectual and non-rational mysticism of intuitionism, and third, the supra-scientific mysticism of recent science.

By the development of religion into something more personal, more individualistic, there came into existence a "new" mysticism, spurious and quite unchristian. This mystical irrational approach to God has become popular. It has tried to outstrip, on the affective side, the traditional rationalism of cognitive good sense in the christian order. Owing to the fact that psychology no longer offers itself as an auxiliary science to metaphysics but has become absolute in the study of mental processes, there is an attempt to explain mysticism on the basis that psychology offers. "But psychology is a poor substitute for religion and metaphysics . . . and psychological experience is apt to prove the happy hunting ground of the faddist and the savage, and to culminate in utter pessimism."¹ With the

¹ M. C. D'Arcy, S. J., *The Nature of Belief*, p. 34.

volitional and sentient aspects of experience stressed to the detriment of the cognitive, philosophy has been kept from supplying the truth about the nature of the Ultimate Reality and the relationship established by such an experience.

The mysticism, under consideration in this work, is not theological but philosophical mysticism, a distinction which Christianity does not recognize in the study of mysticism. Due to the recognized value and the importance it has for life, it is imperative that it be singled out for study.

A philosopher who can point out lurking dangers in modern thought and stimulate his followers to take prevalent errors back to Thomistic thought for rectification, is a safe guide; such is the Reverend Doctor Fulton J. Sheen. To him, the author gives acknowledgment and sincere thanks for his direction and for the generous use of his personal library for sources of material for this dissertation. The writer is also grateful to Doctor Ignatius Smith, O. P. and to Doctor Charles Hart for most valuable suggestions. To Mother Mary Catharine Malone, and to the members of the Congregation, she wishes to express her gratitude.

The Catholic University of America.

INTRODUCTION

Modern thought outside the scholastic field is agnostic in regard to the supernatural. Arising from the system of Kant that God cannot be known by the intellect but by practical reason, agnosticism worked its way through principles that admit intellect to be limited and truth to be arrived at only by the empirical method. Kant made religion a matter of inward personal experience. Many of his followers are permeated with the same idea. "They are anxious to be 'up-to-date' and in touch with modern thought, oblivious of the fact that it stands on feet of miry clay which cannot support the weight which is laid upon them."¹

Anti-intellectualism, the outgrowth of intellectualism and rationalism, gave a subjective and relative value to the intellect and robbed it of all dependence on objective being. It has found strange ways to lure the unwary, especially by imitations of mystic literature. Historical accounts of the great mystics with excerpts from their writings, popular expositions of the subject in magazines, besides treatises by laymen whose chief interests lie outside the field of religion, keep the subject in the foreground. There is a current mysticism that is bad philosophy and poor religion. As a way of knowing God by Religious Experience, it is based on subjective feeling and emotion, not on any particular emotion, but on the whole of personality. It tries to get away from the supernatural help and belongs to natural or preternatural religion. It makes claim to a declaration of certitude of having seen God, of a deliberate undertaking to recover the principle of value without discursive reasoning. There is reason then, for the reader to discriminate between Christian mysticism founded on metaphysics with an acceptance of psychology to explain psychic states, and pseudo-mysticism based on emotional experiences and partial data left uninterpreted by the science of psychology. There is the mystic contemplation of the mind, a *simplex intuitus*, as contrasted with data of the senses; a union with reality without identity, in opposition to deification, a unity all-absorbing; a mediate knowledge by a process of concepts

¹ A. Chandler, *Church Quarterly Review*, 104 (1927), 281.

as against a knowledge by immediacy; an orthodox mysticism in which God enters into consciousness in the light of the principle of causality, as differentiated from that mysticism which is empirical.

Taking only a limited number of writers, we find mysticism has been studied and interpreted broadly or limitedly as men come to it by different approaches, under different impulses, in different tempers. Along the way of nature and under the impulse of science, the esoteric or psychic form has obtruded itself upon the world. The revelations of spiritism, the misnamed Christian Science, the paradoxically styled New Thought, the libido of the organism have all been termed mystic and the followers of these types have retired into their own imagination and there found God. With William James the religious man becomes conscious that the higher part of him is coterminous and continuous with the "More," a power beyond the subconscious mind. This type of religious experience is a sort of *via media* between Bergson's intuitive idea and Eddington's idealistic background in the scientific world. Its validity has been attacked for the lack of objective reference to any reality beyond the individual. It is not necessarily religion; "Many have ceased to believe in God as a personal being. They steep themselves in a semi-religious awe at the sight of mountains and seas or the starry heavens or the gorgeous pageantry of the setting or rising sun; they can best be described as quasi-religious or mystical, but they never face the dilemma, either God exists or He does not";² it expresses temperament rather than the more definite and self-determinative part we call character, and arouses interest in certain events which the psychologist himself evaluates. "If it does not furnish the knowledge that we are led to expect," says Boutroux, "it brings at least fresh arguments for maintaining against Rationalism, the original reality and power of religious emotion."³

Those who are intuitionists meet the problem of God by direct vision. Man by his natural powers anticipates the Beatific Vision reserved for the next life and claims to come to a complete knowledge of the nature of God. The existence of life without cause, a transcendence of intuition over intellect allows the "God of Becom-

² P. Richards, *Belief in Man*, p. 95.

³ E. Boutroux, *Religion and Science*, p. 318.

ing" to be an inspiration rather than a possession. Many of these evolutionary gods are creating a flair as a result of the interpretative analysis of their new organic universe. The conclusion that has been reached is, that intuitionism does not satisfy the need of religion, that Bergson's philosophy can give no intuitive knowledge of God.

Just how science has become locked up with mysticism some of the great scientists have already expressed. Though mysticism and science are seeking truth from opposite viewpoints, they have supplemented each other. Scientists besides finding the invariants of the universe have exercised their mystical vision upon the invisible world, the "beyond." They have found the Reality that the scientific method had allowed to escape. This sort of mysticism, the supra-scientific, has become a favorite resort of those who resent the authority of any tradition, and in their quest for truth of God leave reason for a seemingly higher guide. The new scientific world-view, in banning the active life of the intellect and taking the raw material of knowledge from the mind itself, is thus engaged in the contemplation of an ideal and transcendent universe, that is to say, in the contemplation of the abstract without the concrete. "It is high time that the scientists and the religious folk took up a philosophy worth considering and built their natural beliefs on intellect and their religion on a faith which is intellectually watertight." *

* M. C. D'Arcy, *Nature of Belief*, p. 25.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE NON-INTELLECTUAL APPROACH TO GOD

To obtain an idea of what is meant by the term mysticism, which is often used vaguely and mysteriously, let us take the concept back to pagan times when men concentrated attention upon the development of the sixth sense, by which they were able to find hidden meaning and revealed mysteries. Thus they come to describe as mystic,

those sacred rites which took place not in the sight of all or in the full light of day and at public altars, but either in the night or within closed sanctuaries or in remote and solitary places.¹

The chief characteristics of the mysteries were secrecy, emotion, and edification; first, secret (*μυστήριον*)—what was known was communicated through certain words and ceremonies by those already in possession of the secrets; second, emotion (*ἔργια*)—the real gain to the initiate being not to instruct or to impart knowledge, but to produce impressions and emotions; third, edification (*τελεταί*)—the act which fitted the subject for admittance to the secret.²

After the advent of Christianity, *mystic* had reference to the sacred mysteries in which those admitted had to be instructed before they received the Christian initiation of baptism. The relation between the pagan and the Christian mysteries has long been a subject of discussion. Some maintain that these early Christian ceremonies are but a continuation of pagan thought; others suppose that the mysticism of the early church was made up of a medley of rites bearing a close resemblance to pagan forms.³ That they were

¹ Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*. Quoted by S. Cheetham, *The Mysteries, Pagan and Christian*, p. 41.

² Cf. S. Cheetham, *The Mysteries, Pagan and Christian*.

³ There are the usual extremists, those who maintain that the oriental cults compare favorably with Christianity, and that Christianity borrowed lavishly from its competitors, and those who exalt Christianity by decrying

akin in meaning must be denied, that the spirit which animated the pagan ceremonies was comparable to Christian inspiration must also be rejected. Though young in the manifestation of external forms and although still in the atmosphere of the *Zeitgeist*, the church refused to absorb what was inconsistent with her teaching.

The term mysticism was sometimes used in the Christian church to mean anything connected with the faith that was *μυστικός* or allegorical. A symbol having sensible and invisible elements could be applied to realities of the spiritual order; for example, bread and wine were symbolic of the Eucharist, the lamb was symbolic of Christ Himself. What was really carried on into the times was the use of the word mysticism.

According to the etymology of the word, mysticism is derived from the Greek verb, *myein* (*μύειν*) meaning to shut, to cover over, to close the eyes or the mouth; the eyes so as not to see the secret, the mouth not to reveal it; or from the Greek noun *mysterion* (*μυστήριον*), which signifies a hidden esoteric element that has associated with it some recondite meaning especially of a religious kind. It received a broader meaning when it became associated with philosophy. The old word contemplation held its own with the later Middle Ages.

The study of mysticism has been found to be a world movement passing down through the ages, at one time destroying faith, again renewing it; at one period revealing itself as pantheistic in its tendencies or again justifying itself as a lofty means of Christian perfection.

everything outside it. Many recognize that their unwholesome feature blended with much that exalted man above the limits of ordinary life.

Cf. S. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity*. Scholars as E. Rohde, *Psyche*, 11, 293 ff.; R. M. Ramsay, *D. B. Hastings*, extra vol. 126a; L. R. Farnell, *Higher Aspects of Greek Religion*, 141 (London, 1912); *Cults of the Greek States*, 111 (Oxford 1899), 101, incline to a deprecatory opinion of the ancient mysteries. Others, like T. R. Glover, *Progress in Religion* (London 1922), 320, 323-330; K. Lake, *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (2nd ed.; London 1914), 39 f., seem to adopt a neutral or hesitating position, while the great majority hold to a favorable estimate. e.g. O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie* (Munich 1906), 11; F. Cumont, *Religions Orientales* (Paris 1909), 11, xxv; H. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions* (London 1913), 84; W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism* (London, 1899).

Elle répond, dit J. Simon, par le mysticisme aux théories des anciens sur la connaissance, et par le panthéisme à leurs spéculations sur la nature de l'Absolu.⁴

In the pre-Christian era, Philo Judeus, who prepared the way for Plotinus in the third century, is regarded as a mystic. Although acquainted with Christianity he remained a pagan. His teachings that the soul retire into itself to receive the Divine Illumination and become truly spiritual were a part of a mystical system whose final goal was ecstasy.⁵ The soul is borne "towards absolute Unity, the Good, God, whom the soul attains in the supreme Union. The soul really lives the One in immortality and unconsciousness of itself."⁶ This conception, akin to the Christian mystics, raises the question as to whether Plotinus, who was not a Christian, was a real mystic. "Does not Catholic Theology teach that supernatural grace, whatever be the names of its bestowal, is not refused to any soul of good will? Why deny it then, more directly, even outside Christianity, to some devout ascetic who seeks Him (God) haltingly, with humble and persevering energy, perhaps by means of proceedings of a touching and exotic quaintness? Let us hope, dear reader, that it may be so; but as to this you are asking us much more than we can know."⁷

Not until the fifth century, when Dionysius developed Neo-Platonic elements in his philosophy, did mysticism find itself a veritable source for later developments. The influence of Dionysius was evidenced in the works of Erigena and to him we attribute in

⁴ J. Simon, *Hist. de l'École d'Alexandrie*, 1, 2. Quoted by A. Augar, *Étude sur les Mystiques des Pays-Bas au Moyen Âge* (Bruxelles 1892), p. 40.

⁵ Porphyry in the *Life of Plotinus*, p. 23, says that Plotinus experienced complete ecstasy four times to his knowledge. Cf. A. B. Sharpe, *Mysticism, Its True Nature and Value*, p. 154, also Dom C. Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 343. *Dublin Review*, vol. 190, p. 55.

⁶ J. Maréchal, *Studies in the Psychology of the Mystics*, p. 178, tr. A. Thorold.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

"Accepting the principle," says Sharpe, "that he who is not against us is for us," we may consider Plotinus as an involuntary witness of the truth of the Christian view of mysticism and the reality of the experience of Christian mystics." A. B. Sharpe, *Mysticism, Its True Nature and Value*, p. 157.

large part the spread of mysticism. A characteristic of Neo-Platonism was a tendency of the mind toward the supernatural. As a type of religion, it appeared as a science in the twelfth century. Abelard, the *Vir Bellator*, with rationalizing dialectics encountered opposition from St. Bernard, whose mystical tendencies and ascetic teachings have placed him in the foremost rank of the great mystics of the West.⁸

Mysticism received a strong impetus from the Victorines,⁹ Hugh, Richard, and Walter. Hugh declared that the way to ascend to God is to descend into one's self; while Richard explained that the ascent is through self above self. In building a mystical theology, they brought renown to the abbey of Saint Victor of Marseilles. From a small priory dependent from the abbey, the movement was spread through the teaching of William of Champeaux. At the close of the twelfth century, so remarkable for spiritual ideals, there was a drift towards pantheism due to Arabian speculation. Linking this period with the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are the names of Bonaventure and Aquinas. The former, Cardinal and General of the Franciscan order, led a host of his followers into the way of mystical thought and mystical experience; the latter, both a mystic and a philosopher, conciliated mysticism with scholastic thought in his writings and in his life.

If Saint Thomas wrote a treatise, *De Ente et Essentia* and also hymns to the Blessed Sacrament, it is because there were really two men in him, as it were, obeying two distinct inspirations.¹⁰

In spite of its cold intellectual style, Scholasticism was a sister, not an opponent, of mysticism. The scholastic system synthesized the experiences of the mystics and, at the close of the fourteenth century, cast overboard the extravagant elements and all sorts of hereti-

⁸ Cf. Dom C. Butler, *Western Mysticism*.

⁹ The Victorines go directly to the true, by meditation and contemplation without passing through the series of more or less complicated discursive acts of syllogism; for they looked upon created beings less as realities than as symbols of divine teaching. The sensible world hides invisible realities; what should be studied is not sensible beings in themselves but the teaching which they contain. P. Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality*, Vol. II, p. 109.

¹⁰ De Wulf, *Scholastic Philosophy*, tr. Coffey, p. 69.

cal opinions. The Béghards¹¹ or Fraticelli, the "temperamental" theosophists consecrated themselves to the care of contagious diseases and the burial of the Dead; the Béguines, pious women, who assembled in beguinages, responded to the needs of the times, cared for the sick, in town and in private houses, lent themselves to the manual labor of women. The Council of Vienne in 1311,¹² defended the notion of the supernatural against the followers of these sects by condemning the opinion that all intellectual nature has naturally its beatitude in itself, and has no need of the light of glory which elevates it to the Beatific Vision,¹³ and that "man, in this present life, is able to attain to so great and high a state of perfection that he may become entirely free from sin and can no longer grow in grace."¹⁴

Mysticism had a very prolific period and reached its peak in Spain in the sixteenth century; the names of a Teresa of Jesus and a John of the Cross became synonymous with genuine mystical experience. Historical accounts of these great spirits together with an exposition of their doctrines and teachings are today creating a new wave of interest, for the mystic-minded still enjoy correlating their experiences with those whose sense of the Divine consists in inward harmony. It is certain that errors, connected with pseudo-mysticism troubled the church's peace for the early part of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century and that, not merely in Spain, but in France and Italy too. On account of a great deal of Lutheran propaganda causing men to turn from the faith and from the sacraments, to seek salvation through subjective processes, it is not to be wondered at that any new departure

¹¹ The name *Béghard* or *Beguine* was derived from Lambert de Bègue, priest of Liege, who founded a hospital and church for the widows and children of Crusaders about 1170.

¹² *Errores Beguardorum et Beguinarum de statu perfectionis in concilio Viennensi (1311-1312) damnati a Clemente V.*

¹³ Prop. V. *Quod quaelibet intellectualis natura in se ipsa naturaliter est beata, quodque anima non indiget lumine gloriæ, ipsam elevante ad Deum videndum et eo beate fruendum*—Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion symb.*, n. 475, p. 208, ed. 1908.

¹⁴ Prop. I *Quod homo in vita præsentis tantum et talem perfectionis gradum potest acquirere, quod reddetur penitus impeccabilis et amplius in gratia proficere non valebit.* Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 471, p. 207.

in spirituality should have been regarded with disfavor by the Church.

In the philosophy of the eighteenth century, rationalism pin-nacled reason, destroyed faith, and left the spiritual part of man's nature unbalanced. But not for long could feeling be overpowered by reason. The cry for restoration was begun by the Romantic school in Germany and elsewhere in the closing years of the century. Again mysticism which had its root in the way of love, stirred the affective and emotional nature to such a degree, that religion ceased to be an objective significance. The following scientific age, the age of driving mechanical force, of naturalism, disfavored a world of spirit. Man and society became scientific studies. The period received the generalizations of science stimulated by evolution with multiple and variable manifestations, and by Positivism with its scientific way of thinking. The transition to the twentieth century was gradual.



CHAPTER II

MODERN NOTIONS OF MYSTICISM

Perhaps no problem today has as many diversified approaches to it as religion. Reason has been found by some to be inadequate to lay its foundation, but to separate religion from reason has been to render religion unreasonable. The modern mind claims that religion's basis must rest not on tradition and external authority or historical evidence but upon ascertained facts of experience.¹ The means of communicating with God, they say, is not through logical process but by a direct converse, with the absolute assurance of reality. God must be discovered by experience or His existence can never be known. In this region of observation and experiment, man has found a way to express his religious nature. The conscious need he has of God, *desiderium naturale*, arises from the sensational, the rational and the mystical forces of his nature. This inrooted desire of the human soul worked out into a mysticism has manifested itself in many forms.

Among the causes of recrudescence of mysticism may be numbered; first, the waning vitality of reason, which happened when in the history of thought the pendulum swung from Rationalism to Romanticism, when cold reasoning melted beneath the warmth of love and sentiment; second, the strong reaction against Positivism which affirmed that the only reality that can be in question is the content of experience; third, interest in religious psychology, the study of conversion and mysticism drawing out a long line of study that gradually extended to the whole field of religion in which religious leaders, educationalists and evangelists became seized with the importance of scientific knowledge of the mental processes, which were involved in religious experience, in order to control and manipulate these processes; fourth, the reaction against the over-institutionalized type of religion, the revolt against materialism and the dominance of science. To these causes may be added

¹ W. R. Inge, *Light, Life and Love*, Introd.

the charm and attractiveness of much that is mystical in the writings of James and Bergson.

Mysticism, "the romance of the soul in quest of the ideal,"² in its broad sense, in contemporary thought, means an immediate awareness of the God of the invisible world; in a narrower sense, it is the awareness of God in the universe. There are almost as many definitions as there are writers on the subject. Canon Inge, who has gathered no less than twenty-six,³ has defined it in shortest terms as the "love of God,"⁴ and as the attempt to realize in thought and feeling the immanence of the temporal in the eternal, and of the eternal in the temporal.⁵ It is a belief that we may attain directly without the aid of the senses and without the aid of reason to an immediate intuition of God; it is faith that does not rest on historical basis; a life not controlled by external law;⁶ it is more than a way of knowing; it is a definite metaphysical doctrine, and an ethics or way of life;⁷ it is a method and a spirit of attaining union with God; an innate tendency of the human soul which seeks to transcend reason and to be united to Ultimate Reality; it is an attitude of mind;⁸ it is an immediate feeling of the unity of self with God; it is a known mental process or occurrence which is *sui generis*;⁹ it is a doctrine incapable of rational expression that the ultimate nature of reality may be known as an immediate apprehension, intuition or insight; it is an expression of that within man, which has enabled him to interpret life in terms of moral and social value; it is a kind of piety¹⁰

² H. E. Stutfield, *Mysticism and Catholicism*, p. 24.

³ W. R. Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, Appendix.

⁴ *Ibid.*, *Studies in English Mystics*, p. 37.

⁵ *Ibid.*, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 5.

⁶ *The Expositor*, 15 (1918): 241.

⁷ W. E. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, n. 382.

⁸ M. Smith, *An Introduction to History of Mysticism*, p. 3.

⁹ K. Edward, *Religious Experience, Its Nature and Truth*, p. 174.

¹⁰ J. Baillie, *The Interpretation of Religion*, p. 225.

