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Message from the President

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I

Although words and texts are the central referents for reflective activity in the arts and letters, the publishing industry has never had a halcyon relationship with the disciplines that come within the rubric of the humanities. It is a rare occasion today when a humanist finds a thoroughly sympathetic publisher following faithfully the tradition of such Renaissance scholar-printers as Aldus Manutius! Apprising businesses of the virtues of our intellectual heritage in an increasingly non-literary culture is perhaps a more daunting task, though one not to be shirked given present trends, than for humanists to go into the publishing business for themselves.

As is well known only a small fraction of publications in, for instance, philosophy are commercial successes. The bulk of the output in the discipline is artificially supported by other publications and by various, primarily governmental, subsidies, the distribution of which proceeds through the conduits of academic editorial committees, on to libraries and into the hands of those with a special interest in the subject.

The publication of journals in the humanities is a component of academic life that is currently undergoing a reappraisal. In many instances libraries now face decisions about how many humanistic journals should be delisted if a new scientific publication is to be acquired. Humanities journals also face a growing problem of funding.Larger proportions of the membership fees to Learned Societies are going into scholarly publication. Government too is having second thoughts about supporting journals whose reading clientele could easily fit into the author's car.

There is also the problem of access. Younger writers, and those not working in the mainstream, as well as some established authors, often find it difficult to get their articles accepted for publication. Too much energy, that could be more profitably employed, is spent trying to find a suitable journal or amenable editor. When one is eventually found, considerable time usually lapses before it ends up in print. Out of this milieu a great deal of standardized and mediocre work finds a ready outlet, while inspiring pieces are often left to wither on the desk of the jaded craftsman.

There are a number of causes which have led to this parlous state of affairs. Overspecialization in the humanities, in recent decades, has created an ever increasing spate of journals. Esoteric subspecialities have very small subscriber lists. By definition many such publications rarely address the fundamental concerns of thinking and living. They are thus devoid of a vibrancy and spirit that would make one want to preserve them at all costs. Another problem, not unrelated to the issue of specialization, is that much material is published primarily for the external reason of gaining security and promotion within the university hierarchy. Apart from the rather curious spectacle of taxpayers' money being used to further lighten the public treasury, this situation has led to uniformity and a serious decline in the weight given to the content of what is written. Artificial methodological standards and restrictions have been superimposed upon publications in the humanities that are foreign to the essential orientation of these disciplines.

Self-institutionalization and self-publication have been common in our cultural tradition. The list of famous texts that were originally produced through the author's financial and even technical support - texts which have often spawned their own industry of secondary literature - is extensive. The established knowledge industry has a tendency to view this disdainfully as vanity publishing, while others see it as indicative of the innovative and original rebelling against a more oppressive form of intellectual culture. A typical concern, for instance, is thought to be that a decline occurs in editorial standards when there is an increase in self-publishing. Equally, however, this thinking can be seen as the desire to maintain a hegemony over any challenges to accepted intellectual beliefs since it assumes that all

literary production must for some reason be policed.

It is not improbable that in the coming years humanistic publication, and the associated activities of scholars in general, will undergo a considerable shift from governmental to private funding. The transition will be difficult for many. Others will resist the change by continuing the call for more government funding. Some will simply be resigned to the inevitable and do nothing. If this change from a social to an individual basis in the financial under-structure of intellectual activity in such areas as philosophy and literature does occur, as I think it will, then the varied interplays between trade and business and the more noble pursuits will once again assume their traditional place. With some exceptions, worthwhile artists, philosophers, poets and teachers have always been able to find patrons, supporters and followers because they speak to the elemental and the significant in the thought and life of all people, no matter how dimly felt and unarticulated. The socialized bureaucratic dispensation of cultural benefits appears to encourage an abstract self-referentiality. What is methodologically sound and fashionable is copiously sponsored, while insight, depth of thinking and coherent reflection are too often shunted aside.

II

The Institute has been attempting to address these issues by means of both its theoretical and practical constitution which is partially reflected in its publishing agenda. We have recently launched a campaign to introduce libraries and interested individuals to the concept of a looseleaf publication in the humanities, and more particularly in philosophy. Legal practitioners and researchers are already quite familiar with looseleaf services. In the humanities, however, the traditional journal has remained the format of choice for most editors. The primary disadvantages to such a format are high costs, lack of flexibility in adding new features, such as supplements, and significant time lags in publishing already accepted articles and essays. By distributing ***ELEUTHERIA*** in a looseleaf format we hope that a paradigm will be created, using modern technology, so that humanistic publications will become accessible and affordable, while serving more adequately the aims of writing in philosophy and its related disciplines. I encourage all members to bring the Institute's looseleaf service for ***ELEUTHERIA*** to the attention of university and public libraries as well as to individuals.

Another feature of ***ELEUTHERIA*** that we regard as important is its wholly non-governmental source of funding. What we are trying to create is a capital endowment fund out of which will come sufficient income to finance this publication and eventually a more expansive publishing program. Our **LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS** are an aspect of this effort. Capital funding, in place of operating grants, for publications in the humanities is quite unusual in the current environment, where governments are the primary sponsors of such publications. Individuals are the best source of capital donations. Although building up capital endowments is initially quite time consuming and painstaking, especially in the context of the humanities, over the long term the payoff in terms of security and a reduction in energy expended on fund-raising is significant.