The Ritschlian definition of mysticism is based likewise on piety. "When the influence of God upon the soul is sought and found solely in an inward experience of the individual, that is, in an excitement of the emotions taken, with no further question, as evidence that the soul is possessed by God; without, at the same time, anything external to the soul being

that is world-wide and extends to every period of the world's history. To one it is not a system of thought nor a special philosophy but a mode of expression,¹¹ to another it is a means of enlightenment; ¹² to Rignano, it means sentimentality:

certain terms thus become in time pure sounds, no longer evoking intellectual representations but only emotions; and not certain particular emotions relating to a well-determined object, but general emotions similar to those aroused by a series of musical notes in the minor mode.¹³

The movement of mysticism, as indicated in the above definitions, is in the direction of immediacy as a criterion of truth, without an attempt to interpret experience by and for the intellect.

Mysticism has raised questions in psychology as well as in philosophy. The approaches to mysticism from the psychological point of view are thoroughly experimental. The experiences are both external and introspective. Professor James has described subjects in pathological states of mysticism. These states are purely accidental to mysticism itself. These form the other half of religious mysticism, or as he calls it, diabolical mysticism, a religious mysticism turned upside down.¹⁴ James asserts that it generally arises from an eruption of the subconscious, while some even admit that mysticism is nothing but a sublimated form of sex instinct. Allowing also for the physiological explanation, they conclude that the mysticism of St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa and others was only the result of bodily infirmities of physiological conditions which produce sensibility and awareness.

The introspective approach is made upon the mystic himself. Failure on the part of the mystic to transmit to others the content of his experiences has often been taken to mean that he has had no contact with the spiritual, that his attitude is agnostic toward ultimate certainty.

consciously and clearly perceived and firmly grasped, or the positive contents of any soul-dominating idea giving rise to thoughts that elevate the spiritual life, then that is the *piety* of mysticism." Herrmann, *Communion with God*, Eng. tr. 3 ed., pp. 22-23.

¹¹ F. S. Haserot, *Essays on the Logic of Being*, p. 483.

¹² J. W. Buckham, *Mysticism and Modern Life*, p. 14.

¹³ E. Rignano, *The Psychology of Reasoning*, p. 256.

¹⁴ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 426.

Such psychological mysticism giving a deeper realization of every aspect to the universe is a quasi-spiritual feeling, vague, unpractical, and subject to presumptuous speculation. The influence of the psychological school on the philosophy of religion seems, says Dom Butler, to be on the whole unischievous.

Psychology treats mental states as the data of a science. But intuition changes its character completely when treated in this way. This is why a chilling and depressing atmosphere seems to surround the psychology of religion. The whole method is external; it is a science not of validity but of origins; in limiting itself to the investigation of mystical vision as a state of consciousness it excludes all consideration of the relation which the vision may bear to objective truth.¹⁶

To understand mysticism

It is necessary that there be some pursuit of ultimate objective truth or it is nothing. 'What the world calls mysticism,' says Coventry Patmore, 'is the science of ultimates,' the science of self-evident reality. Thus it soon became clear to me that mysticism involves a philosophy and at bottom is a philosophy.¹⁷

A divergent view, by one of the foremost writers on the subject and a disciple of Inge is that "mysticism is not an opinion; it is not a philosophy."¹⁷ Dom Butler, agreeing with this, says that real religious mysticism is not a philosophy, but an experience and that there may be a philosophy of mysticism.¹⁸ Since it is the "inspirer of what is best in man,"¹⁹ it is accepted in its essence "beyond the purview of philosophy and as belonging exclusively to a reign of which philosophy itself must stop short."²⁰ "There is an element of mysticism in all of us."²¹ With Mr. Bertrand Russell some may agree that all philosophers have a mystical and a logical strain in them.²² He characterizes mystical philosophy by certain

¹⁶ Dom Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 343.

¹⁷ W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, I, 3-4.

¹⁸ E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 97.

¹⁹ Dom Butler, *Western Mysticism*, pp. 188-189.

²⁰ B. Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 12.

²¹ A. B. Sharpe, *Mysticism*, p. 179.

²² W. E. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, p. 383.

²³ A. M. McDowall, *Three Philosophic Prophets*, Littell's Living Age, 23 (1921), 200.

beliefs; first, insight or intuition and, connected with it, the conception of a Reality thinly veiled by the shows of sense; second, a belief in unity and its refusal to admit opposition or division anywhere; third, the denial of the reality of time; fourth, a belief that all evil is mere appearance. While fully aware of the wisdom to be learned from the mystical way of feeling, he is quite unwilling to accept mysticism as a creed.²³ To the spiritualist, mysticism is a religion, "which puts emphasis on immediate relation with God."²⁴ In Professor Inge's *Personal Idealism and Mysticism*, mysticism is described as "a type of religion which puts the inner light above human authority and finds its sacraments everywhere." As a form of religious experience it lacks the doctrines, external form and ceremonies that traditional religion is heir to. Its temple of worship is in the inner sanctuary of the soul; its divine authority, the self-directing ego. Like religion it has a history antedating the Christian era and boasts of centuries of passage over a rough and rugged way.

Mysticism without intellectual significance is an incommunicable experience that can scarcely be described "but in the language of symbols and allegory that cannot be described in strict conceptual terms."²⁵ Mysticism looking within to the religious feelings in its search for God, and appealing to the "inner light," breaks up into distinct types according to the point of view of the inquiry into the source of religious knowledge. "The Naturalistic conceives the religious feelings as the natural religious consciousness of men, as excited and influenced by the circumstances of the individual"; the Pantheistic advances to the complete identification of the soul with God. In this the final attainment of Reality is "Deification."²⁶ Its end is not only union but fusion. Many mystics are pantheistic; they know that all is one. "If the mystic were not a pantheist at heart, mysticism would be the very apotheosis of egoism and separatism."²⁷

In pan-mysticism God is really everything; while in ordinary

²³ R. Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 9-11.

²⁴ R. M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, xv.

²⁵ W. E. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, p. 333.

²⁶ B. B. Warfield, *Studies in Theology*, p. 654.

²⁷ E. Holmes, *Experience of Reality, a Study of Mysticism*, pp. 43 and 57.

pantheism everything is God. This distinction is often expressed by the word "panentheism" or universal divine immanence.

Although mysticism is one of the commonest and vaguest terms in religious nomenclature, the summation of modern notions is that mysticism has separated the life of feeling from the life of reason and chosen the former as superior to the latter.

CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The Infra-Intellectual Mysticism of William James

Ever since the eighteenth century when the religion of feeling was emphasized in the Romanticist school, there has been a tendency to stress the importance of religious experience and to make a strong demarcation between religion and reason. To do this, it was necessary to distinguish knowledge by experience, from knowledge by reason. On this assumption, that truth can be divided; the fate of religion was affixed to the interior state only and religious experience was made the foundation of belief, that is, a means of getting into contact with God without reason. Religion by reason, a combination of cognition, conation, affective states, plus organization and external worship, retired to the background, as many modern thinkers gave meaning to the religious experience which to them was exclusively an affair of primary importance. Some were content to speak of it merely as an experience which had for its object something ineffable, something indescribable; others attached their experience to dogmas that had to be verified by another experience; still others justified their experience by an object that was specific but immediately apprehended; while another class of defenders claimed that religion has the same justification as morals or aesthetics. These varieties of religious experience have had critics as well as advocates, critics who argue that religion is not exclusively an affair of religious experience; that it is a complete misreading of the order of events to suppose that experience comes first and afterwards gives rise to belief about God and the world, that "all discussion of the validity of religious experience is but a beating of the air."¹ A religious experience that has claim for real Being as its object, an emotion of reverence toward it and an impulse to worship it, must differ from that experience which leaves outside the intellectual element of religion and invokes a new and mysterious faculty to effect directly a union with the Divine.

¹ Tennant, *Philosophical Theism*.

The American School of Psychology, began the study of religion by direct attention to religious emotions and sentiments. A critical examination of these emotions stressed the non-rational element in religion. The tendency of modern psychology is to regard feeling as being fundamental to experience in general. A decided shift of emphasis placed on the religious approach influenced the modern mind to neglect all objective standards of truth, all demands of the intellect, and to indulge in subjective immediate intuition of truth; freedom from objective standards brought absolute certitude of personal contact with reality. New and surprising forces from the science of psychology pried into the secrets of religious experience. Everything was now to be explained as the natural functioning of the principles of the mind. The contribution of psychology to the study of religion cannot be ignored, nor can its account be accepted as complete and full, for it cannot answer the deepest questions of life.

Perhaps no name in the field stands out with more striking clearness than that of William James, who made the emotions the principal factor for the interpretation of religious reality, gave the lead to later workers, and swayed the currents of thought. Influenced by his predecessors, he gave, in the Gifford Lectures delivered early in the twentieth century, the *Varieties of Religious Experience*. His study of the religious consciousness from biographical data resulted in the division of his work into two parts, conversion and mysticism. This method furnished him facts of many extraordinary and abnormal religious phenomena and an investigation of data drawn from the study of religious origins. The mystical experiences singled out were of the extreme type: they were impressions from souls either overcome by the pleasurable feeling of heavenly love; by love-like transactions with the Deity, or by religious sensibility of great suffering and ecstatic vision. James divided his collected experiences between the healthy-minded and the sick souls; the former, deliberately optimistic arrive at unity of mind by positively refusing to feel unhappy, and, in spite of the hardships of their condition, fling themselves upon their sense of the goodness of life; their optimistic faith is effective in overcoming evil and in obtaining happiness. The morbid-minded believe evil to be so inherent that they can be relieved from their failures,

sins and disappointments only by a supernatural remedy, that no change of environment or rearrangement of the inner self can lift them from their pessimism. "It seems to me," writes James, "that the morbid-mindedness ranges over the wider scale of experience, and that its survey is the one that overlaps," for "even though one may be quite free from melancholy one's self, there is doubt that healthy-mindedness is inadequate as a philosophical doctrine, because the evil facts which it refuses positively to account for are a genuine portion of reality; and they may after all be the key to life's significance, and possibly the only openers of our eyes to the deepest levels of truth."² From the great mass of mystical data, James drew no inference as to the nature of these spiritual facts except that the experiences brought their own verification of reality. Correctly so, for Psychology has a right to describe but not to interpret the phenomena of mysticism. His depreciation of the ideational function in religion stressed the affective life as the direct source of knowledge, with the result that the feeling state became the criterion of the objective reality of Deity.

Psychology tries to investigate what is the exact character of experience. The term is indefinite and has varied connotations; ordinarily, we mean by experience, what has happened to an individual, what he has passed through. The term is synonymous with "a test, trial, or experiment"; another meaning is "the active observation of facts or events, considered as a source of knowledge"; "the fact of being consciously affected by an event or a state viewed subjectively." With modern psychologists the religious use is described as "a state of mind or feeling forming part of the inner religious life." It may also connote the wisdom accumulated from spiritual facts derived from the inner and outer world or the consciousness of communion with the spiritual. Doctor Rashdall says that we may include in that term all that is meant by philosophers when they speak of the moral and religious consciousness, or when they speak of it as some kind of subjective feeling or emotion; but he argues, as against the second meaning, such an emotion can never give an objective fact.³

² W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 163.

³ H. Rashdall, *Philosophy and Religion*, p. 71.

With modern non-scholastic psychologists, experience is religious when the objective reality is Divine. It is a certain kind of mystical feeling peculiar to religion and differing from other kinds of feelings; or it may be applied to supra-normal but not exclusively religious phenomena, such as visions, provided that they are experiences in connection with some religious occasion. Again, experience may be said to be "the sum of effects realized through feeling, consciousness, reason and conduct in the self-consciousness of a believer in religion. Hence, a religious experience is some sort of conscious response of the spirit of man to a divine object. It is personal religion, an inward fact distinguished from outward manifestations.

Experience for James is immediate and vivid sensation lacking perception; it is a state wherein one does not cognize but is simply aware of the fullness of some concrete experience, a reaching out of the individual to a supreme being; it is an inner commitment of life to the guidance of that which is considered the Highest and Holiest; an indubitable fact grasped by acquaintance rather than by accuracy of definition.⁴ Again, says James, "it is any moment that brings the reality of spiritual things more home to me."⁵ H. G. Wells describes an experience with expectancy when he says,

then suddenly, in a little while in His own good time, God comes. This cardinal experience is an undoubting, inner sense of God. It is the attainment from absolute certainty that one is not alone in one's self. It is as if one were touched at every point by a being akin to one's self, sympathetic, beyond measure, wise, steadfast, and pure in aim. It is completer and more intimate, but it is like standing side by side with and touching some one that we love very dearly and trust completely.⁶

As a personal possession, religious experience takes its rise out of certain natural conditions which have the power of awakening mystical moods, such as a sudden shock, a conflict within the personality, a sense of overwhelming danger, the awful grandeur of a natural scene, or the mere thrill of contact with nature in its lovelier phases. It begins when new thought comes into the mind

⁴ G. Harkness, *Conflicts in Religious Thought*, p. 132.

⁵ W. James, *Letters*, II, p. 215.

⁶ H. G. Wells, *God, the Invisible King*, p. 23.

whether caused by reading, or in the silent hour of inward thought, when "some new turn of our thinking pierces to new depths and throws a flood of light on some old problem or some region of unthinking acceptance or dull acquaintance."⁷

The nature of the religious experience is difficult to analyze. God's immediate presence seems to be felt, to be so real that the subject loses his own identity for a time and seems to be in direct communion with God. The immediate presence of the divine is brought out by analogy with the magnetism possessed by a bar of iron. The soul becomes conscious of God and is drawn toward Him in the same manner as the magnetic bar draws to itself the extraneous bodies capable of being magnetized and of becoming agencies to attract in turn other bodies. C. Piat refers to this striking comparison of William James:

Imaginons un barreau de fer qui serait doué d'une vive conscience magnétique: sans aucune sensation tactile ou visuelle, sans aucune représentation, il sentirait pourtant les diverses modifications de son état magnétique sous l'influence des aimants qui se déplacent autour de lui: ces impressions détermineraient en lui, d'une façon consciente, diverses attitudes et diverses tendances.⁸

James could hardly give us a more correct notion of its nature since he himself never experienced God's presence.⁹

I have no mystical experiences of my own, but just enough of the "germ" of mysticism in me to recognize the region from which their voices come when I heard it.¹⁰

The experienced is often characterized by intense stimulation producing a vivid consciousness. To some, all religious experience is mystical; to others, only some sort of intuition of the Divinity itself. The marks by which James distinguishes the mystical are: first, ineffability, a quality which is directly experienced, the indissoluble something which is subjectively felt but which is too personal to be imparted or to be of value to others; secondly, the noetic quality or state of knowledge, a plunging into depths not reached by

⁷ A. H. Gray, *Finding God*, p. 33.

⁸ C. Piat, *Insuffisance des Philosophies de l'Intuition* (Paris, 1908), 129-30.

⁹ W. James, *Letters*, II, pp. 211, 213.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

the intellect, a sort of insight that carries conviction with it; thirdly, transiency, the duration of the mystical experience which may last from one-half hour to one hour or two, and then fade away with some meaning to its content, with some desire for a renewed experience. "There will be a sphere of existence that one conscience ordinarily is not able to attain and whose action is not exercised on us but by intermittence";¹¹ fourthly, passivity; namely, that which makes the mystic feel his will is in check, grasped and held, as it were, by a superior power not his own.¹²

"Now this superior power is a 'More' of the same quality, as the higher part of his nature which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of and save himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck."¹³

A sense of the presence of the "More" is immediately felt in the region of the subconscious. This term as now used in contemporary psychology is to be distinguished from the term "unconscious" which refers to processes that never rise into consciousness. The unconscious field is one with the conscious and acts as habit or tendency determining the way we think and the judgments we

¹¹ D'autres vont plus loin dans le sens de l'union du Créateur a sa Créature. Ils conçoivent la présence de Dieu en chacun de nous comme continue et progressive; ils la conçoivent comme une vie qui agit sans cesse in notre âme et l'envahit toujours, plus à mesure que nous l'acceptons avec plus de générosité: ce qui constitue une sorte de "dynamisme moral." C. Piat, *Insuffisance des Philosophies de l'Intuition*, p. 136.

¹² Evelyn Underhill has added the following marks: 1. "Active and practical; 2. Aims, transcendent and spiritual, that is, with the heart set upon the changeless one; 3. The Reality is to be a living and personal object of love; 4. A living union with the one which is obtained neither from an intelligent realization of its delights nor from the most acute emotional longings but is arrived at the so-called mystic way." E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 81.

Coe mentions five elements: 1. There is a perception of objects not physically present; 2. There is a sense of external control of the thought and muscles; 3. There is an intellectual seeing without an intellectual process of thought or reasoning; 4. There is an ecstatic climax of the whole experience; 5. The whole experience is incommunicable. G. A. Coe, *The Psychology of Religion*. Cf. A. R. Uren, *Recent Religious Psychology*, p. 213.

¹³ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 508.

make. It is a necessary condition resulting from the union of soul and body. The unconscious divides into the subconscious, that is, all that surrounds the focus of attention, all those active or dynamic psycho-physical tendencies which go to make up personality. These tendencies of modern psychology are in accord with the mind of St. Augustine¹⁴ whose whole thought was desire and satisfaction. He supplemented non-scholastic conclusions by assuming that man has by nature a fundamental craving or desire, a power which works to the integration of personality. This power is not found in the subconscious but in consciousness, the higher part of self fitted to take all impertinent desires and raise them to an order conformable to the law of perfection. The theory of the subconscious known as the penumbral refers first to the fringe of the conscious mind. It asserts that the field of attention includes a penumbra as well as a focus. From this center, there is a fading away of the margin and beyond this is the region where experience is said to be possible. This focus shifts and brings matters beyond into clear consciousness. A second theory, emphasizing a purely physiological neural process, states that all alleged subconscious deliverances are due simply to restimulation of brain tracts, that have been organized in a particular way by previous experience; a third theory declares that there is an intricate psychical mechanism which does complex work without the cognizance of the conscious mind.¹⁵

According to the explanation, there is added to the psychological theory a metaphysical or over-belief which modifies it entirely. What is of primary importance is the subconscious; of secondary import and of a very diminished expression of personality is the conscious ego. The subconscious ego, James conceives as making part of something greater but of the same nature. Experience has been instrumental in establishing a relation between the visible

¹⁴ Cf. J. E. O'Mahoney, *The Desire of God*.

¹⁵ A. R. Uren, *Recent Religious Psychology*, pp. 211-231.

Professor Coe's position is that the neural theory, supplemented by the penumbral theory, are together adequate to cover the facts. The term "subconscious" with J. B. Pratt covers the physiological neural processes which connect us up with our past and that of our race, the fringe region of the field of consciousness, and the co-consciousness in those who possess it.

and the invisible worlds, between the ego which receives and the "More" which acts. The subconscious is then a medium by which the known and the unknown, religion and knowledge are linked. "All that I know, all that I feel tends to persuade me that outside of this world there are others whence we draw experience capable of enriching and transforming our life."¹⁶ It is in this last sense that Professor James designates the subconscious or the subliminal. He says, if this latter sense is offensive, you may call it by any other name you please . . . to distinguish it from the level of the full suulit consciousness, call it the B region if you will. He applies to the religious experience a hypothesis which has already been proved in other domains and must, therefore, for that reason be truly scientific. This hypothesis allows him to account for a great many facts. First of all, there exists the conscious mind and a variation of this known as the subconscious; second, a tendency of psychological elements broken off from consciousness to organize into a new synthesis, and, under certain conditions, to form a secondary personality; third, the eruption of these elements into the normal consciousness. This last theory is often referred to as the theory of multiplicity of consciousnesses. The evidence for its existence is generally based on the following: the unconscious retention in memory of past experiences; the apparent association of these with sensations of which we were not conscious at the time of their occurrence; the effect of these latter upon the total state of mind and the sudden intrusion into consciousness of composite stimuli which considered singly seem to be too faint to arouse consciousness. What agreement for the origin of the mode of operation, what value it has for the discovery of the supernatural is still a matter not yet agreed upon by psychologists. According to this doctrine, says Boutroux, there is

une transition continue, de l'expérience proprement psychologique à l'expérience religieuse, comme de l'expérience physique à l'expérience psychologique. Et l'expérience psychologique s'emboîte dans l'expérience religieuse, comme l'expérience physique dans l'expérience psychologique.¹⁷

Metaphorical figures are not wanting to give it a position in the

¹⁶ Cf. Myers, *La Personnalité Humaine*.

¹⁷ E. Boutroux, *William James*, p. 63.

mind. It is the consciousness sunk at a lower level, located as the vast "extra-marginal field outside the primary consciousness."¹⁸ It is the region sluiced with the rational consciousness but parted from it by the filmiest of screens.¹⁹

As to its workings, it is often compared to the brewer's vat,²⁰ where psychic elements may ferment of themselves into some new product; to a workshop where ideas, feelings, desires are worked over, reinforced, combined and arranged for the future display room of consciousness. All psychic elements in this workshop have a force independent of mind, that send them uprushing into consciousness; they come and go, rise and fall, even without a "censor" to debar their entrance into the conscious realm.

Like a great reservoir filled to overflowing, the subconscious has everything in it that passes unrecorded and unknown.

It contains all our momentarily inactive memories, and it harbors the spring of all our obscurely noticed passions, impulses, likes, dislikes and prejudices. Our intuitions, hypotheses, fancies, superstitions, persuasions, convictions and in general all our non-rational operations come from it. It is the source of our dreams, and apparently they may return to it. In it arise whatever mystical experiences we may have and our automatisms, sensory or motor; our life in hypnotic and 'hypnoid' conditions, if we are subject to such conditions; our delusions, fixed ideas, and hysterical accidents, if we are hysteric subjects; our supra-normal cognitions, if such there be, and if we are telepathic subjects. It is also the fountain head of much that feeds our religion.²¹

Here the root and centre of religious experience is placed, and "the man who demands a reality more solid than that of the religious consciousness seeks he knows not what."²² Mystical states are part of the stuff of this region, and the higher mystical flights are inroads from the subconscious life of the cerebral activity correlative to which we as yet know nothing.²³

It is in the processes beyond the margin of consciousness that

¹⁸ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 233.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 388.

²⁰ Cf. J. Howley, "Psychology of Religious Experience," *Studies*, 3 (1914): 52.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 483-484.

²² F. H. Bradley, *Appearances and Reality*, p. 449.

²³ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experiences*, p. 427.

the real contact of the soul with God takes place and that the conscious part of religion may be the least part of the total reality of that contact.

In building up this subliminal theory, Professor James has opened a mystical approach whose basis is the felt presence of the Divine. He wished to ascertain if there is any foundation for the belief in the supernatural. It is to experience alone, he says, that appeal can be made; there is something that reinforces life, *perhaps* it may be God, perhaps a larger self, at least God may reveal Himself in an intimate, intense, and living manner. In great measure, the value of the experience is determined by the kind of God that arises from the disturbances of this obscure region, the kind of deity that feeling brings to those favored with a mystical experience. This is a unique God who is the all-inclusive soul of the world, an immanent God implicit in the self and in the universe.

If the immediate reality of the higher principle be taken away, there would be nothing left of religious experience; it would no longer exist. But it does exist, and, therefore, that which is given and experienced in it exists also. God is in us, and therefore He is.²⁴

The development of the God-idea was gradual with James. In his earlier works, God is conceived as an essential stimulus to moral life. He is that which gives meaning to moral activity. The idea of the finite God is evident.

I believe the only God worthy of the name must be finite. . . . He works in an extraordinary environment, has limits and has enemies.²⁵

The source of saving experiences is God; we and God have business with each other, and in opening ourselves to His influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled.²⁶

There are religious experiences of a specific nature. . . . I think that they point with reasonable probability to the continuity of our consciousness with a wider spiritual environment.²⁷

²⁴ Solovyf, *Religion in Evolution*, p. 134.

²⁵ W. James, *Pluralistic Universe*, pp. 124-25.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 516-17.

²⁷ W. James, *Collected Essays*, pp. 299-300.

CHAPTER IV

INTUITIONISM

The Bergsonian Supra-Intellectual Approach

In various metaphysical systems, the nature of reality has been considered and with each system has come a new theory of knowledge. No system is more unique than Bergson's; his is a philosophy of evolution and creation. In it epistemology and metaphysics reciprocally imply each other; the theory of reality is at the same time, the theory of knowledge, of instinct, and of intelligence. To establish a system of continuity of pure intuitionism, to approach reality by the avenue of duration, to obtain a type of knowledge which is coincident with the interior of things was the vision of Bergson. He sought truth or what he firmly believed to be the truth.

There is more persuasive force, more power to influence and great efficiency in store for one who goes straight toward truth, though he did not start from it. He is one who finds after having sought—who in seeking one thing finds it may be another—and who after he has found still goes on seeking, following after truth in humility. This is what Bergson has done, says Chevalier.¹

He has created an élan, a vision of life as *un grand tout*, a new conception of time; he has established intuition as a supra-intellectual faculty and has carried experience to excess, and novelty to absurdity.

The centralization of Bergson's philosophy is the *la durée et l'intuition*. This fundamentally can best be understood by treating them as strictly correlative. In a letter to Höfding, Bergson says,

In my opinion, any resumé of my views would distort them in their ensemble and by that distortion, expose them to a host of objections, if its author did not at once place himself at and continually return to that which I consider the very *central* part of the doctrine—the intuition of duration. . . . The representation of a duration which is heterogeneous,

¹ J. Chevalier, *Henri Bergson*, p. 330.

qualitative, creative as the point whence I set out and to which I constantly return.²

How describe duration, that pure unity, "all of a piece,"³ inseparable from consciousness?

It is a melodious evolution of moments each of which contains the resonance of those preceding and announces the one which is going to follow; it is a process of enriching which never ceases, and a perpetual appearance of novelty; it is an indivisible qualitative and organic becoming, foreign to space, refractory to number.⁴

The *durée*, the ever-flowing time, is the living stuff, the reality that lies behind appearances. Reality is movement and movement is time.

La durée réelle est ce que l'on a toujours appelé le *temps*, mais le temps perçu, comme indivisible.⁴

Change in time is change in essence, a change in which the past makes *Corps* with the present, yet a change with nothing that changes.

Il y a des changements mais il n'y a pas de choses qui changent; le changement n'a pas besoin d'un support. Il y a des mouvements, mais il n'y a pas nécessairement des objets invariables qui meuvent: le mouvement n'implique pas un mobile.⁵

Duration is the continuous progress of the past which grows into the future and which swells as it advances.⁶ It gathers up like a snowball all its past which it carries with it, it goes forward to the future which it creates. We may ask are these mere words or brilliant analogies? When Bergson makes duration the fundamental reality, he is not speaking of time in the usual sense of the term. Duration is the ultimate reality.

The theory of intuition upon which time is based is the second principle of Bergson's metaphysics. It is Bergson's own—not that intuition itself had escaped consideration from other philoso-

² Lettre citée dans H. Höffding, *La Philosophie de Bergson*, tr. fr. (Paris: Alcan, 1916), pp. 160-161.

³ E. Le Roy, *The New Philosophy*, p. 189.

⁴ H. Bergson, *La Perception du Changement*, p. 26.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁶ H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 4.

phers, but its position was now to be transcendent to intellect; it was to be supra-intellectual. The Greeks relied on intuition for their final grasp of truth. Thales' doctrine,⁷ "all things are manifestations of one thing; and that one thing is like water," was presumably an announcement of an intuition. In the philosophy of Aristotle, intuition played an important part, as also in the Platonic system of separated ideas, and in the philosophy of the Middle Ages. St. Thomas recognized with limitations the nature of intuition as intellectual, though the human intellect is the lowest in degree of the order of intelligences, "*Intellectus animae humanae est infimus in ordine intellectuum.*"⁸ It is by contrast with discursive reasoning that St. Thomas defines intellectual intuition.⁹ It is to the discourse as a principle and a conclusion. Through all the abstract steps of reason—and by means of them—one finally sees into the interior of the thing, penetrates into its most intimate reality, and gathers into unity that which the rational processes have considered under divers and multiple aspects. During the Age of Reason in France, Rousseau popularized intuition; in Germany, Jacobi reached metaphysical truth by direct knowledge as did also Spinoza and Descartes. Kant with aesthetic feeling speculated on the possibility of a higher type of mind. Many of Bergson's ideas found a parallel in the philosophy of Schopenhauer. This German thinker regarded all great scientific discoveries as an immediate intuition, a flash of insight not simply the result of a process of abstract thinking. Schelling also maintained a doctrine of intuition as supra-rational. Fichte, Schelling and Hegel identified the subject and object with a third term; Fichte by the psychic nature of the Ego; Schelling by the ontological nature of the Absolute; and Hegel by the ideal or logical Idea. Intuition in the nineteenth century was looked upon as uncontrolled imagination, and in our twentieth century, it is Bergson himself who has emphasized the rôle that intuition plays to get a real knowledge of life.

Bergson belongs to a school that has produced sophists and

⁷ *Meta.*, I, 3, 983b.

⁸ *C. G.*, II, cap. 16.

⁹ Cf. *Summa*, I, q. 79, a. 8, c.

skeptics, men who despairing of intellect and reason and looking for truth in feeling, set up this special faculty. Intuition is the original *Élan Vital* which has gradually evolved into animal instinct, then into intelligence, but which is much better expressed in instinct than in intelligence, that being due to a brusque leap from animal to man and differing from instinct, not in degree but in kind. They believe intuition has direct insight and value in the continuous evolution of life; that it is an instigation to action; a belief not to be set aside with doubt; a spark that leaps into life, that shows the way to truth, not as demonstrated but as something known because it is seen and felt; a light as necessary as the binnacle to the mariner, as sure a guide as the divining rod to the searcher for water;¹⁰ a power of apprehending spiritual qualities and values; a faculty that outstrips other faculties and leaves them behind; a mental stethoscope with which the intuition tries to feel the heart of things.¹¹

There is also an intuition that is intellectual; that is, a sensible perception in which the object produces in us a species of itself,

¹⁰ H. W. Weston, *Intuitionism*, p. 268.

¹¹ A. A. Luce, *Bergson's Doctrine of Intuitionism*, p. 29.

Intuition has been likewise defined in the following ways: A knowing, a conscious realization; a conviction in spite of appearances; that place within where man and God are consciously one; that faculty of the soul which brings man into conscious relation with the subject, mind or Fountain of Wisdom; the voice of the soul; the voice of love; the voice of spirit in man again bringing to his consciousness that which he knew of old when he was consciously identified with the Great Central Spirit; the act of the mind by which a truth is immediately perceived. W. N. Weston, *Intuition*, p. 53. Intuition is a remote influence through which the attitude or conduct of an individual is influenced. This influence appears to be highly subtle having an apparent origin either in a high plane of the mind or in a plane higher than mind, it is ultra human or superhuman. It is a product of brain activity, just reflex cerebration. H. J. Mulford, *The Monist* quoted from *Current Opinion*, vol. 63, 1917. Intuitions are convictions arising out of the fullness of life in a spontaneous way, more akin to sense than to imagination and intellect and more inevitable than either. Radhakrishnan, *The Idealist's View of Life*, p. 180. Direct insight, constant awareness, direct inner perception, swift instant understanding. It is the identification of one's self with the cosmos. It is the syntheses of things around us and our becoming one with them. G. H. Paclian, *Relativity and Reality*, New York, 1932.

and by means of which we perceive directly sensible qualities; there is the intellectual knowledge, the psychic similitude, a living reflection of the object known, not that which is known but that by which it is known; also an indirect analogous knowledge in which the object known by an intermediary is carried even to the purely spiritual. That the knowledge of God is best achieved through intuition is the belief of the mystico-religious school which differs fundamentally from Bergson's *sympathie intellectuelle*. This is a sort of intellectual auscultation by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexplicable.¹² It is to the very inwardness of life that intuition leads us. Bergson says, it is not a material inwardness but a penetration of it in order to become on intimate terms with it, to listen in a manner to the inward breathing.

To bring the intuitive method into the foreground of his philosophy, it was necessary that Bergson set aside the traditional, natural intellectual method that had come down through the centuries, the method which Plato and Aristotle, Kant and his followers had accepted as a heritage. Modern non-scholastic philosophers also still adhere to the idea that experience can be explained in intellectual fashion.

To break up such a method, strengthened and permeated with conceptions and reasonings, formulated by the master minds of Grecian, Arabian and Christian schools, was at least a daring undertaking. Reality must now no longer be comprehended in its static form, life must move as a stream flowing and enduring; the mechanism of science must be exchanged for a mobile philosophy. Bergson believes the intellectual method fitted only to deal with matter, suited only to give snapshots, immobile pictures, to construct concepts that cannot penetrate the enduring. A new method of knowledge must carry beyond the static, the material, the immobile.

We must give up the method of construction which was that of Kant's successors. We must appeal to experience—an experience purified or in other words released when necessary from the molds that our intellect has

¹² H. Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 7.

formed in the degree and proportion of the progress of our action on things. An experience of this kind is not a non-temporal experience. It only seeks beyond the spatialized time, in which we believe we see continual rearrangements between the parts, that concrete endurance in which a radical recasting of the whole is always going on. It follows the real in all its sinuosities. It does not lead us like the method of construction to higher and higher generalities—piled up stories of a magnificent building. It is the detail of the real, and no longer only the whole in a lump that it claims to illumine.¹³

Bergson found the intellectual method had proved inadequate, mechanism could not be accepted as a final theory so the *Élan Vital* was to be invoked to save experience.

In a letter addressed to one of his followers, Bergson writes:

In taking the term intellect in the wide sense given to it by Kant, I can call the intuition of which I speak, 'intellectual.' But I should prefer to call it supra-intellectual because I have felt bound to restrict the meaning of the term intellect and reserve it for the whole of the discursive faculties of the mind originally destined to think matter.

Both Kant and Bergson regard the intellect working by concepts as incapable of apprehending reality in its very nature. For Kant, the intellect has no other meaning—the objective world is merely phenomena but it is implied to have a *Dinge an sich*. When Bergson contrasts intuition with intellect, we have in mind the Kantian conception, that is, the conception as limited to the use of mechanical concepts, applicable to sensuous objects. In this sense intellect and intuition have nothing in common; when he identified them he has a conception non-Kantian. The adoption of these two views throughout his philosophy has led to much confusion. The intellect is the foe of connecting the same with the same, it is a formal knowledge which is not limited to what is practically useful, that looks upon all matter as carvable at will and "is made to appear to our thought as an immense piece of cloth in which we can cut out what we will and sew it together again as we please."¹⁴ We are led to believe then that intuition functions in a way superior to intellect, that there is between them a difference of nature, not of degree. A second view, though only implicitly

¹³ H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 363.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

expressed, is that these faculties are not so diversely separated, but assist each other, so that this difference is rather one of degree than of nature.

Intelligence remains the luminous nucleus around which instinct even enlarged and purified into intuition forms only a vague nebulosity. But in default of knowledge properly so called, reserved to pure intelligence, intuition may enable us to grasp what it is that intelligence fails to give us and indicate the means of supplementing it; on the one hand, it will utilize the mechanism of intelligence itself, to show how intellectual molds cease to be strictly applicable, and, on the other hand, by its own work it will suggest to us the vague feeling, if nothing more, of what must take the place of intellectual molds. . . . But . . . it is from intelligence that has come the push that has made it rise to the point it has reached; without intelligence, it would have remained in the form of instinct riveted to the special object of its particular interest and turned outward by its into movements of locomotion.¹⁴

Immediacy.

A characteristic feature of intuition is its immediacy, that is, a certain way of approaching the problem of truth and knowledge. Immediate experience is used to indicate awareness prior to all understanding, prior to any state of conscious mental activity, an experience that cannot be described. To reflect upon it is to give an account of its immediacy. Its chief characteristic is unity, coextensive with feeling, action and apprehension. This element of immediacy is in all apprehension of truth. It is not sense percept, a visual perception of what is outside in the external world. "Let us not think," says Le Roy, "that the perception of immediacy is simple passive perception, that it is sufficient to open our eyes to attain it."¹⁵ In art and aesthetics, beauty is grasped and appreciated through immediate processes of the mind, through immediate apprehension. Immediacy is identified with knowledge of a different kind from intellectual cognition, and therefore, there is no need for the analysis and interpretation of experience by means of concepts. It is capable of growth and development and differs with years, temperament and training, with the traditions and habits of society. In Mysticism, the soul has an immediate consciousness of the nearness of God and of its union with Him.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 177-178.

¹⁵ E. Le Roy, *The New Philosophy*, p. 153.

Bergson's immediacy is a rapid process, a directness for getting into the heart of things, a rapport with the stream of life, the *durée*. This immediacy clears away the idea, the concept, abstract knowledge, reason and discursive knowledge. In his philosophy, Bergson has given us two theories of sense perception, one of which we are able to reconcile with scholastic teaching. First, he distinguishes the two actions which form the process of sense perception. The object produces within the subject an impress of itself, not in its essence but in its accidents. The organ knows immediately the concrete object in the materiality of its existence. An after image is produced at the same time as the object is fixed in the mind.

Recent discovery of centrifugal perceptual fibers will incline us to believe, he says, that is how the thing regularly happens, and by the side of the afferent process which carries the impression to the centre, there is another inverse process which brings back images to periphery, thus our distinct perception is veritably comparable to a closed circle, where the image perception directed to the mind and the memory image projected into space, runs along one after the other.¹⁷

In a second theory, Bergson identifies subject and object in a monistic unity. Extended matter is envisaged in its totality as a consciousness that all is in equilibrium. The term perception has attributed to it something of the extension of matter; "la sensation reconquiert l'extension, l'étendue concrète reprend sa continuité et son indivisibilité naturelles . . ."¹⁸ et l'espace homogène, qui se dressait barrière insurmontable, n'a plus d'autre réalité que celle d'un schéma au d'un symboles.¹⁹

Mysticism.

Bergson himself declares that his intuitive method is not mystical, "since it proposes to erect the bridge broken down since Kant's day between metaphysics and science, . . . if we understand by mysticism a certain appeal to our inner and profound life then all philosophy is mystic."²⁰ He formulated his philosophy on the

¹⁷ H. Bergson, *Matière et Mémoire*, pp. 105-106.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 245, cf. p. 263.

¹⁹ *Bulletin*, May 1901, pp. 63-64.

basis of mystical experience as envisaged in that which has immediacy beyond all interpretation, for there is an abstract and sterile mysticism that thrives on sentiment and releases itself from dogmas and works. At least Bergson's philosophy seems to conduct us to a sort of natural mysticism because it pretends to make us communicate with the essence of things by means of sensibility. Chevalier in defending Bergson against this non-rational or even anti-rational charge of mysticism, says that it is because most people have taken the word intuition in its ordinary sense, by which philosophers define it . . . a quality of instinctive divination, or vague presentiment, unattached to any precise object and, more particularly, based on no definite reason.²⁰ Notwithstanding Bergson's refusal to be mystic, the subject of mysticism has made strong appeal to him.²¹ To him, the mystics reveal themselves as great men of action whose inner fire of enthusiasm is to be contagious, but never extinguished until it embraces all humanity. Love and action are to be the outlet of this vitality.

Love on which each of them imprints the mark of his personality, love which is for each of them an emotion altogether new, capable of transposing human life into another tone; love which makes each one loved for his own sake and which by him and for him other men will let their souls open to the love of humanity.²²

As Christian mystics they must be the *Adjutores Dei* of creative evolution, the torch bearers to lead in the march of life, only then will religion whose essence ought to be the diffusion of mysticism and which is now only possible, become in the future an actual thing. From the enthusiastic boiling matter that was poured by individual mystics into the mold, new doctrines will crystallize. This is the distant vision of a new religion supported purely from the affective side of man's nature.

The Non-Rational Approach of Rudolph Otto

Closely allied with the Bergsonian theory of intuition is that of Rudolph Otto. Both Bergson and Otto have presented a subjec-

²⁰ J. Chevalier, *Henri Bergson*, p. 117.

²¹ H. Bergson, cf. *Les Deux Sources*.

²² H. Bergson, *Les Deux Sources*, p. 101.

tively-felt reality—a philosophic attitude of suspended mysticism. Otto's is an intuition which is not to be confounded with Cartesian evidence nor with Bergson's insight, but with a Kantian form, a theological intuitionism. From the study of religion made by theologians of various schools, there have resulted many theories regarding its origin, its development and its distinctive elements. This theory of Rudolph Otto of the Marburg school as set forth in his principal work, *Das Heilige*,²³ has in it a Stoic idea that religion rests ultimately on certain intuitively apprehended and self-evident truths of a distinctly religious character. These elements in experience are starting points of demonstration, common beliefs, that is, the religious consciousness is in possession of certain ultimate self-evident axioms peculiar to itself. These *a priori* forms are both rational and irrational. A specification of qualitative differences between religious feeling and the feelings of various kinds, develops a new feature in the contribution he makes to religion. The *a priori* element analogous to Kant's practical reason is the idea of the *holy* or of the *sacred* which refers to the non-rational element that is found in religion from its most elementary to its most highly developed forms.

When we think of God, the Holy One, declares Otto, there are contained in our thought of Him certain rational predicates, for example, reason, spirit, almightiness and goodness. The rational element is that which can be "expressed in clear and definite concepts and is accessible to thought, to intellectual analysis and to definition,"²⁴ or "that in it which comes within the clear comprehension of our power of conceiving and belongs to the realm of familiar and definable conceptions."²⁵

The non-rational element is the holy or sacred which is not ethical or aesthetic. It is the numinous.²⁶

²³ The author defends the thesis that religion has sprung forth and is primarily developed in the zone of psychology of religion. His doctrine is, that in all men beginning with primitive man, there lives a religious impulse which is an independent concern of mankind, and has directed itself at all times to an incomprehensible, which we experience emotionally and grasp intuitively.

²⁴ R. Otto, *Das Heilige* (9th ed.), p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁶ Es gilt also, für dieses Moment in seiner Vereinzelung einen Namen zu

This unique element in reality is a feeling or emotion. The emotion that it evokes in the human being is that of being in presence of something awe-inspiring or fascinating. But how translate "ce frémissement de tout l'être, cette horreur sacrée que l'on éprouve on que l'on devrait éprouver à la seule pensée et plus encore aux approches de Dieu."²⁷ Oman calls it the "holy dread of the Old Testament" or the Greek "panic fear."²⁸ The Holy experienced as the *Mysterium Tremendum* in all His awfulness, overpoweringness and energy is not wholly unknown, but is rather the "wholly apart" before whom man recoils, before whom he is debased, in whose presence a *Kreaturgefühl*²⁹ possesses him, making him conscious of his profanity in the presence of the majesty of God; the other element is *Mysterium Fascinans*; no longer a dread, an annihilation of self, but an infinite yearning, an attraction and fascination for that same Divine Being. It appears as a strange and mighty propulsion towards an ideal good, known only to religion, and in its nature, fundamentally non-rational, which the mind knows in yearning and presentiment, recognizing it for what it is behind the obscure and inadequate symbols which are

finden, der erstens es in seiner Besonderheit festhält, und der zweitens ermöglicht, die etwaigen Unterarten oder Entwicklungsstufen desselben mit zu befassen und mit zu bezeichnen. Ich bilde hierfür zunächst das Wort: das *Numinöse*, und rede von einer eigentümlichen numinosen Deutungs- und Bewertungs-Kategorie und einer numinosen Gemutgestimmtheit, die allemal da eintritt, wo jene angewandt ist. R. Otto, *Das Heilige*, p. 7.

From *numen* the most general Latin word for supernatural divine power, Professor Otto coins the word *numinous*. The reason is, that the word Holy is at once too lofty and too narrow.

I do not mean that there is some rare specific quality in things which is the object of religious feeling as frost can be felt by our sense of cold. I should say that we have no organ which enables us to apprehend the numinous and that many persons do not have the religious feeling at all, or only, like myself, occasionally, just as some persons have no ear for music. S. Alexander, *Symposium, Science and Religion*, p. 133.

²⁷ H. Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux*, tome III, p. 37.

²⁸ J. Oman, "The Idea of the Holy," *Journal of Theol. Studies*, 25 (1923-24), p. 277.

²⁹ Ich suche nach einem Namen für die Sache und nenne es *Kreaturgefühl*, das Gefühl der Kreatur, die in ihrem eigenen Nichts versinkt und vergeht gegenüber dem, was über aller Kreatur ist. *Das Heilige*, p. 10.

its only expression.³⁰ These two elements, the *Demut* finding God within and the *Hochgefühl* finding Him, das *Ganz Andere*, are intended by Professor Otto to be the orthodox Christian ideas of transcendence and divine immanence.

It is the part of religion everywhere to assume that the divine reveals itself without as truly as within. To this faculty, Otto gives the name of Divination. It is native to our being, he says, capable of being educated, but cannot be acquired in the sense of being evolved out of something else. The feeling, the mysterious something that Otto designates as numen, is continued in the historical development of religion; it synthesizes the rational element of goodness and the non-rational of sanctity as the "Sacred." The new complex *a priori* category is realized only in a late period of religious development and "it is immediately understood to be a matter of course of the plainest and most obvious kind."³¹ This "Schematisation of the Category" of holiness is quite unique, not chance "association of ideas," but "necessary connections according to principles of inward and rightful relationship and mutual affinity." *Nach Prinzipien innerer rechtmässiger Verwandtschaft und Zugehörigkeit.*³²

The emotional response of the numinous is a mysticism, not however, an act of union, but predominantly the life lived in the knowledge of this *wholly other*, God. . . . "Mysticism enters into the religious experience in the measure that religious feeling surpasses its rational content, that is, to the extent to which its hidden non-rational numinous elements predominate and determine the emotional life."³³

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Es immer zugleich als einfachste, einleuchtendste Selbstverständlichkeit verstanden wird. *Ibid.*, p. 168.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³³ R. Otto, *Mysticism, East and West*, p. 141.

CHAPTER V

THE SUPRA-SCIENTIFIC APPROACH OF A. E. EDDINGTON

In the twentieth century, physics, using as its handmaid mathematics, validated the claims of the mystics. The physicist began by taking "raw material for ether, electrons, quanta, potentials, Hamilton functions, etc. and he is now scrupulously careful to guard these from contamination by concepts borrowed from the other world."¹

The mathematician with his ideal constructions finds his data outside sense experiences; he perceives relations directly and in this sense relativity is mysticism of the scientific type. Although mysticism is appearing in periodicals and in books which carry a reaction against the dominance of scientific ideas and dissatisfaction with scientific method, Havelock Ellis says,

When we look broadly at the matter not only is there no opposition between science and mysticism but . . . they are essentially related.

True, he says,

if the natural impulses which normally work best together are separated and specialized in different persons, we may expect to find a concomitant state of atrophy and hypertrophy both alike morbid. The scientific person will be atrophied on the scientific side; the mystical will be atrophied on the mystical side. Each will become morbidly hypertrophied on his own side.²

Science is continuing to reduce everything to energy in motion; to dissolve substance into creations of mind. A scientific pragmatic vision is giving way to spiritual vision "that apprehends in a new fashion and perceives with a strange intensity what had only been perceptible in silhouette on a cold clear background."³

When scientists say that Reality is beyond the scientific order,

¹ A. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, xv.

² Havelock Ellis, "Science and Mysticism," *Atlantic Monthly*, III (1913): 771.

³ Père de Grandmaison, *Personal Religion*, p. 106.

they are referring to reality not as "all that there is," but as a world in which they find higher values, a realm towards which they had taken an attitude as a "place of adventure." The basis of modern mysticism is the seeming disparity between scientific perception and common sense perception. While the plain man catches the colors in the evanescent clouds of a sinking sun, the scientist is measuring electro-magnetic wave lengths, he is giving significance to physical realities, making inferential statements in symbolic language.

All scientists are reading the book of the universe; each one some portion of it written in a language in which he is an expert, and the whole body of science is simply the volume of thought they have transcribed from its pages.⁴

It is with the volume transcribed by Professor Eddington, High Priest of a new cult, and with his attempt to set in order the facts of experience to reach the world of Reality, with which we are here principally concerned. His findings reveal the universe in two ways: there is the world of everyday experience, of common sense, real and objective, presupposed as the world from which other worlds are built, namely, the world of science, of pointer readings constructed by the mathematical physicist; and the world of Reality, the spiritual substratum which escapes sense perception but which is needed "to deal with those parts of our being unamenable to metrical specification."⁵ This presupposition of a world of fact is made on the basis of code messages that come into the mind through a series of dots and dashes along nerve fibres. The world is sending us signals after the manner of a broad-casting station and our minds are receiving radios to interpret these signals. They are not like the things reported to us, they are their corresponding signs or symbols which we translate back into their corresponding ideas.⁶ What, it may be asked, are these symbols, and for what do they stand? Symbols are usually material forms that stand for some meaning, usually a spiritual reality. "They are among the most powerful tools for digging into the

⁴ J. H. Snowden, *The World, a Spiritual System*, p. 135.

⁵ A. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 323.

⁶ A. Eddington, *Science and the Unseen World*, p. 35. Cf. J. Snowden, *What Do the Present Day Christians Believe*, p. 17.

mine of the universe and exposing its merits."⁷ To understand the physical world it is necessary to know the equations which the symbols obey but not the nature of what is being symbolized.

Professor Eddington, in *The Nature of the Physical World*, obtains common sense knowledge from the study of his table of substance, the table that lies before him supporting his books, papers and time-recorder. He distinguishes between this knowledge of table No. 1 and the scientific knowledge gained from his table of electric charges. This table is practically empty except for the scattered specks of electric charges that jump and collide, separate and vanish beyond the ken of science to discover. Everyone is familiar with table No. 1 no matter what its substance and accidents, for its service is requisitioned for the savant of science who abstracts from it his scientific table No. 2. Although less familiar, "it is the part of the world which in more devious ways has forced itself on his attention."⁸ In this scientific world the "whole subject matter consists of pointer-readings and similar indications."⁹ He discovers "que les choses sont très différentes de ce qu'elles paraissent être," but never does he come upon an irrational things, any piece that would refuse to fit into the general plan of the world, the jig-saw puzzle of scientific discovery. The entities of science, protons, electrons, and ether are subjective existences only, the result of certain abstracted features, capable of being measured on the scale and indicated by the pointer of a balance or some other instrument. As illustrative of this point of view of exact science, Professor Eddington considers an elephant sliding down a hill. The thing that really did descend the hill is a bundle of pointer-readings, two tons. He speaks of the angle of 60 degrees of the hill as the reading of a plumb-line against the division of a protractor, of people as ridges in the four-dimensional world. So the whole subject matter turns to symbolical interpretation, to mathematical treatment. "Here the scientist," says Levy, "turns out to be a pure mathematician. It would not, then, be his function to tell us anything about a world more real or more extended than

⁷ J. Snowden, *Discovery of God*, p. 28.

⁸ *Intro.* x.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

the symbols on this sheet of paper, no matter how many of his symbols were called dimensions or space."¹⁰ By mind the substantiality of things is dissolved into shadow; matter is absorbed and out of thinking are analyzed characteristics which the scientist himself has furnished. By working with abstractions he concludes that nothing exists but his own ideas.

Indeed by choosing the abstractions you work with, you can come to any conclusion you like, and all of them will be absurd and contradict one another.¹¹

From the study of table No. 1 and table No. 2, the world of sense and the world of science, Professor Eddington carries his dual knowledge over to the world of value. He is concerned to know reality that underlies and forms the background of the mechanically measured part of the physical world. It is fundamentally mind-stuff, the raw material out of which worlds have been constructed. It is for him something below the level of consciousness and that here and there rises only in islands. It is likened to our own feelings, in fact, is continuous with our human nature, so that consciousness will be the avenue of approach to our knowledge of reality. From the watch-tower of consciousness the outlook for reality is taken.

We have found a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown; we have devised profound theories one after another to account for its origin, at last, we have succeeded in constructing the creature that made the footprint and lo! it is our own.¹²

The scientist finds in consciousness besides sense perceptions, the inner light of convictions, of value, of feeling of something that assures purpose. He derives this idea from the study of self. By a certain bending of the mind back upon itself, he is as clearly conscious of his spiritual nature as he is of his body, but as spirit belongs to an entirely different order of reality, so consciousness of spirit belongs to an entirely different order of consciousness. In other words, he finds two distinct kinds of consciousness, phenomenal—awareness of physical and mental phenomena, and spirit-

¹⁰ H. Levy, *The Universe of Science*, p. 104.

¹¹ L. P. Jacks, *Symposium, Science and Religion*, p. 167.

¹² A. Eddington, *Time, Space and Gravitation*.

ual awareness of noumena. He insists that this self-consciousness is the key to the understanding of reality, that it is a fundamental bit of reality which he has a right to assume until the assumption is proved or disproved. It is representative of all reality; it is immediate experience. It has two outlets in diametrically opposite directions, the stream of sensation with its cause outside, and the stream of thoughts, including feelings and purposes to be thought of as conscious life. The idea of continuity expressed "as a stream" is entirely figurative. What is meant is, that mental states exist in succession and "stream" expresses this fact with vividness. The idea of continuity is also used in relation of consciousness to reality. To effect the relation, the mind first constitutes reality as an object of meaning, and builds it according to its own plans and specifications.

The inner convictions and feelings of purpose are not like sense data, appearances of physical reality; they are just what they seem. The self is these very states; they do not seem to undergo any transformed shape; they exist in consciousness in their own form. They are not something apart from consciousness which consciousness is viewing, but they are consciousness itself. They are not symbols or representations of something beyond them; they are the Ultimate Reality. The immediate object, then, is a state of mind, a pure mental object, a state that is called mystical. From the three-fold way of knowing one reality only this one, the mystical, engaged the mind of Eddington in the closing chapter of *The Nature of the Physical World*.

In inner convictions are "found the basis of experience from which the spiritual religion arises." But it is obvious, the only avenue to the "intimate" knowledge of Reality is not to be trusted implicitly, it may be beset with "pitfalls." Through uncertainty, then, to the hinterland of science which is "no colorless domain," but a world of projections from the brain, poetic additions to the real truth of things, he has gone forward only to find that he cannot enter the *Beyond*, nor describe what is there, he can only say, "It lies over there—where this trail and the others would lead if they did not break off."¹³

¹³ C. A. Bennett, *Dilemma of Religious Knowledge*, p. 14.

Just here Sir James Jeans, sensitive to peculiar feelings of an incalculable and tremendous something behind phenomena, assumes that sensitiveness is a response to a stimulus that is really there. He conceives the physical world as capable of being mathematically interpreted. People, he says, are trying to make concrete pictures of the world, of space and of time. But these must be thought of only as mathematical concepts. Mathematics can explain these admirably. He is not averse to making God a mathematician, a God to be verified by testing, analyzing, and measuring. A Thinker is behind the thought, and the Thinker is a mathematician capable of interpreting mathematical equations. The thought of the Thinker is the marvellous universe which fits into the framework built by mathematicians, who accept the appellation "mystic," when it means that they are able

to view the invisible, to handle the intangible, to perceive the relations, to stand in awe before the profusion of eternal worlds with which they are acquainted.²⁴

Up through a hierarchy of sciences to metaphysics we are carried by an "irresistible compulsion" to find mathematical equations replacing first principles. The modern mystical approach of supra-"scientism" has led to a God, an abstraction devoid of life and energizing worth, designated by mathematical symbols.

²⁴ *The Monist*, 34 (1924), 375-376.

CHAPTER VI

CRITICAL APPRECIATION

Religious Experience of William James

It would not be a genuinely scientific approach to religious experience to condemn it outrightly and absolutely. There is a religious experience which is of a distinctly religious quality, an ultimate experience of a religious object, truth or value, which is among those spiritual intuitions which apprehend all ultimates not apprehended by the senses. To distinguish this form that does not exclude faith in God's revelations from the form of experience that is pure subjectivism, there must be some understanding of its connotation.

One of our recent writers¹ has given religious experience two meanings: first, man creates the idea of God, otherwise non-existent, by making Him to his own image; second, God as the Perfect Other exists in His own right, transcends our highest thought of Him and reveals Himself in a process by which men believe in Him. These two conceptions of God, as well as others, are involved in the modern idea of the universe. Thoughts of God are being adjusted to them because they cannot be adjusted to traditional conceptions. The God-idea is then growing with the expanding universe. He is a vast cosmic drift or trend toward harmony;² the sum of forces acting in the cosmos as perceived and grasped by the human mind;³ that force or process which makes for the progressive development of values;⁴ the super-personal;⁵ the struggle and the mysterious pain at the heart of

¹ E. Lewis, *God and Ourselves*, p. 258.

² W. Horton, *Theism and the Modern Mood*, p. 117.

³ J. Huxley, *Science and Religion*, p. 262.

⁴ H. N. Wieman, *Religious Experience and Scientific Method*, p. 9.

⁵ Wishart, *The Idea of God in the Light of Modern Science*.

the universe;⁶ the nisus directive of the course of events;⁷ the totality of the Universe;⁸ an oversoul;⁹ the principle of concreteness;¹⁰ the principle of the conservation of value within existence.¹¹ These conceptions of God are substitutes for the traditional definition, *I am who am*.

The question is raised, Is God an idea or more than an idea? If He is just an idea, He is immanent in the Ego; if He is more than an idea He is reality. There are ideas to which are attached no factual reality, but there is no factual reality without an idea. Mental activity is the basis of all experience, and religious experience is no exception to the rule for arriving at a certitude of God. How else can God be known except man can be brought to think of Him? If God is only a thought, then if man did not exist to think about Him, there would be no God. But God is more than a revelation of something within man, He is also a revelation of something outside Him. He exists as a reality independent of mind. He would have existence whether man conceived Him or not. Religious experience establishes a relation with this external reality and becomes then, as Lewis says, not a monologue but a dialogue.¹² From an examination of the visible world by the light of reason, man has convincing proof of the existence of God. By the ennobling faculty of the intellect which he possesses, he comes to know not only that God is, but also, in some manner to know who He is or to know His nature, though imperfectly and by analogy. It is not then experience only, but experience and reason also by which God is known. From the scholastic point of view, the first type of religious experience, namely that God is only an idea, is undoubtedly unjustified, because it makes religion purely subjective, and the idea of God a creation of the mind. The second sense is more legitimate, inasmuch as it implies the existence of God, independent of a mind. Its defect, however, lies in the fact that it already assumed the existence of God as an independent

⁶ E. S. Brightman, *The Problem of God*, p. 137.

⁷ L. Morgan, *Emergent Evolution*, p. 34.

⁸ G. E. Harkness, *Conflicts in Religious Thought*, p. 168.

⁹ McKeehan, *Interpretation of God*, p. 327.

¹⁰ A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, p. 250.

¹¹ Höfding, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 89.

¹² E. Lewis, *God and Ourselves*, p. 259.

fact, instead of a dialectical proof. This second definition corresponds vaguely to the scholastic notion of the desire for God.

Deep-rooted in man's rational nature is the desire for happiness.¹³

Every man no matter who he be, wishes to be happy. There is no one who does not wish it, and who does not yearn after it in such a way as even to desire it above all else. Men are drawn by different attractions: one desires this, another that; among men there are many ways of living, and among them one prefers one way, another, another; but no matter what may be the kind of life one chooses, it is ever the same, a happy life is what all desire.¹⁴

This desire has its basis in the operations of the intellect which is infinite in its extension, boundless in its capacity for knowledge. *Quantum est de se ad infinita individua se extendit.* This implicit tendency toward beatitude at the very heart of being is as a tendency toward God, the final end. He alone supplies happiness because *He is*, says St. Thomas.¹⁵ It is really the solution of the metaphysical problem of the return of being to its Source.¹⁶ When man realizes that the world about him has failed to satisfy the fullness of his being, where this tendency of nature remains unsatisfied,¹⁷ his desire for God is augmented. The universe as a participated being has not within it the reason of its own existence nor the motif of its action, and since nothing finite can be the adequate object of happiness, and since man knows he is an imperfect being,¹⁸ he therefore, orientates his intelligence to the transcendent,¹⁹ which carries him beyond the horizon of terrestrial

¹³ *Homini inest appetitus naturalis ad illam veram beatitudinem quae in Dei visione consistit, non dico appetitum elicitum sed naturalem appetitum, hoc est, inclinationem naturalem et pondus naturae quo in illum finem propendit, sicut gravitas in lapide.* Comm. F. D. Soto in IV Sententiarum (Venice, 1584), disp. XLIX, q. II, a. 1.

¹⁴ St. Augustine, *Serm.* CCCVI, sec. 3 opera ed. Migne V, p. 1400.

¹⁵ Cf. *De Verit.*, q. 22, a. 2; *ibid.*, q. 21, a. 2; *De Pot.*, q. 5, a. 1; I q. 105, a. 2, ad. 2. Cf. IV *Sent.*, dist. 49, q. 1, a. 3; *De Malo*, q. 16, a. 8; I q. 57, a. 4; *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 13.

¹⁶ J. E. O'Mahoney, *The Desire of God*, p. 94.

¹⁷ *O. G.*, lib. III, cap. XXV.

¹⁸ *Omne imperfectum tendit in perfectum.* *Summa*, I-II, q. 16, a. 4.

¹⁹ Intellectus noster in infinitum intelligendo aliquid extenditur, cujus signum est quod, qualibet quantitate finita data, intellectus noster majorem excogitare possit. Frustra autem esset haec ordinatio intellectus ad in-

limitations to the ultimate and compelling object, God,²⁰ the first desired of all creation.²¹

What is naturally desired is naturally known, for man naturally desires happiness and what is naturally desired by man is naturally known by him. The knowledge of God and the desire of the highest good are to all men. Nothing is desired except through likeness of first goodness; nothing is knowable except through likeness of first truth.²²

Passing now to a strict presentation of the scholastic doctrine of religious experience, an important distinction must be made. The fundamental error of most modern philosophers who profess belief in religious experience, is their failure to take into account the first of the three stages by which this state is reached, namely, confused intellectual knowledge. They start from the affective state thus giving no logical explanation for the initial attainment of this knowledge, for the affective state presupposes knowledge; it needs a cause, it is a reaction to a stimulus. Religious experience for them is made up of only two stages:—

1. Affective states
2. Intellectual knowledge

finitum, nisi esset aliqua res intelligibilis infinita: Oportet igitur esse aliquam rem intelligibilem infinitam, quam oportet esse, esse maximam rerum; et hanc dicimus Deum. *C. G.*, lib. I, cap. XLIII. Quaecumque sunt a Deo, ordinem habent ad invicem, et ad ipsum Deum. I, q. 47, a. 3.

²⁰ Impossibile est beatitudinem hominis esse in aliquo creato. Beatitudo enim est bonum perfectum quod totaliter quietat appetitum; alioquin non esset ultimus finis si adhuc restaret aliquid appetendum. *Summa*, I-II, q. 11, a. 8.

²¹ Deus igitur, quum sit primum movens immobile, est primum desideratum. *C. G.*, lib. I, cap. 37.

²² . . . homo enim naturaliter desiderat beatitudinem, et quod naturaliter desideratur ab homine naturaliter cognoscitur ab eodem. Cognitio Dei naturaliter omnibus est inserta et similiter desiderium summi boni. . . . Homo naturaliter ordinatur ad Deum et per cognitionem et per affectum, in quantum est ejus particeps. *III Sent.*, dist. 23, a. 4, q. 3.

Omnia cognoscentia cognoscunt implicite Deum in quolibet cognito. Sicut enim nihil habet rationem appetibilis nisi per similitudinem primae bonitatis; ita nihil est cognoscibile nisi per similitudinem primae veritatis. *De Verit.*, q. 22, a. 2, ad 1.

whereas the scholastic doctrine has three stages :

1. Confused intellectual knowledge
2. Affective states
3. Reflex intellectual knowledge

Professor James believed

that feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue. . . . When I call theological formulas secondary products, I mean that in a world in which no religious feeling had ever existed, I doubt whether any philosophic theology could ever have been framed. I doubt if dispassionate intellectual contemplation of the universe, apart from inner unhappiness and need of deliverance on the one hand and mystical emotion on the other, would ever have resulted in religious philosophies such as we now possess.²³

By this he means that religious philosophy had to have its first hint supplied by feeling, that "over-beliefs, buildings-out performed by the intellect"²⁴ were originally directed by feeling. This position is quite contrary to the scholastic doctrine, that contends that there are not two elements in religious experience but three. First of all, confused intellectual knowledge of God; secondly, an affective reaction, and thirdly, distinct intellectual knowledge.

A. A confused intellectual knowledge is that which the Fathers of the Alexandrine School declare is found and established in all men, that springs up spontaneously at the very sight of creation. This knowledge is incapable of being analyzed, as is distinct knowledge.²⁵ In fact, it is not knowledge proper, that is, connected

²³ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 431.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

²⁵ Cognitio, sive in sensu, sive in intellectu, alia est confusa, alia distincta. Cognitio confusa est qua attingitur aliquid non resolvendo nec discernendo ejus partes, seu praedicata, aut attributa. Distincta est e converso, qua cognoscitur aliquid resolvendo, seu discernendo partes ejus, aut praedicata. Et omnis confusio dicit ordinem ad plura; vel actualiter in se inclusa, quia ex illis actu constat, vel potentialiter subjecta, quia sub se continentur; unde oritur quod alia est cognitio confusa actualis, scilicet respectu eorum quae actu conveniunt rei, alia confusa potentialis, scilicet respectu eorum, quae sunt objecta, et quasi in ejus potentia continentur, et

and systematized, but only fragmentary pieces of information. Confused knowledge in its operations based on the inclination of nature in its search for goodness, is closely akin to the descriptive knowledge spoken of in modern religious experience, as having a very direct bearing upon the knowledge of God. Such knowledge does not define any object, "it is simply the interlocking of a perfectly consistent system of concepts without regard to any experience whatever."²⁶

By confused intellectual knowledge the scholastics mean the first impact of the first principles of thought on the sensible world. It will be recalled that there are certain immediate principles of thought, *prima intelligibilia principia*, such as identity, contradiction and sufficient reason, known immediately upon the knowledge of the terms.²⁷ These first principles which preexist in man as certain seeds²⁸ of knowledge are not innate but the light by which they are known is innate.²⁹ The soul does not possess this knowledge as such, but they are the first intelligibles which the intellect reaches when it comes in contact with the sensible. Whether these principles be complex,³⁰ such as a whole is greater than its parts, or simple, such as being, they are at the basis of all knowledge. In the first stage, the intellect spontaneously perceives in being these principles. On the notion of being and non-being is based the first indemonstrable principle, namely, that the same thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time. On this principle are based in turn all other principles.³¹ There is then according to St.

similiter distingui potest e converso cognitio distincta. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, t. 2, p. 1, q. 1, a. 3 secunda distinctio. St. Thomas, 1 q. 14, a. 6; q. 85, a. 3, ad 3; q. 85, a. 4, ad 3; q. 85, a. 8; q. 86, a. 2. *U. O.*, lib. III, cc. XXXVIII and XXXIX.

²⁶ H. N. Wieman, *Religious Experience and Scientific Method*, p. 27.

²⁷ Primae conceptiones intellectus quae statim lumine intellectus agentis cognoscuntur per species a sensibilibus abstractas. *De Verit.*, q. 11, a. 1, ad 1.

²⁸ *De Verit.*, q. 11, a. 1, ad resp.

²⁹ Cognitio principiorum accipitur a sensu, et tamen lumen quo principia cognoscuntur est innatum. In lib. Boeth. *De Trinitate*, q. 3, a. 1, ad 4.

³⁰ Prima principia . . . sive sint complexa ut dignitates, sive incomplexa sicut ratio entis. *De Verit.*, q. xi, a. 1, c.

³¹ *Summa*. I-II, q. 94, a. 2; cf. *De Anima*, a. 6, ad 8; In IV *Meta.*, lect. 5, 6; I, q. 117, a. 1; I-II, q. 51, a. 1. *De Verit.*, q. 10, a. 6, 8, ad 1, q. 11, a. 3; a. 15, ad 1.

Thomas need of a supreme principle, *being*, and a first judgment, *being is*, which imperfectly reflect back to a First Principle. But this First Principle is not clearly known. He is something about which many predicates are asserted; He may be the Being of all Being, the One or the Many, but in every case, these are attributes which are applicable to the First Principle which is God.

All this has a bearing on religious experience. The confused intellectual approach to God means merely the immediate reaction of a mind upon seeing the universe. It is immediate knowledge, for in the act of knowing there is so rapid a relation between subject and predicate, that it seems to be accomplished without the aid of concept. In as much as it involves first principles, it is intellectual. In its first apprehension, intelligence knows being for it cannot know itself the while it is still the intelligence of nothing.⁵² This immediate intellectual inference with reality which is still inchoate⁵³ has in common with modern religious experience, immediacy but not intellectuality. An experience devoid of principles and dependent on mere feeling leads not to God but to Agnosticism, it tells nothing about the eternal ultimates, the everlasting verities. Confused intellectual knowledge, is therefore, not identical with modern religious experience, the first element of which is the affective state.

B. *The Affective State.*

A subjective state that is purely affective is the basis of modern religious experience. This is to distrust the intellect's ability to reach metaphysical truth and to resort to feeling, a simple yet vague state of mind. Our human personality is limited in its range. This limitation belongs to the very nature of personality, we recognize it in our relations with others. We have our own thoughts, feelings and emotion, these we can communicate to others through speech and the media of sense, but they cannot share our feelings, our emotions nor we theirs. We read the thoughts

⁵² *Summa*, I, q. 87, a. 1.

⁵³ Est enim quaedam communis ex confusa Dei cognitio, quae quasi omnibus hominibus adest; . . . quia naturali ratione statim homo in aliqualem Dei cognitionem pervenire potest. *C. G.*, III, cap. XXXVIII.

of those whom we know, but their thoughts are not our thoughts. Sympathy enables us to share their feelings but it remains that the feelings are theirs, and ours are ours; feelings are incommunicable, personal and limited to our organic nature. The simplest form of consciousness in the human personality is feeling. It varies from person to person, from experience to experience, thus allowing the God-idea to vary also. Take for example, the ideas of the deity according to A. N. Whitehead and E. S. Ames. The term, "principle of concretion," which Whitehead used to designate God is quite different from the popular identification of God as an ideal. God Himself is not concrete but He is the principle which constitutes the concretion of things. "In the place of Aristotle's God as Prime Mover, we require God as the Principle of Concretion. God is not concrete, but He is the ground for concrete actuality. No reason can be given for the nature of God, because that nature is the ground of rationality."⁵⁴ According to Ames' view, "few patriots conceive their country as absolutely perfect. They idealize it, they love it and they labor for the ideals which are identified with its institutions and enterprises. Similarly, the religious man knows that justice is not complete, but he knows too that there are good and happiness and some fulfilment of righteousness. These qualities he identifies with the divine. God is not taken as the equivalent of all that is, but as the ideal being who seeks the realization of the good."⁵⁵ Experiences vary, those brought through fear, love, awe and religious joy are registered at different levels. The organic thrill of an Alpine ascent drops to a religious awe when man beholds the yawning chasm of a mountain gorge. But these temporary sentiments are generally too dissolving to give added strength to his religious convictions.

If the affective state is placed in an intellectual background in relation to revelation and dogma, its object, God, will cease to be a capricious invention of an unregulated fancy and become a personal God, a God of value. A religion intellectualized and externalized and not entirely dependent on feeling and emotion can be

⁵⁴ A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, pp. 250 and 257.

⁵⁵ E. S. Ames, *Religion*, p. 146.

the true religion, because it integrates harmoniously in one fuller and deeper vision of God, the different broken lights of the others, thus incorporating the truths of all, without the one-sidedness of any.⁸⁶

A thing must be known to exist before it can be desired. This principle was observed by man when with dissatisfaction he passed beyond the finitude of natural realization to the term of his final perfection. At the source of his incessant tendency was an intelligibility that gave direction and adequate meaning to his actions. A tendency in itself toward an object is not knowledge of that object, but only an effect of something causative. Feelings emerge insensibly from the knowledge which as a stimulus calls forth a reaction. An angry man knows who has insulted his honor; a man who experiences an emotional disturbance of fear knows the cause of his fear before he takes flight; and so with other experiences, there is emotion where there is cognition. The danger lies in allying our religious experience with feeling only. According to Schleiermacher's theory, the "highest grade of feeling" is associated with religion. Feeling is psychologically prior to the other elements of mental life. It is believed to be immediate, that is to say, unmediated by ideas of any kind; so that it is through feeling alone that we become aware of our environment, knowledge and desire both alike secondary.⁸⁷ Religion, it is true, has in it an element of feeling, but it is not essentially feeling. Belief in God that was rooted in pure emotion would be lacking in that element necessary to be called belief. "Genuine faith," as A. E. Taylor tells us, "because it reposes on conviction, cannot be other than a *fides quaerens intellectum*." While it is impossible to isolate completely the affective element from the element purely intellectual, just as it is impossible to isolate completely one chemical element from another, nevertheless, an approximate analysis can be attempted.⁸⁸ To base the absolute conviction of God's presence on feeling is to establish a religious experience of pure subjectivism, which is "preoccupation with one's inner attitude, the attempt of the mind to work upon

⁸⁶ A. E. Taylor, *The Faith of a Moralist*, p. 96.

⁸⁷ J. Baillie, *The Interpretation of Religion*, p. 208.

⁸⁸ A. E. Taylor, *The Faith of a Moralist*, p. 102.

itself."³⁹ Fleurbach writing of Schleiermacher's position, that religion fails to have any objectivity, says,

God is renounced by the understanding; he has no longer the dignity of a real object, of a reality which imposes itself on the understanding; hence he is transferred to feeling; in feeling his existence is thought to be secure. And doubtless this is the safest refuge; for to make feeling the essence of religion is nothing else than to make feeling the essence of God. And as certainly as I exist, so certainly does my feeling exist; and as certainly as my feeling exists, so certainly does my God exist.⁴⁰

If religion is to be considered just a mental process, a fact of mind, then it may be brought to an idealist's point of view. Christianity cannot allow religion to be merely a subjective creation of the mind, for it claims objective revelation and communion with God other than by thought of Him. Religion, to be worthy of its relation to God, must be based on conviction which has its birth in intelligence not feeling.

Feeling besides being subjective is too indefinite to be made the basis of a faith in God. A pleasant or painful feeling is definite when associated with some person or thing, as when we say, the head is aching. Feeling dissociated from cognition is vague and indeterminate and will never issue in the knowledge of a personal God.

To place feeling prior to intellect is not according to the doctrine of St. Thomas.⁴¹ For him it is the intellect and not the other faculties of the mind by which man is able to obtain a theological vision of God. He has not established the truth that man can see God *faciè ad faciè* by means of natural powers alone,⁴² for the

³⁹ C. A. Bennett, *Dilemma of Religious Knowledge*, pp. 113-114.

⁴⁰ L. Fleurbach, *Wesen des Christentums*, Geo. Eliot's tr., pp. 9, 277-278. Although this work was written as early as 1841, the author anticipates many tendencies in contemporary thought about religion.

⁴¹ Intellectus autem prior affectu. *De Verit.*, q. 10, a. 5.

⁴² . . . impossibile est quod aliquis creatus intellectus per sua naturalia essentiam Dei videat. Cognitio enim contingit secundum quod cognitum est in cogniscente. Cognitio autem est in cognoscente secundum modum cognoscentis. *Summa*, I, q. 12, a. 4, ad resp.

Facultas autem videndi Deum non competit intellectui creato secundum suam naturam. sed per lumen gloriæ. *Idem.*, a. 6, ad resp.

Omnis autem cognitio quæ est secundum modum substantiæ creatæ



natural ultimate end of the intellect is to see by the light of reason the glory of His works and thus also of Himself. It is the intellect that thinks, and it alone can give truth; it reaches down to the innermost essence of things, assimilates all being, and in some certain manner becomes all things,⁴³ while feeling which belongs to the sensitive life is only superficially united to things.

C. *Reflex Intellectual Knowledge.*

After the confused intellectual knowledge or instinct for God, and the affective state, which is the effect of an idea but does not produce it, there follows a reflex intellectual act. It is to this realm that the scholastic arguments for God's existence belong. These proofs are the result not of a confused or mediate but of a reflex knowledge which is essential for the development of religious experience. Theistic proofs of God's existence, once the basis of discussions for philosophers and theologians, are not found to be necessary for modern experimentalists. They have been suspended for various and questionable reasons by those who say that there are no arguments to prove God real because experience of Him⁴⁴ suffices. They claim these proofs are too abstract in their nature for any but philosophers and theologians to understand; too explicit and formal to make an appeal to the heart; too dependent upon Aristotelian principles that are now discarded; too insufficiently convincing to demonstrate the objective reality of God; too traditional to prove anything about His nature. Even the "vast literature of proofs of God's existence drawn from the order of nature, which a century ago seemed so overwhelmingly convincing, today does little more than gather dust in libraries, for the simple reason that our generation has ceased to believe in the kind of God it argues for."⁴⁵ "There is no more reason for rejecting the old arguments for the existence of a Supreme Being, that lost their

deficit a visione divinae essentiae, quae in infinitum excedit omnem substantiam creatam. Unde nec homo, nec aliqua creatura potest consequi beatitudinem ultimam per sua naturalia. *Idem.*, I-II, q. 5, a. 5, ad resp. Cf. II-II, q. 2, a. 3; *C. G.*, lib. III, cap. LIII.

⁴³ *C. G.*, lib. I, c. XLIV; *Summa*, I, q. 26, a. 2. *Ibid.*, II, cc. XLVII, XCVIII.

⁴⁴ R. M. Jones, *Fundamental End of Life*, p. 143.

⁴⁵ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 74.

force largely because we have no longer that confidence in the faculty of discursive reasoning which our forefathers had,"⁴⁶ than there is for rejecting the chemical combinations of the scientist, for example, water, because the chemist calls it H₂O.

These proofs formulated in the philosophic language of St. Thomas are not different in principle, from those of the man who as he observes the world about him expresses himself in common terms. Reproachful as modern religious experience may wish to make the Thomistic proofs, they cannot be despised. To discard proof is to discard reason; to reject the sensible which is necessary as a preliminary of thought and as a stimulus to mind activity, is to depend upon personal experience, the testimony of inner light. The visible things of the physical universe, illumined by the light of the intellect are signs wherefrom men infer the existence of God as *First Cause* and postulate *Him as an unchangeable Mover*. The knowledge of the perfections of creatures leads to a knowledge of the nature and perfections of the Creator. This reflex knowledge is the ultimate basis of all systems of truth. It differs from confused knowledge not in kind but in degree, whereas, God in the beginning was indistinguishable from other objects, of creation, He is by reason a distinct and certain Being, a Creator, "the depths of whose wisdom are unfathomable and the ways of whose Providence are unsearchable."⁴⁷

The intellectual approach to God by proof outweighs in value a religious experience that depends entirely on personality. Reflex knowledge brings determination and completeness⁴⁸ to what was formerly only potential or undeveloped knowledge.⁴⁹ This knowledge is not accidental as some experimentalists⁵⁰ would have us believe, for the deciding factor must be the intellect,⁵¹ not an

⁴⁶ F. L. Cross, *Religion and the Reign of Science*, p. 11.

⁴⁷ M. Ronayne, *God, Knowable and Known*, p. 91.

⁴⁸ *Habere propriam cognitionem de rebus, est cognoscere res non solum in communi, sed secundum quod sunt ab invicem distinctae. Summa*, I, q. 14, a. 6, "Sed Contra."

⁴⁹ *C. G.*, lib. III, cap. XXXVIII.

⁵⁰ W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 74, 501. S. Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity*, p. 373.

⁵¹ *Non recte sumitur conclusio nisi per resolutionem in prima principia;*

experience. While the experience may lay the foundation of a knowledge of God and can apprehend Being in an imperfect way without regard to the attributes of that Being, reflex knowledge knows that same Being and is able to define what it is, a subsisting Being to whom no perfection of being can be wanting.⁵² The divine essence not coming within the domain of the senses cannot be known but by indirect concepts that are derived from material things.⁵³ The error of religious experience is that by failing to complete the affective state by a reflective act, it leaves open the way to modern notions of God, such as the evolving God, the finite God, the political idea of God and an identity with the Life-Force.

In *philosophia perennis* there must be a first element that is intellectual, a second that is affective and a third that is reflective. Modern religious experience takes as its point of departure the affective state and only occasionally elaborates with a fringe of intellect.

The Subconscious and Its Mystical Interpretation

While James repudiates the conception of the ideal world put forth by the deists as "causing to evaporate the very essence itself of practical religion," that which he himself posits is not more satisfactory. Though he insists on the existence of permanent relations between God and Man, expressed in terms of human prayer and its Divine answer by way of the region of the subliminal, he fails of his purpose which seems to be, to reconcile simultaneously the psychologist, the theologian and the metaphysician.

To the psychologist, his explanation seems to be by way of a

ita appetitus creaturae rationalis non est rectus nisi per appetitum explicitum ipsius Dei actu vel habitu. De Verit., q. 22, a. 2, c.

⁵² *Summum bonum desideratur dupliciter: uno modo in sui essentia; et sic non omnia desiderant summum bonum; alio modo in sui similitudine; et sic omnia desiderant summum bonum, quia nihil est desiderabile nisi in quantum in eo similitudo summi boni invenitur (Dei). De Verit., q. 10, a. 12, ad 5. Cf. Summa, I, q. 4, a. 2.*

⁵³ *Ad substantiam ipsius Dei capiendum, intellectus humanus non potest naturali virtute pertingere, quum intellectus nostri, secundum modum praesentes vitae, cognitio a sensu incipiat. C. G., lib. I, cap. III.*

hors d'oeuvres, for if the theories of automatism completely explain the phenomena of the principal religious experiences, as James himself states they do, why has he recourse there to a theory which is entirely superfluous? Since sudden conversions, ecstasies and other like forms of religious experience can be explained by the play of subliminal forces, by what authority may one present an explication so patently superfluous? So far from mustering the psychologist into his way, he leaves him without protesting vigorously against what he denominates as a mystical theory. And were one to grant the truth of the premises of the psychologist's agreement, one could not but agree that his stand is a logical one.

Nor is Professor James happier in his relations with the theologian. We can, of course, if we will, describe as supernatural—in the very broad sense of the term—this world of the invisible, and, consequently, as supernatural, also the effect accruing from it. But by the very fact that a union is conceived between religious phenomena—conversions, ecstasies and the like—and other phenomena that can not possibly be clothed with a religious character, the former at once lose their religious character. And yet their very authenticity depends upon possession of their character. Because facts which are of different orders have a certain essential resemblance a common origin is assigned them; either none of them come from God, or all do, and in either case, how speak of the supernatural? Since psychological life emerges from the subliminal, and this in turn from the *More*, in what does the privilege of certain influences consist?

Inasmuch, as it is only due to an equivocation that the doctrine of James can be called supernatural, it is doubtless opposed to the theories of deism which negate the intervention of God in human life. But as there are two degrees of the Divine Intelligibility there are likewise two modes of Divine intervention, the one proper to and demanded by man's nature, once it has been constituted as such, and the other, an intervention totally outside anything owing to human nature. The spiritualistic doctrine treats of the ordinary actions of God in relation to our existence: providence, concurrence; Christian theology adds to it the knowledge of special actions which are the domain of grace. To confound these two

orders under the name of supernaturalism is to place the sought after reconciliation in an equivocation and thus suppress the supernatural element.

It is then with a force quite unmistakable that even the theologians reject Professor James's theory. To say that the conscious Ego is part of a greater Ego, but nevertheless, of one and the same nature with it, denies the fundamental affirmation of all theology, that of the personality of God. And we then find ourselves in presence of what can go by no other name than Pantheistic Idealism. Plainly, then, there is open contradiction from the very start between these two explanations. Theology is the science of the Absolute with its metaphysical and moral attributes. There is no place in the pantheistic system for the Absolute and the reality of its attributes which are real only because they appertain to a real Being. Identity of nature is all the more exclusive of the supernatural by very definition. Religious Experiences, such as ecstasies and visions, are for the theologian to be placed in the category of the purely supernatural; for the psychologist and the metaphysician in the category of the apparently supernatural that is, in the category of the subconscious. It is thus chimerical to hope that the subliminal should be ground of conciliation whereon the opposing force of science and religion could meet and fuse.

Nor are the metaphysicians any more willing to look with favor on the metaphysical hypothesis which sums up the religious philosophy of Professor James. For the very same objection may be brought against all pantheism, namely, the question of how to account for individuality of beings. For if, basically all being is identical, how account rationally for the consciousness each one possesses of individuality? The attempt Professor James makes to meet this objection is in the form of his "filmlet of screens" which cuts us off momentarily from the Absolute, and the theory of the slow organization of personality.

To prove these hypotheses insufficient requires but a moment's reflection. Were they the answer, man would at the first dawn of his psychological life be conscious of his identity with God, and this clear apperception would disappear gradually as the individuality, the Ego proper, emerged from the psychic synthesis

with the growth of the so-called screen. Now, the feeling of personality, conviction of one's individuality is a fact of which we are aware with the first dawn of reason; it is contemporaneous with the awakening of consciousness itself. Certain of the English psychologists hold that consciousness is the perception of difference. We can make use of that doctrine in this instance. Consciousness of a phenomena and the attributing of it to a subject are not two distinct operations. Were there not simultaneous attribution from the very beginning of psychological life, it could not possibly be produced subsequently. The fact of consciousness which contains the affirmation of our personal identity implies at the same time, and as a consequence, the difference or the distinction of ourselves from all other being.

As for the screen of Professor James, the question next arises as to how it is formed. How does it happen that it varies in different individuals, being in some well nigh impermeable, in others, quite the contrary. Why these sudden rents in it according as the personality becomes clothed with a greater degree of stability? What makes this difficulty all the greater is, that the type of religion born of this feeling of identity is not the share of only a few privileged ones, but is manifested among the greater number, and develops very often in the same degree as the moral personality. Without going into further details, it is easy to perceive, how disconcerting this theory must be to the metaphysician in this novel conception. It is at least, an ephemeral fantastic sort of philosophy, that is indeed the filmiest of films and melts away in the glare of the searchlight of logical analysis.

Moreover, this metaphysical conception does not tally with the facts of which it pretends to give an exact interpretation. It is true that a religious person usually feels himself more united to God the more intense is his religion, but here it is a question not of unicity but of union, and Professor James' hypothesis rests on this confusion of terms. The essence of religious life lies in the mixed relation between God and man; but a relationship implies two terms, hence it necessarily implies their distinction. How could religion arise from the consciousness of an identity between the personal ego and Ego more vast? Who can say he entertains feelings of respect, admiration and fear, the constituent elements

of religion in respect of himself? Supposing these could appear, would not their appearance be likewise their dissolution, by the very fact that as man grew better informed, he would throw off his first illusions? We have but to question one of the faithful and ask him whether his religious consciousness tells him he makes but one with God, and his answer will show clearly that no equation exists between the experience, religious phenomena, and the metaphysical interpretation given it by Professor James. It would not be difficult were one to go into the detail of religious experiences to show how utterly inexact is this interpretation. Take for example, prayer under its most ordinary form, impetration. Does not supplication, humble and ardent, bear witness to a transcendental conception the suppliant entertains of his God? On the other hand, how explain the rarity of religious conversions, if in truth, the subliminal made itself felt in all souls? How could it be otherwise in a pantheistic system? Why, too, the very small number of ecstasies which, in Professor James's religion, would be merely the return to one's original identity?

In fine, Professor James's theory of the subconscious does not square with the psychologist's analysis of religious facts, nor with the theologian's consideration of their origin, nor with the metaphysician's conclusions as to their authentic content. It is a hypothesis which attempts to attain unity by designating under a single name, systems diametrically opposed. It does not take into account religious life in general, nor its principal facts in particular, in short, it is an attempt to explain religious life by extracting from it the very essence of religion.

Supra-Intellectual Mysticism of Henri Bergson

In modern times, there has arisen an ever-increasing movement in opposition to the predominance of the intellect in the solution of Epistemological problems. Not satisfied with rationalism and intellectualism many have based their proof on the hypothesis that truth rests on feeling, faith or a mystical vision of some sort. What encouraged this reactionary movement was the mechanical concepts of natural science and the determined world-views to

which it had given rise. Descartes, Spinoza, and others interested in the mechanical, physical order aroused opposition to intellect and logic as sources of truth, and made converts for intuitionism and mysticism. Hume also attacked the pretensions of rationalism, while Kant maintained that there is a higher kind of truth based on practical reason that gives insight into a spiritual world. The general view was that the intellect was powerless to pierce beneath the surface into living reality. This anti-intellectualism was especially characterized by the tendency to regard life as the immediate, original and all-inclusive term which was to be employed.

Bergson took over this idea and distrusted the power of the intellect to reach a reasonable explanation of the universe. All questions of the ultimates, such as the existence of God and immortality, were placed beyond intellectual search. He states that science and logic cannot grasp the core of reality; that intellect dislikes life which is fluid and attempts to solidify everything it touches; that it models matter to get control of it; that it interprets motion in terms of immobility; that it is fitted to look into reality only from the outside; that it operates with pictures, can give only snapshot views of life; that it is only a part of the power of thought, a part which has been developed with a view to action.

Why, it may be asked, does Bergson make instinct and not reason bring us into the closest touch and relation with what is most real? The truth is that Bergson misunderstood the nature of the intellect.

Il se trompe également sur la nature du *concept* qui, d'après lui, est une *représentation* et ne représente guère que l'immobile. Il se trompe plus encore sur le *rapport de l'intuition* qu'il regard comme tournée vers le dedans, et de *l'intelligence* qu'il considère comme tournée vers le dehors: rien de plus artificiel qu'une telle attribution de rôles.¹

Bergson also undervalues the logical elements in the work of knowledge. His conception of knowledge furnishes an answer to the question of the relation between discursive and intuitional thought activity, between mediate and immediate knowledge. All knowledge depends upon first principles,² they are the first intelligibles

¹ C. Piat, *Insuffisance des Philosophies de l'Intuition*, p. 294.

² *Primæ conceptiones intellectus, quæ statim lumine intellectus agentis cognoscuntur per species a sensibilibus abstractas. De Verit.*, q. 11, 1, ad resp.

which the intellect can reach in starting from sensible experience. Mere thought cannot lead to truth, it must be supplemented, not through a separate intuition but through a relation with reality which lies outside the ego. Through the forms abstracted from sensible things, the concept is reached. According to M. Bergson all intuition makes us shun concepts and their *tares inguérissables*.

The two operations of the formation of concept, abstraction and generalization, Bergson treats as simple morcelage and solidification of the flowing. He says the universe is one great continuity that the intellect cuts into distinct parts.

Les corps bruts sont taillés dans l'étoffe de la nature par une perception dont les ciseaux suivent, en quelque sorte, le pointillé des lignes sur lesquelles l'action passerait.³

But Bergson ignores the fact that cosmic beings are facts of experience, as well as that our ideas have a foundation in the real. Experience tells us that monism is not a first fact of experience, but rather that there are diverse and finite individualities, not merely phenomenal but substantially real. Such diversity is found in the world of science where genera subdivide into species and species into individuals but the difference and genus, says St. Thomas, are only one being.

There results one thing from difference and genus, even as from matter and form. Just as it is one and the same nature that results from matter and form, so the difference does not add an extraneous nature to the genus, but is a determination of the generic nature itself.⁴

So too Aristotle says, that beings must by their very definition be multiple, for the definition of man, of vegetable or mineral, supposes that they are beings essentially different.⁵

A Bergsonian pronouncement is that our general concepts have an essential character of fixity, that the idea is a thing crystallized and dead. Rather, we would say, it is the fruit of a vital operation, for the intellect is a living faculty, its very life is engendered by the immanent action proper to an acting subject.

³ H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 12.

⁴ *C. G.*, lib. II, cap. XCV.

⁵ Arist., *Phy.*, I, c. II, sec. 15.

*L'Intelligence est vivante, parce que la lumière intellectuelle, la lumière de l'intellect agent est une similitude participée de la vivante Lumière divine. L'Intelligence est vivante, parce que sous l'action de cette lumière intellectuelle et de la réalité objective, elle produit, tant que la vérité le demande, des concepts nouveaux, à la mesure et à la ressemblance, des choses, qui jaillissent des profondeurs de son activité et qui contiennent en eux des richesses inépuisables.*⁶

There is then nothing lifeless, nothing inert or powerless in the intellect, endowed with vitality and a life-giving power whose interior action, as Farges has so aptly said, tends to prolong itself in exterior action.

Comme nos idées se divisent ou s'accouplent et se fécondent entre elles, donc elles vivent. Une idée appelle d'autres idées; elles évoquent ensemble des sentiments et des mouvements associés, et tressaillent de vie intérieure en enfantant la Science, la Morale et les Arts. Quel magnifique déploiement de vie!⁷

The concept is naturally unsuited for life, declares Bergson, it generalizes at the same time it abstracts, and "more or less deforms the property by the extension it gives to it. . . . Extracted from the metaphysical object and presented in a concept, it grows indefinitely larger, and goes beyond the object itself, since henceforth it has to contain it, along with a number of other objects."⁸ There is no escape from the concept and it is invariably universal. The ideal extension of the same essence to many individuals and likewise to all possible individuals indefinitely, does not disfigure the nature or the comprehension of this essence. According to the law of the logical nature of the extension and comprehension of ideas, the greater the comprehension, the less the extension; the greater the extension, the less the comprehension. For example, when we conceive a triangle as a figure having three sides and three angles, we conceive this definition as applicable to a small triangle as well as to many larger ones, the essence of triangle remaining the same. One would like to consider the Bergsonian generalization or physical extension as a mere figure of speech without any relation to extension and comprehension.

⁶ J. Maritain, *La Philosophie Bergsonienne*, p. 168.

⁷ A. Farges, *La Philosophie de M. Bergson*, p. 360.

⁸ H. Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 19.

Immediate and direct knowledge without concepts, St. Thomas does not mention. "*Notandum est quod illam distinctionem de notitia intuitiva et abstractiva, nunquam legi positam a beato Thoma sub illis verbis, licet forte aequivalentes distinctiones ponat.*"⁶ We may infer from the following text that he makes a distinction. "*Cognitio autem de re secundum id quod est, potest dupliciter haberi scilicet dum cognoscitur quid est et an est.*" We say that intuitive knowledge is that which corresponds to the question *an est*, and abstract knowledge is that which responds to the question *quid est*. As an interpreter of the Angelic Doctor, Capreolus is of the opinion that it will be more correct to call intuitive the knowledge of the singular and abstract the knowledge of the universal. For Aquinas all knowledge takes its rise in the senses "*Nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu,*" thus intuitions are excluded. To Bergson the relation is the knowledge of an idea, the subjective likeness of the object formed in the subject according to the mode of being of the subject. He suppresses this relation and is therefore condemned to make for the intuitive knowledge an identification of object and subject according to the mode of being of the object. This results in a fusion of the mind with the thing, transports us into the object and identifies us by an effort of intense sympathy with what that object has of uniqueness, inexpressibleness, of incommunicableness, this gives us less than intellectual perception, it deprives us of truth. Bergson's intuition is of the sensible order, it is an experience from the materiality of the thing, it possesses only the sense, an infra-psychic likeness of the object. We seek in things a contact which changes us into them, we do not possess the things we are possessed by them; we do not intellectualize the matter, we materialize the mind.

In his treatment of the function of intuition in the acquiring of knowledge, Bergson is not in agreement with the Scholastic synthesis. In order that we may point out his errors we shall consider in the first place that there is a Scholastic intuition,—a grasping of first principles—as well as a reasoning process; second,

⁶ Capreolus, in *II Sent.*, dist. III, q. II, a. III, ed. Paban-Pèques, Vol. III, p. 293.

that there is no pure intuition which is super-intellectual, but only an intuition which accompanies reason; third, intuition as understood by Bergson is a kind of "glorified instinct."

First, Bergson's definition of intuition is radically different from the definition of Scholasticism.¹⁰ He calls it the capacity of "viewing the thing from within" (*intueri*), or "reading inside it" (*intelligere*), "the kind of intellectual sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible." This is but a vain mirage of metaphors. It is only by exterior observation that we penetrate, or seem to penetrate, into the interior of other beings. Even with our most intimate friends and acquaintances, we divine their thoughts and sentiments by a process of induction or deduction which has nothing in common with intuition. He falsely assumes that this is the entire and sole method whereby knowledge is acquired.

Scholasticism has always recognized a knowledge *per discursum* together with an intuition *per simplicem apprehensionem*. Far from being opposed to intuition, St. Thomas teaches that although the rational act is the one common to man, yet it participates in the discovery of truth by an immediate vision which is granted only to superior natures. He says that the vision in the Word is the knowledge the most perfect, be it of the universal or of the particular. "*Perfectius (res) cognoscitur per Verbum quam per se ipsam, etiam in quantum est talis.*"¹¹

In the intellectual life, the intellect, an intuitive faculty, grasps the intelligible in the sensible and thus forms the idea; the synthesis of two ideas the mind affirms in a first judgment. The immediate apprehension of first principles which serve as the basis of all knowledge is grasped by an intuition in the correct sense of the term. St. Thomas holds that just as soon as we know the meaning of "whole" and the meaning of "part" we immediately see that the part cannot be greater than the whole. By some such

¹⁰ In general, intuition designates the act of knowing an object immediately, without reasoning or passage by intermediate ideas. It is opposed to the discursive act. Cf. M. C. D'Arcy, *The Nature of Belief*.

¹¹ *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 16, ad 11; cf. q. 4, a. 6.

immediate grasping does the intellect, as the foundation of its ontological life arrive at first principles. Once it knows the meaning of being and the meaning of non-being, it sees that a thing cannot be and not be at one and the same time and under the same formal circumstances. Ideas and first principles form the basis upon which science is built, they are the pegs, as it were, upon which reflection hangs its analysis. All knowledge begins with an intuition of first principles, self-evident truths which are not assumptions.

They display the power of the mind working unrestrictedly on material suited to it, and in such knowledge the mind cannot fear contradiction, because it knows why the facts are as it says, and that the opposite is not only unlikely but impossible. . . . If we deny that there are truths which are self-evident, we implicitly declare that there is nothing which is or can be evident, for truths do not prosper by taking in each other's washing.¹²

The two aspects of the mind, reason and intuition, are but one act. In the essential identity, we cannot say that one is objective, real and absolute, and the other is subjective, symbolic and relative, any more than we can tell in a rapidly revolving multi-colored disk where one color ends and the other begins. Between intuition and the concept, there is not a breach but a gradual blending, just as in physics there is no real difference between wave vibrations and those which, amplified, are grasped by the senses either as light or sound.

Secondly, profound intellectual unity under a seeming duality, the Bergsonians fail to appreciate, as they discard the rational process, and, consequently, must assert the supremacy of intuition. Between reason and intuition there is no opposition, but a difference between less and great, imperfect and perfect. Two modes must be affirmed, but not two kinds of knowing. But intuition is not the more perfect absolutely, this mode of knowledge is most perfect only when it is able to coincide with a state of an object that is immaterial.¹³ God is an immaterial object, but in this

¹² M. C. D'Arcy, S. J., *The Nature of Belief*, p. 54.

¹³ *Ad secundum dicendum quod ad speciem, quae est medium cognoscendi, requiruntur duo: scilicet repraesentatio rei cognitae, quae competit ei*

world He cannot be seen intuitively. The Science of God is intuitive, for He sees all in His Word whose thought is creative of all things. The science of the angels is also intuitive, these pure spirits see the whole creation in a superior light reflected from the Word, the reason and cause of all that is. Their intuition and their comprehension coincide and are identified.¹⁴

In all other circumstances, the object will be better known by the intermediary of a similitude,¹⁵ of itself fitted to receive the light of intelligence. This grasping of an image by the intellect is known as the process of abstraction which differs radically from Bergson's immediacy.

In all matter, there is the principle of its being which the intellect is incapable of grasping immediately; it must, therefore, consider or abstract the form united with other elements in com-

secundum propinquitatem ad cognoscibile; et esse spirituale, vel immateriale, quod ei competit secundum quod habet esse in cognoscente; unde per speciem quae est in intellectu, melius cognoscitur aliquid quam per speciem quae in subjecto, quia est immaterialior; et similiter melius cognoscitur aliquid per speciem rei quae est in mente divina, quam per ipsam ejus essentiam cognosci possit; etiam dato quod essentia, rei posset esse medium cognoscendi, non obstante materialitate ipsius. *De Verit.*, q. 3, a. 1.

¹⁴ Ad tertium dicendum quod in cognitione est duo considerare: scilicet ipsam naturam cognitionis; et haec sequitur speciem secundum comparisonem quam habet ad intellectum in quo est; et determinationem cognitionis ad cognitum, et haec sequitur relationem speciei ad rem ipsam: unde quanto est similior species rei cognitae per modum representationis, tanto est cognitio determinatior; et quanto magis accedit ad immaterialitatem, quae est natura cognoscentis in quantum hujusmodi, tanto efficacius cognoscere facit. *De Verit.*, q. 3, a. 1.

Cf. A. Farges, *La Philosophie de M. Bergson*, p. 407.

¹⁵ Ad primum . . . dicendum quod perfectio cognitionis potest attendi vel ex parte cognoscentis, vel ex parte cogniti. Quod ergo dicitur quod perfectior est cognitio quae est per essentiam quam quae per similitudinem, intelligendum est ex parte cogniti. Illud enim quod per se ipsum est cognoscibile, est per se magis notum quam illud quod non est cognoscibile ex se ipso, sed solum secundum quod est in cognoscente per sui similitudinem. *De Verit.*, q. 3, a. 1.

Quanto species intelligibilis eminentior est in aliquo, tanto ex ea refingitur perfectior cognitio; sicut ex specie lapidis in intellectu quam in sensu. Unde per hoc Deus perfectissime potest cognoscere res per suam essentiam, in quantum sua essentia est supereminens similitudo rerum et non adaequata. *De Pot.*, q. 7, a. 7, ad 5.

position, in order to consider it in itself in its highest degree of immateriality. After an examination of the various characteristics of the object, the intellect by its own power discovers the communicability of forms rendered incommunicable by matter and in an indirect way unwraps these patterns. This intelligibility of things is found not by stripping the object of its individuating notes but by separating the form from matter. "*Quidditas rei materialis abstracta a notis individuantibus.*" In all creation, these determined forms determine matter realized in some individual. With this, science is not concerned but with the universal. "*Omnis scientia est universalis; quodam modo autem minime.*"¹⁶

Assimilation which is a condition of physical life is also a condition of mental life, for it is necessary that these abstract forms be assimilated by the intellect. That is, the form undergoes a transformation by the intellectus agens turning upon the phantasm to illuminate it. By this process, the intelligible element abstracted from the sensible species produces a knowledge of what the phantasm represents in the *intellectus possibilis*. This process varies according to the subjective power of each individual. "*Quod recipitur in aliquo recipitur in eo secundum modum recipientis.*" Reasoning is necessary on account of a defect of the intellect. "*Necessitas rationis est ex defectu intellectus.*"¹⁷ but this reasoning does not falsify the object as Bergson believes but only represents it imperfectly. *Abstrahentium non est mendacium*. Abstraction, by equating the object with the intellect, establishes truth. "*Veritas est adequatio rei cum intellectu.*" In the new philosophy, there is no adequation, but Bergson points the way toward what he considers absolute truth, through the identification of the known subject with its object in a reality which shall be lived, not translated into a system of concepts. There is the immediate plunge across the abyss, that separates life and intuition. Since there is no matter in the stream of life, there is no form,

En d'autres termes, il n'y a plus de personnes permanentes, ni de substances stables, ni de causes actives, mais seulement des actions sans agent, des

¹⁶ Arist., *Meta.*, I, XII, CX, Sec. 8.

¹⁷ Cf. *Summa*, II-II, q. 83, a. 10, ad 2; q. 49, a. 5, ad 3; I, q. 58, a. 3; I, q. 79, a. 9; *C. G.*, lib. I, cc. LXVII, LXVIII.

attributs sans sujet, des accidents sans substance, dans manières d'être sans être, un devenir perpétuel de ce qui ne peut jamais être.¹⁸

That which the mind intuits is a representation, a picture created by the imagination, whereas the concept which represents the nature or essence in an abstract condition is fixed, immaterial, necessary, eternal and the *medium quo* not the *medium quod* percipitur.

Thirdly, it is evident from the foregoing that Bergson's intuition is nothing but a "glorified instinct." By intuition, he says, "I mean instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely."¹⁹ Intuition takes its rise in instinct, and as it flows along, it bifurcates into two streams; the one, terminating in animal instinct, the other continuing into a vague nebulosity, the instinct enlarged and purified into intuition. Of this, the nucleus is made up of intelligence, the "condensation of a power more vast." The "fringe" that fades off into darkness, Bergson persists in saying, should have more importance for philosophy than the bright nucleus it surrounds. For it is its presence that enables us to affirm that the nucleus is a nucleus, that pure intellect is a contraction by condensation of a more extensive power.

Surely Bergson is speaking metaphorically where he invites us to turn from the nucleus to the indecisive penumbra that is lost in darkness; there where we fancy he has caught all movement, all life, all continuity, in fact, his whole metaphysics. But how shall we study this special form, this famous "fringe" except by the critique of our intelligence? To renounce the intelligence and to think without it, is only a chimerical method.

Bergson has failed to perceive that intellectual knowledge is of a deeper kind than sense knowledge. The animal has a cognitive immanence which places it above plant life but lower than man.²⁰ While the highest sense knowledge of the animal is bonded with the lower sense knowledge of man, still the intellectual knowledge of

¹⁸ A. Farges, *La Philosophie de M. Bergson*, p. 469.

¹⁹ A. Mitchell, *Bergson's Creative Evolution*, p. 176.

²⁰ *Natura superior in suo infima contigit naturam inferiorem in jus supremo.* St. Thomas, *De Divinis Nominibus*, C. 7, Lect. 4. C. G., lib. II, c. XCI; I, q. 57, a. 2. Cf. Comm. in Cajetan, I, q. 79, a. 3.

man rises to a higher perfection, to a kind of intuition, feeble it is true, but nevertheless, the link that binds it to the next higher order of intelligence, the angelic. Since Bergson's intuition is a "glorified instinct," it is in the sensitive order and can never hope to grasp essences and truth in judgments.

Bergson in explaining his doctrine of intuition, makes use of the word intuition in both its senses, philosophical and common, and does not thereby lessen the confusion and equivocation attendant upon it in the first place. For if he destroys true intellectual intuition, the weapon he uses is two-edged, for it destroys equally, intuition in the sense of knowledge that is lived, since it separates it from intelligence and makes it the operation of a power other than the intelligence. He makes of it a special faculty or rather a confusion of all the faculties.

All the influences, which flow from the coherence of our faculties and which suppose the cooperation and the harmony of all the forces of the soul, we believe, because we unite them under one name, constitute a single and unique operation, *sui generis*. Bergsonian intuition seems to us to be no more than an artificial forcing and concentration of only a few of our faculties. What is more, when intelligence is excluded, even in principle, there remains nothing but the sensitive faculties. This is the reason why Bergson assigns such preponderant rôles to imagination and thinking, to metaphor and emotion. His philosophy is in substance only an aggregate of sensible imagery, not a product of thought. The early Greeks endeavored to explain all things by the medium of air, water and fire; they drew on the sensible only, it is true, but at least the philosopher himself thought. Today, however, in the person of M. Bergson, he explains reality by feeling it.

According to him, sense dilation should bring attainment of the truth, the absolute, should make us one with the essence of things. Our answer is, that the senses may swell, but they will never thus arrive at truth. In spite of himself, even without acknowledging that he does so, Bergson is constrained to introduce intelligence and intellectual perception into his process; the only alternative is the assertion that we think with our senses. This latter process would truly be non-intellectual, yet would hardly deserve the ap-

pellation of supra-intellectual. Bergsonian intuition thus can only be said, in all its torturous windings, to be against the use of nature and to lead to a kind of naturalistic mysticism.

Non-Rational Approach of Rudolph Otto

Religion is not to be identified with knowledge, it is more than knowledge, though knowledge is an element in it; it is not feeling as with Schleiermacher who made it the immediate awareness of the Infinite in the finite, the Eternal in the temporal, the direct contact and fusion of the self with the divine; religion is based not on illusion as with Bertrand Russell; nor is it rooted in the irrational, the numinous of Otto; but it is based on that relationship of man to God, of the creature to the Creator. Man in presence of his God means, for St. Thomas, a spirit in presence of a spirit, a created spirit in relation to the Father of spirits. Religion is primarily of the soul and the intimate sentiments manifest themselves in an external form of worship. Professor Otto contends that a vast process of development was gone through before the first element of rational belief in a personal deity emerged; secondly, that the real essence of religion is the irrational Holy; that religion and morality were distinct in primary manifestation and that the two aspects of goodness and holiness united only later into a complex category without logical reasoning. In the first place, he attempts to give the genesis of historical development as a profane stage free from religious feeling, and in which remarkable things "had not yet even that which flavours the numinous." In doing this, he indulges in pure speculation without any attempt at proving any of his propositions. This assumption without facts psychological and ethnological, of a pre-religious period is but an imitation of another emotional theory of the psychology of religion that understresses the rational and the intellectual. "One must begin development with power not impotence; with the positive not the negative; with effort and efficiency in the search for a cause, and not with primeval stupidity."¹

Secondly, Professor Otto neglects the intellectual element in ex-

¹ W. Schmidt, *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, p. 153.

perience and makes the real essence of religion, the irrational; that non-ethical feeling "that issues from the soul's deepest source of cognition."² There is a feeling of something "wholly other," the sense of a presence *numen inest*. He makes the distinctively characteristic mark of the religious consciousness, the sense of the august sublimity and transcendence of God, "the High and Eminent One that inhabiteth Eternity, and His name is *Holy* who dwelleth in the high and holy place."³ The element peculiar to religion is the Holy. St. Thomas defines our attitude toward the Divine not as *awe*, something indefinable, historically underivable and *unentwickelbar*, but as *divina reverentia* the most constant motif which makes for religion. The virtue of religion puts one in an attitude of reverence before the dignity of the Creator, an attitude that requires the complete homage of soul and body, a spontaneous feeling of reverence which seizes one and which the Holy Spirit regulates in its activity by the supernatural gift of fear, "that perfect reverential fear, the fear that the angelic powers have before the infinite perfection of God."⁴ The fear that evinces itself by adoration and is altogether holy. This instinctive reverence is at the base of the honor that one gives to God; *principium omnium quae in Dei reverentiam observantur*.⁵ It is not the fear of being separated from the love of God, or fear of sin, but the fear that causes one to flee instinctively from God when one knows His sovereign excellence. *Quo quis refugit se Deo comparare reverendo ipsum*.⁶ Fear imports a certain reverence by which man does not dare to compare himself to the divine majesty but rather subjects himself to Him.⁷

St. Thomas distinguishes two aspects of fear, the fear of love, "timor separationis," and the fear properly reverential, "timor adequationis." John Baillie speaking on this subject says "Instead of *awe*, we should prefer to speak of *reverence* as the most

² *Ibid.*, p. 141.

³ *Isaias*, chap. LVII, 15.

⁴ Rt. Rev. D. Marmion, *Christ, the Life of the Soul*, p. 112.

⁵ *Summa*, II-II, q. 22, a. 1.

⁶ *Summa*, II-II, q. 97, a. 6.

⁷ Quod timor importat quamdam reverentiam per quam homo non audet divinae majestati se comparare, sed ei se subjicit. *De Verit.*, q. 28, a. 4, ad 4.

comprehensive of religious emotions; and though we should indeed hold that it is blended of two strains, and should hold one of these strains to be the respect and love of that which is good, we should hold the other to be not any feeling in itself and already religious, but rather the feeling aroused in us by power."⁸

Does Professor Otto mean by irrational that element in religion that cannot be defined or described, or does he mean that the non-rational is a sensation? If so, he fails to reconcile sensation which is *a posteriori* with the numinous which he says is *a priori*.

From the Holy, he excludes ethical elements as not belonging to primitive religion.

That the characteristic element in religion should be non-rational while morality should be characterized rational—that is a combination of views for which it seems impossible to conceive any justification. Surely, if the sense of the numinous is to be called non-rational, the sense of the moral obligation should be called non-rational too.⁹

From the facts ascertained by the anthropologist there is among primitive peoples a relationship between religion and morality, this relationship being either direct or indirect; there are duties to Deity or deities, and duties to fellow man.

All, or practically all peoples, consider it a matter of obligation, or of custom closely akin to obligation, to manifest in some form or another—through prayer or sacrifice or ceremonial or taboo—their reverence, fear, regard, dependence or other feeling or attitude to the Deity or deities.¹⁰

The advocates of early dissociation of morality and religion, as the evidence stands, have no warrant that there is any one people without some trace of either direct or indirect relationship.¹¹

⁸ J. Baillie, *The Interpretation of Religion*, p. 254.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

¹⁰ J. Cooper, "The Relations Between Religion and Morality," *Primitive Man*, Vol. IV, No. 3, July 1931.

There is no thorough study of the whole problem of religious-moral relations. A considerable number of pertinent facts have been assembled by E. Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., London, 1912, vol. 11, chap. 48-52; L. T. Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., London, 1908, vol. 11, chap. 2; E. C. Parsons, "Links Between Religion and Morality in Early Cultures," *American Anthropologist*, 1915, n. s., XVII, 41-57. Cf. *Primitive Man*, vol. IV, No. 3, July, 1931.

¹¹ Cf. W. Schmidt, *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee*.

From what reason does the Marburg Professor allow at a late period a rapprochement between religion and morality? When and why do two elements primitively separated become united? For no logical necessity but as a matter, of course, of the plainest and most obvious kind.

The histories of religion are in the habit of reporting the gradual, mutual interpenetration of these elements, and the process of ethicising of the Divine as if these things were in some sort, a matter of course. And they are a matter of course for that feeling which is inwardly aware of its own necessity. Yet this very self-evidence which attaches to these processes is itself a problem, and one which we cannot possibly solve without the supposition of a dim *a priori* knowledge of the essential and necessary relationship of the two elements. This relationship is in no sense logically necessary.¹²

No wonder such want of logical necessity or logical reasoning is the "most surprising circumstance in the history of religion." We cannot conclude that Professor Otto is either historically or philosophically sound in his "religious *a priori*." In the Marburg church where he attempts to carry out his religious convictions, Quaker quietism, the prayer of passive attention, and the dominant feature of external worship can never substitute for spiritual active contemplation that is essential for true mysticism, a union with God not by self-effort alone but by a gift from above, divine grace.

Supra-Scientific Mysticism of Arthur Eddington

We have seen first, that the form of mysticism that science knows and is concerned with is a natural mysticism, a mysticism that, as a philosophy, holds Reality to be One, ineffable and identical with self; second, that Professor Eddington's monistic conceptions of reality imply different ways of knowing it and that the experience of consciousness as an avenue of approach is intuitive and vague. We are now to consider first, whether interpreting in abstractions develops a true mysticism, a mysticism that has always been associated with the Church and her great mystic members whether it is just a mood that is idealistic and mystical; second,

¹² *Das Heilige*, pp. 167-168.

whether a spiritual reality requires a unique way of knowing it, differentiated from sense, experience and scientific knowledge, and whether a new knowledge, that inverts the order between knower and known, is acceptable.

First, we must admit a radical distinction between natural mysticism and supernatural mysticism, a distinction according as man lives in the natural or the supernatural order. For a clear explanation of the terms nature, natural and supernatural we refer to St. Thomas. When he says that it is the nature of fire to burn, he understands the term nature to signify what Aristotle meant by it, that is, "*Natura nihil aliud est, quam principium motus et quietis in eo in quo est, primo et per se, et non secundum accidens.*"¹ When he says nature is *generatio*,² he takes it to signify a birth, in the same sense in which St. Paul says, "we are by nature the sons of wrath." *Sumus natura filii irae*. He interprets it also to mean *principium hujus generationis*, the intrinsic or vital principle in all living things; or again, he refers to it as the essence of a thing, *principium radicale operationum et passionum quae ei per se conveniunt*.³

That is natural which is proportionate or determined to its nature, that is, all that which constitutes the being in its species, its essence, its faculties together with all that exercises their functions, and when it acts as a moral being, the just sanction of its acts. Man is so constituted in the natural order that he is able to seek God, his final end, by the light of reason, to use creatures to assist him to attain his end, to exercise his faculties, especially his intellect and will, and by obedience to the natural law ingrained in his heart to merit a reward for his works or a punishment for his faults.

By correlation, all that exceeds the proportion of his nature in essence, passivities, powers, exigencies and reward, is in the supernatural order. "*Id quod excedit proportionem ejus naturae eamque gratuito perficere potest.*" Supernatural then refers to those advantages which man cannot acquire by himself, but which the

¹ In II *Physicorum*, lec. 1.

² *Natura dicta sicut generatio, id est nativitas est via in naturam.* In II *Physicorum*, lec. II.

³ Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*.

Creator bestows upon him by virtue of His wisdom and justice, and not because of his act of Creation.

Each nature has its own limits and its capacity to act, but as it is dependent upon the Creator for its being and actions, it is necessary that it be elevated by the Creator to receive or to do that which it would be incapable of doing by itself. This obediential power has no other limits but the intrinsic possibility of things. A few examples will serve to illustrate. The potter perfects the clay in his hands when he molds it into a form which was potential to it, but which, of its nature, it was not able to attain without an artificer. In the order of nature, the fish swims and is guided to its end by its vegetative and sensitive powers. If God should elevate it by giving it reasoning powers fitted to perceive that which it could not naturally perceive, this would be to transcend the natural. To resuscitate life is in the natural order of affairs, but to bring back life to a person already dead is supernatural. Such was Christ's act in the raising to life of Lazarus. Following a known physical law, a stone cast into the sea falls to the bottom; should we find it floating upon the water, we immediately ascribe this condition to a power which it does not possess. Again, God has provided for the very young child a mother to dispense the means of nourishing that child. There is nothing supernatural in the way the mother receives and gives to her child the milk upon which it lives; should she or others fail to make the necessary provision, God would not be bound to supply the deficiency, but should He in His goodness sustain the child without any nourishment, this would be an act in the supernatural order, in the broad sense of the term.

So, too, in speaking of the human mind as having capacity to act according to its nature, the Angelic Doctor states that when a higher power, as God, enables it to act above its natural capacity, this is an obediential power in the creature.

*In anima humana, sicut in qualibet creatura, consideratur duplex potentia passiva; una quidem per comparationem ad agens naturale; alia vero per comparationem ad agens primum quod potest quamlibet creaturam reducere in actum aliquem altiore, in quem reducitur per agens naturale; et haec consuevit vocari potentia obedientiae in creatura.*⁴

⁴ *Summa*, III, q. XI, a. 1.

Grace in the supernatural order presupposes nature; first there is the foundation namely, nature; then the structure built upon it which is grace. There must then be a relation between the natural and the supernatural as they both have their origin in God, the font of truth. They can easily be distinguished but not separated. There are truths, such as those of science, that belong to reason and nature, and truths supernatural that are of revelation and faith. A harmonious and helpful relation exists between faith and science. Newman expressed it when he said that all truth is of God, and therefore, from whatever source truths are derived they must be capable of harmonious adjustment. As for mutual assistance, reason prepares for faith, explains and defends it; faith corrects reason and is an enlightenment to its problems. *Credo ut intelligam; intelligo ut credam.* St. Thomas says, "Faith presupposes natural knowledge, as grace presupposes nature, as perfection presupposes something perfectible." *Fides praesupponit cognitionem naturalem, sicut gratia naturam et ut perfectio perfectibile.*⁶ To which the Council of the Vatican supplements *recta ratio fidei fundamenta demonstrat.*

Those who oppose themselves to such harmony declare that philosophical reason is the supreme judge, the autonomic of the value of religious faith, and is able of itself to find what is true in faith. *Rationem humanam ita independentem esse, ut fides ei a Deo imperari non potest.*⁶ They also make a strong opposition between supernatural and contranatural, maintaining that supernatural is contranatural.⁷ That to which man is not naturally inclined but to which he must do violence to overcome his natural propensities is truly contranatural. Is not this what the great mystics, well disciplined in mortification, are doing to overcome nature?

Between the natural and the supernatural is placed the inter-

⁶ *Summa*, I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1.

⁶ H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, n. 1810, p. 481, ed. 1908.

⁷ *Sed vita supernaturalis non est contra nostram naturam ut natura est, eam gratuito perficit secundum mirabilem harmoniam quae praesertim apparet in vita illuminativa et unitiva Sanctorum et excellentissime in Christo.* Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*, p. 202.

mediate concept preternatural signifying a privilege which perfects nature without going out beyond its own limits.⁸

The mystic states are called supernatural in a special sense, because nature is especially powerless to place them there. In mysticism man is in the supernatural order when the life to which God raises him exceeds the capacities, strength, and exigencies of his nature, when he lives and moves in virtue of an interior principle, when another life, as it were, conspires with it in an exquisite new unity, when without the destruction of his nature he is raised above his nature by grace. Grace makes him a participant of the Divine Nature "*consortes divinae naturae.*" By this is meant that in this life his nature, elevated by sanctifying grace, "*gratia nihil aliud est quam quaedam inchoatis gloriae in nobis,*"⁹ by infused virtues and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by the light of faith and by the exercise of supernatural virtues, comes by intuitive vision to a quasi-experimental perception of God, to love Him as a Being most worthy to be loved. "*Par le coeur nous sommes a Dieu et il est a nous; il est notre et nous sommes siens; il nous appartient.*"¹⁰ This action is a healthy, normal action of psychological and moral life, but in virtue of its own power cannot effect a supreme union with God. Grace, the help and gratuitous gift which God bestows on receptive souls, must be the intermediary, the link to bind the activity to a supernatural end. Grace makes him a participator in the Divine Life itself, makes him a "new creature, a member of the family of the Trinity."¹¹ This transformation does not change nature, this communication of grace to the soul does not make a different sort of a person, but just himself living his own life, yet in vital union with an essentially higher One. It perfects nature, "*cum gratia non tollat naturam*

⁸ A contranaturali distinguitur etiam praeternaturale: praeternaturalia dicuntur miracula prout eorum supernaturalitas inferiori est supernaturalitate gratiae praesertim, miracula inferioris ordinis dicuntur "praeter naturam" potius quam "supra naturam." *De Pot.*, q. 6, a. 2, ad 3.

⁹ *Summa*, I-II, q. 24, a. 3, ad 2.

¹⁰ Noble, *L'Amitie avec Dieu*, p. 133.

¹¹ Dr. F. J. Sheen, *The Life of All Living*, p. 172.

sed perficiat."¹³ Just as a tree grafted produces fruits that it would not have without graft, but produces them by the movement of the sap and of all its natural energies; and as by graft the fruits are better, so too the soul through contemplation is enriched by God with new properties. The true mystic realizing that he has no right to God, comes by an ascesis of asceticism and prayer to the highest state of contemplation which St. Thomas defines "as a simple intellectual intuition of truth . . . ending in an affective movement of the heart." *Contemplatio pertinet ad intuitum simplicis veritatis . . . in affectum terminatur.*¹⁴ When the mystic emerges from the Land of Promise, still conscious of his experience, he has a stammering tongue. To those who have not been there, he can give no clear account of what he has seen. He breaks off exclaiming, "Words are futile." After the experience is passed, there is his great anxiety as to the meaning that should be given to it. "A sort of immediate, indisputable, inevitable, evidential quality takes the place of dry banal knowledge."¹⁴

Not all mystical states are of the same order. The ecstatic form, an accidental rather than an essential phenomenon, may sometimes need the application of a criterion to distinguish what is of divine origin. Mystics are in all walks of life, they are within the monastery, in convents as well as outside, among poets, artists and musicians as well as among those of low degree of learning.

Reading the lives of the mystics one can admire the constancy of action and the enduring love and the joyfulness of heart with which they passed through the purgative and illuminative ways to close union with God. Such mysticism is religion of the highest type. This mystic path, as we have followed it, is supernatural, reasonable, simple and direct in its approach to God.

The mysticism of our idealists is nothing more than a generalization of past experiences, nothing more than ascribing objective

¹³ *In natura animae vel ejus cumque creaturae rationalis est aptitudo quaedam ad gratiae susceptionem et per gratiam susceptum fortificatur in debitis actibus. . . . Gratia naturam perficit et quantum ad intellectum et quantum ad voluntatem et quantum ad inferiores animae partes obedibiles rationi.*

¹⁴ *Summa*, II-II, q. 180, a. 3, ad resp.

¹⁴ Père de Grandmaison, *Personal Religion*, p. 121.

existence to the subjective creations of their own faculty, to ideas or feelings of the mind, and believing that by watching and contemplating these ideas of their own making, they can read into them what takes place in the world without.¹⁵ This naturalistic mysticism concerns the religious feelings as the "natural religious consciousness of men, as excited and influenced by the circumstances of the individual."¹⁶ The theosophical mysticism which does not profess any dogma but is a *potpourri* of all Eastern exoteric forms of religion, is a mysticism of "pure human invention like so many wild trees the branches of which have not been grafted by divine grace; so many human efforts incurably vitiated and sterilized by naturalism."¹⁷ Such mysticism is not religion nor is it a basis or a substitute for religion, for the mystic though he may be all faith, all love, all vision, is *in vacuo* without an objective. True mysticism recognizes this objective and directs to it by rendering to God the reverence which is His due. The contemplation of the modern mystic is formless, lifeless, a part of experience that takes on the appearance of life, because stimulated by a temperament which some modern psychologists are trying by questionnaire method to associate as mystical. "Such an inquiry may lead to the classification of a type of character, but not to the understanding of an inward experience nor to the existence of any higher mystic experience, among those belonging to this type."¹⁸

The danger of such mysticism is that it weakens the rational and practical side of religion, and inclines to substitute pan-absorption for spiritual communion. Such an implication of absorption is found in the writings of Professor Eddington and thus rests upon a theory of knowledge that true philosophy cannot sustain.

We pass then to a consideration of this epistemological problem, to find that a new faculty is employed for the purpose of knowing Reality, and that when known, the subject-object relation is transcended.

¹⁵ Cf. J. S. Mill, *Logic*, Bk. 5, chap. 3, sec. 4.

¹⁶ B. B. Warfield, *Studies in Theology*, p. 654.

¹⁷ A. Farges, *Mystical Phenomena*, p. 583.

¹⁸ Dom. A. Walsh, "Mysticism Viewed by Some Philosophers," *The Placidian*, 5 (1928), 19. Cf. Sixth International Congress of Philosophy held at Harvard University, Sept. 1926.

Quite apart from sense experience and scientific reasoning, mystical consciousness is a unique way in which Professor Eddington has of knowing the spiritual.

We treat it (consciousness), in what seems to be its obvious position as the avenue of approach to the reality and significance of the world, as it is the avenue of approach to all scientific knowledge of the world.¹⁸

This approach is intuitive and vague. An ambiguity as to the use of the term consciousness is, perhaps, responsible for this vagueness. By consciousness, he understands that part of the mind that has feelings of value, of purpose, of inner convictions that assure him of a spiritual world and even of a personality as the form of Reality of which he is convinced.

In a yearning towards God the soul grows upward and finds the fulfilment of something implanted in its nature. The sanction for this development is within us, a striving born with our consciousness or an Inner Light proceeding from a greater power than ours.¹⁹

This independent objective reality does not owe its being to consciousness that knows it, it is simply an object of consciousness in the same way as trees, men, present facts, reasoning and discussions, pains, pleasures and emotions. Just as objects in the light are not the light, so objects in consciousness are not the consciousness. It is known, however, through immediate vision, through experience, for the necessary connection between subject and object is lacking.

The second view that our Professor most frequently adopts is that Reality is part of and continuous with our own spirit. He takes point of departure in this with St. Thomas who sees Reality as objective and connected with the subject, Ego, under the influence of evidence and in the light of truth. This subjective attitude makes of Reality a mind-stuff, something fundamentally continuous with our spiritual nature, a background that is of a piece with human consciousness. It makes Reality conscious and yet not conscious, for he says it "rises to the level of consciousness only in the form of those 'islands' which are human beings. Now according to a fundamental principle, a thing cannot be and

¹⁸ A. Eddington, *Nature of the Physical World*, p. 348.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

not be, viewed under the same formal aspect, it cannot be above consciousness and yet below, if it is a piece and continuous with it, it is not independent, if it is mental, it cannot be the personality of which he is convinced. Reality is, as it were, imprisoned and incarcerated within the walls of self and such subjectivism is intolerable, both emotionally and practically, because it 'reduces life to a soliloquy'.²¹

The third attitude which consciousness takes of Reality is to make of it a product of creation.

We have built the spiritual world out of symbols taken from our own personality . . . and in the mystical feeling the truth is apprehended from within and is as it should be, a part of ourselves.²²

Consciousness then being a creative faculty casts what it pleases into the background. Does the fact that a Reality is projected make of it a certainty, does it verify its existence? Is it not in truth existing anteriorly to anything that may be said about it, any place to which the mind may assign it? An attitude has been taken to something that was believed not to be there before, and the power which the mind has of putting it there eliminates the activity of the senses, through which St. Thomas says all knowledge must come. Plato and Aristotle both admit that

a philosopher by no means derives his knowledge of divine things solely from his divinely inspired inner consciousness, but he has at the same time to refer to tradition, to which religious sanction is attached.²³

Once we admit that mind may contribute to the objects it knows, that its capacity is in part, constructive

then I know of no method, says Joad, by which we can assign limits to the exercise of this capacity. It seems, in other words, to be impossible to assert of any object that is known or of any part of the object known, that it does not owe its existence as object or as part to the fact of our knowing it. If this impossibility be admitted, there is no longer any basis for maintaining a realist view of the universe. Hence, to admit that the mind can do anything to what it knows, is to open the floodgates to the waters of Idealism.²⁴

²¹ C. A. Bennett, *The Dilemma of Religious Knowledge*, p. 109.

²² A. Eddington, *Nature of the Physical World*, pp. 337 and 321.

²³ Willman, *Geschichte des Idealismus*, I, 411 and 453.

²⁴ C. Joad, *Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science*, p. 262.

This mystical consciousness, whether it knows the spiritual world as an independent, continuous or projected object of existence, is an irrational approach. It sets itself up as a special faculty for knowing in a different way from sense data, and reasoning in the world of sense and science.

By what means our scientist learned to transcend his thoughts so as to become a perfect copy of Reality we cannot say, except it be by a wish fulfillment which stands higher to him than the powers of pure reasoning. Do different appearances of the one object require different faculties for knowing it? It would seem this is the conclusion of our Professor. Even when we have not one reality and two appearances of it, but different realities, must we have different ways of knowing them? By the light which St. Thomas throws upon the problem of knowledge there is seen *one* way and only one. The problem as set forth by him is to be understood provided a differentiation of office is placed upon the intellect and its object. The transforming power which the intellect has of raising the sensible to a degree of likeness itself, must be accounted for through the intermediary and assisting factor, the phantasm. To enable the sensible species to become the intelligible form of the intellect, it has to undergo a real transformation and the active intellect must be turned upon the phantasms in order to illuminate them. This illumination of the sensible species is the true sense of abstraction. The knowledge process, beginning in unlikes and ending in likes, makes man an endowed creature capable of knowing the world outside him, and in the spiritual world a Creator, but without knowing the fullness of His nature. This one way of knowing will account for the real, the scientific and the spiritual world and the experience arising from each of them. There are other kinds of knowledge, according to St. Thomas, that are more perfect. The supreme ideal of intelligence would be intuition, *per intuitum simplicis veritatis*, a single, immobile, comprehensive act which grasps unity in itself but which we cannot reach except by *componendo et dividendo*. The intuitive knowledge is the most complete and better form. Our knowledge begins with the senses which give us the singular, the individual, but it is impossible for the intellect to apprehend this directly, "*impossibile est singulare ab intellectu apprehendi directe,*" but

we obtain by the abstractive process the direct intellectual knowledge of the universe, also an intuitive and individual intellectual knowledge of one ego which, "it is true, is not a complete intuition because we grasp neither the nature of our being nor its entire history."²⁵ It is God alone with His Divine Intellect that knows intuitively the individual.²⁶ His intelligence is Pure Intuition—"Perfectius (res) cognoscitur per Verbum quam per seipsam etiam inquantum est talis."²⁷ Man does not possess as a special power an intellect by which he attains simply and absolutely and without discursive steps to the knowledge of truth. "*Deus cognoscit res alias a se, non solum in universali, sed etiam in singulari.*"²⁸ According to his nature he sees dimly, as it were, in a glass, but in the Beatific Vision, his Creator face to face. We cannot by reflection find a region or define a region into which the intellect cannot come. Intuition and intelligence are not different, they are both the mind in action. Intuition contains first principles, intellect applies these principles in the sensible and the intellectual orders that come before it. They are inseparable, they constitute a working pair.²⁹ Simple truths are known by mental habits of understanding, reorganization of more complex truths by the habit of science, mental dexterity in handling principles and conclusions according to the spirit of wisdom; but there is developed such spontaneous, natural and quick final judgments, that reasoning seems to be eliminated and the whole process to be intuitive although it is strictly intellectual. St. Thomas expresses this idea by saying:

The power of intellect first of all apprehends something and this act is

²⁵ Ogiati-Zybura, *The Key to the Study of St. Thomas*, p. 120.

²⁶ *C. G.*, lib. I, C. 65.

²⁷ *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 16, ad 2.

²⁸ *C. G.*, lib. I, C. 65.

"Il n'y a aucune 'saisie immédiate' de Dieu d'ordre naturel; une contemplation mystique (authentique) d'ordre naturel est une contradiction dans les termes; une expérience authentique des choses divines, un contact senti avec Dieu, un *patis divina*, ne peut avoir lieu que dans l'ordre de la grâce sanctifiante." J. Maritain, "Expérience Mystique et Philosophie," *Revue de Philosophie*, 33 (1926), 594.

²⁹ *Intelligere autem dicit nihil aliud quam simplicem intuitum intellectus in id quod sibi est praesens intelligibile. I d, 3 q. a. 4, a. 5.*

called *understanding*; secondly, however, it takes that which it apprehends and orders it toward knowing or doing something else, and this is called *intention*; whilst, however, it is engaged in the inquiry of that which it intends, it is called *excogitation*; but when it examines that which it has thought out with other certain truths, it is said to know or to be wise, and this is the function of *phronesis* (*φρόνησις*) or *sapientia*; for it is the function of wisdom, to judge.³⁰

Corresponding to these habits are the gifts of understanding, intellectus; knowledge, scientia; and wisdom, sapientia, which St. Thomas uses in his spiritual system.³¹

Intuition cannot exist as a separate faculty as a sufficient way of knowing. It has three defects, says Hocking.

It cannot define *what* it perceives; for a definition makes use of a concept. It cannot *communicate* what it perceives; for language is made of the common coin of concepts. It cannot *defend its truth* nor *distinguish true from false interpretation* without the aid and criticism of the intellect.³²

As it was distrust of intellect that led Eddington to appeal to mystical consciousness as a distinct faculty, so it is the same intellect that gives us certainty that it can take care of the spiritual. In placing the scientific world between the physical and the spiritual, the Professor made it a pure mental construction, an abstract form. This is wrong for two reasons, because abstract forms are incommunicable and immovable and never permit of true knowledge; and secondly, because it is ridiculous to have abstract realms when we can get knowledge from the concrete world around us.

We maintain that both experience and reason will lead to the discovery of Reality, that they go hand in hand as we experience

³⁰ *Summa*, I, q. 79, a. 10, ad 3.

³¹ Sed differentia hujus doni intellectus ad alia tria, scilicet sapientiam, scientiam et consilium, quae etiam ad vim cognoscitivam pertinent, non est adeo manifesta. Videtur autem quibusdam quod donum intellectus distinguatur a dono scientiae et consilii per hoc quod illa duo pertinent ad practicam cognitionem, donum autem intellectus ad speculativam; a dono vero sapientiae, quod etiam ad speculativam cognitionem pertinet, distinguitur in hoc quod ad sapientiam pertinet iudicium, ad intellectum vero capucelas intellectus eorum quae proponuntur, seu penetratio ad intima eorum. Et secundum hoc supra numerum donorum assignavimus. *Summa*, II-II, q. 8, a. 6, c.

³² W. Hocking, *Types of Philosophy*, p. 211.

self and non-self, the inner and the outer worlds. By consciousness we understand nothing else but the intellect apprehending present internal facts and phenomena, in as much as they are the modifications of the self. The ego is the subject which receives, remembers, compares, combines or separates the ideas, volitions and feelings which make up individual life. By one concrete act both the facts and the phenomena are apprehended. Although consciousness is a condition of knowledge, it is not a universal criterion of truth, for it makes known only present internal facts, and says nothing about the nature of these facts, nor is it a cause or motive of certitude.

An attempt to draw knowledge from a vague inner experience that took birth in the mind is abortive. A feeling of value is always consequent to the perception and knowledge of an object's existence and can never be the cause. Feelings of value pass into a religious conviction, that these values are the shadowings of a perfect Divine Reality which is beyond' imagination, but is all the heart's desire. Had our scientist chosen *Conscience* a word closely akin in etymological construction to consciousness, he might have discovered his goal much more easily, for in the depths of personality can be found traces of God. He has not left himself without a witness in conscious life. "O man," says St. Augustine, "go not abroad, retire into thyself for truth dwells in the inner man."³³ Cardinal Newman in the *Apologia* tells us that he would be an atheist, a pantheist or a polytheist were it not for God's voice speaking to him through conscience. Eddington, too, could have heard that small voice had he listened. Even as he paused in his reasoning when he abstracted his scientific knowledge from table No. 1, he had already a notion of *being*, of something existing together with a knowledge of first principles, the germ of knowledge. *Intellectus naturaliter cognoscit ens.*

He who admits that intellect can safely assert that it reaches the absolute when it says *something exists*; he who grants the objective validity of the notion of being, cannot consistently stop half way, but is inevitably drawn within the domain of Thomistic Metaphysics.³⁴

³³ St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 55, 7.

³⁴ Olgiati-Zybura, *The Key to the Study of St. Thomas*, p. 45.

Men like Eddington and Jeans have acquired a sensitiveness of mental vision, an attitude toward the spiritual, and because of this have penetrated more deeply into the secrets of the universe. Should they, however, see Reality as the theologian, they would concern themselves not only with facts but with divine causation, that lies outside the experience of natural phenomena by natural causes, they would find the spiritual world with a Divine Personality.

The tendency today is for the sensation of an object rather than the object itself and for the structure or relation of things in mathematical symbols. Those men who have "gone mystic" have heard no little grumbling from others in the rank and file of science about false appearances created by their championing this kind of thought.

The return of science to some sort of modern mysticism, would be essentially a step in man's hard-won progress away from one of his most ancient bad habits, that of ascribing to the supernatural whatever he did not understand.²²

Intellectual men seek to reach the real by abstraction, argumentation, and analysis; emotional men by feeling without intellectual direction; wise men by knowing all things in their ultimate causes. They are the philosophers who control common sense, the domain to which belong God's existence. Now common sense declares God to be an objective reality. This deduction is made from primary data apprehended by observation, and first principles apprehended by the intellect. This certainty of common sense is as well founded as the certainty of science. According to Mr. Eddington's science God is *mental stuff*, therefore, he looks within himself to find God there. God is immanent, but there is only poverty about such reasoned thought of God as "to think that God exists." We must postulate a Personal God choosing to create an ordered universe, and we have the one and only condition that can explain what we see and know.

To make room for the supernatural Being in our lives, the "Western mind," says Adams, "must turn again from the surface of being, where the intellect plays its calculating game with the

²² Scientific American, *Science and Mysticism*, Oct. 1933.

things of the world, to its innermost being where the things of the world are silent and God speaks. Only in the depths of such a merciless return to itself, when the whole being is pressed back into one part, and the cold clear light of eternal things play upon it, will it be able to realize the enormity of its questionable, dishonest and godless things. Only hearts shaken to their depths can find the deeper nature; only the fully contrite man is on the right road to God." **

** K. Adams, *Christ and the Western Mind*, p. 40.

CONCLUSION

We have, then, in the course of this dissertation, traced the historical background of mysticism, and found that there were periods when spirituality was intensely practical as well as theoretical when false mysticism exposed Christian society to great danger; when spiritual teaching, which departed from a firm theological foundation, was looked upon with suspicion. Then we witnessed the rise of Phenomenology, a mystical trend which entered modern philosophy. We have shown that there is now a tendency to reject externality and transcendence; to think in terms of what is called experience, and that this recent tendency has been to characterize the non-intellectual approach to God as mystical.

The three types which we selected for a critical appreciation are first, the infra-intellectual approach of religious experience represented by William James; second, the supra-intellectual approach of intuitionism, the proponents, Henri Bergson and Rudolph Otto; third, the supra-scientific approach of scientific mysticism with Arthur Eddington as chief exponent.

William James has first of all made religion purely subjective. Mental activity as the basis of religious experience leads only to a revelation of something within man, not to the revelation of a God outside him; secondly, his theory of the subconscious was found not to be consistent with the psychological analysis of religious facts nor with his metaphysical hypothesis that makes religion arise from the consciousness of an identity between the personal Ego and the Ego more vast. James attempts to explain religious life by taking from it the very essence of religion, namely, the real relation that exists between man and God, and the logical relation that exists between God and man.

Pseudo-mysticism, as a form of religious experience, was found to have in it a preponderance of feeling, and a separation of this element from the rational and moral elements of the personality to have a deleterious effect on the stability of practical religion. For the affective approach to God represents to some the height of religious fervor; while in reality it suggests the dethronement of reason and the extravagant visions of a disordered imagination.

To discover and guarantee the divine existence, Bergson thinks the intellect perverts reality, and therefore he calls in a separate faculty, intuition. He believes that the way into the profounder levels of life is not to be found by means of a physical, psychological or intellectual insight. A view of his theory forces the conclusions, first, that his confusions of intellect and reason, or even his assignment of intellect to a subordinate position of cutting into distinct parts the continuity of the universe, is a rejection of truth. Mere thought without its relation to reality gives the idea of God but not his objective existence; second, Bergson's intuition undervalues the logical elements of the work of knowledge. He makes for the intuitive knowledge an identification of object and subject according to the mode of being of the object; hence a confusion of mind with reality.

With Professor Otto, the real essence of religion is the irrational. He assumes that a vast process of development was gone through before the first element of rational belief in a personal deity emerged. This is idle speculation with no attempt at proof.

The mystic approach which the scientist makes to Reality is as non-intellectual as that of the intuitionist. "Inner conviction," says Joad, "reached by non-rational ones, must carry its guarantee of authenticity within itself." Mystical consciousness, the unique way in which Professor Eddington has of knowing the spiritual, results in a conclusion that Reality lies beyond, that it is discoverable by a knowledge akin to our knowledge of self. But such a conclusion has been arrived at from premises that are nothing more than creations of his own mind. He believes that by contemplating these ideas he can read into them what takes place in the world without. This mysticism cannot be a trustworthy approach to God.

Finally, a discrimination has been made between this so-called mysticism based on philosophy and true mysticism based on theology; the one purely natural and non-intellectual, the other, wholly intellectual and supernatural.

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