On February 2nd of this year I addressed the Board of Directors of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities with a presentation entitled “Learned Societies, Funding and Tax Law”. The proper and informed utilization of charitable tax law is an integral part of limiting the dependency of learned societies on government funding. Although donations to arts and culture rank low in the charitable priorities of most Canadians, it is now necessary for humanities scholars to focus on new sources of funding. Persuading donors to give to the humanities will also help these disciplines clarify to themselves their activities both in relation to the nature and purpose of their undertaking as well as with respect to their role in our overall cultural development. There will undoubtedly be casualties in this process, but a more vital, rich and surefooted community of active players in the humanities may very well emerge.

On March 31st the Institute sponsored a seminar in Ottawa entitled “Understanding Modernity”, which was led by Peter McCormick who gave a critical review of and a commentary on Charles Taylor's new book *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Out of that seminar came the review which is included in this issue of ***ELEUTHERIA***. It is expected that early in the Fall the Institute will hold another seminar in Ottawa wherein Taylor's work will be further examined and contrasted with Stephen Toulmin's new book *Cosmopolis*. Occasional seminars and presentations on various topics related to speculative philosophy are an aspect of the work

of the Institute.

UNDERSTANDING MODERNITY

Peter McCormick

Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity by *Charles Taylor* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1989), Pp.xii + 601.

I

Charles Taylor, the distinguished Canadian philosopher and political scientist, believes that one of the most pressing tasks of today, the modern predicament, is coming to "a renewed understanding of modernity", of what are the "momentous transformations of our culture and society over the last three or four centuries," (Preface, ix. See also the recent interview in *The Idler*, January-February, 1990). He also believes that one central way of shouldering this task is to describe the elements and the history of what he calls the modern identity, that is, "the ensemble of (largely unarticulated) understandings of what it is to be a human agent: the senses of inwardness, freedom, individuality, and being embedded in nature which are at home in the modern West" (ix).

Why this emphasis on understanding modernity and on articulating identity? The short answer is that Taylor thinks such a project follows from his initial "intuition" that many of us today "tend in our culture to stifle the spirit," to "scale down our hopes and circumscribe our vision" (520). To recover and retrieve many of the buried "empowering goods" in our culture requires of us a new attempt both to characterize that culture more fully and to trace its development more sharply. The long answer, and it is a very long book, is Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity,* a substantial work that stimulates fresh reflections on understanding modernity.

Taylor divides his long story into five unequal parts, each bearing an evocative title - identity and the good, inwardness, the affirmation of ordinary life, the voice of nature, and subtler languages. Each part is subdivided into a number of detailed and heavily annotated chapters - twenty-five in all. Each chapter is then subdivided further into sections. The story however is less symmetrical than it may at first appear. For the main plotline is very largely the history of how the modern identity develops from the Greek era to our own. This story comprises Parts II to V. Since however Taylor tells his story mainly in the unusual terms of the interconnections between the identity of the self and certain moral visions of the good, he devotes Part One to an extended philosophical discussion of ethics and the self. He then uses this discussion to nuance the extended historical reflections. Taylor believes that other central matters should also be addressed, in particular the links not just between the modern identity and the self but also those between the modern identity and our understandings of philosophy of language and epistemology. Explaining some of the basic claims here however and providing "a full scale alternative picture" (x) he thinks "would take another book" (521). Yet the story he does tell here is not just a "prelude" (x); Taylor understands his story as a necessary one - "one has to tread this path" (499).

This story is extremely rich. It is informed with a wealth of historical detail and it is directed by a searching contemporary project that displays an extraordinarily comprehensive grasp of contemporary philosophical discussion both in Anglo-American and continental circles. Such a story will need to be explored in a protracted way

from many different perspectives and interests. Here however I would like to limit my concerns to several only of the many important issues that should be examined thoroughly. In particular I would like to look more closely at just what Taylor thinks comprises the complex notion of modernity, at the specific ways in which Taylor thinks his portrait of the modern identity raises questions about moral frameworks and incomparable goods, and finally at Taylor's apparent successes and failures in trying to parse his cardinal notions of qualitative distinctions and moral realism. For somewhat different perspectives on this multifaceted work see Martha Nussbaum's review in *The New Republic*, April 9, 1990, and that of Jeremy Waldron in the *TLS*, March 23-30, 1990. In a second and final part of this essay, to appear in the next issue of ***ELEUTHERIA***, I will situate Taylor's theoretical reflections in the extended historical narrative he elaborates and compare and contrast his views with the importantly different narrative Stephen Toulmin offers in his recent work, *Cosmopolis* (Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press, 1990). Consequently, the task in this first part is largely expository while that of the second is mainly critical.

I

A Portrait of Modernity: Moral Sources, Instrumentalism, and Morality

Taylor's aim is "to show how the ideals and interdicts of this [modern] identity - what it casts in relief and what it casts in shadow - shape our philosophical thought, our epistemology and our philosophy of language, largely without our awareness" (ix). And he construes the modern identity as exhibiting three facets: an inwardness that allows a certain depth to the self, an affirmation of ordinary life, and an inner moral source reflected in an expressivist idea of nature. Each facet is explored historically in the order indicated. Whatever conceptual relations may hold among these elements, Taylor identifies them successively with the Classical and Medieval heritage up to Montaigne, the move from the Reformation to the Enlightenment, and the subsequent move from the Romantic period into the twentieth-century. The polemical task is to rescue these elements not only from their detractors but also from their often less historically informed champions as well. And the basic idea is that what characterizes our identity as moderns today is a more or less diminished or distorted understanding of ourselves, one that does not draw centrally enough on the genuine threads of our fuller cultural and historical context.

This complex context today is to be understood mainly in terms of modernism. Taylor sees modernism largely as a successor to the romantic emphasis on expression, as a "search for sources which can restore depth, richness, and meaning to life" (495). The key phenomenon is the world of art where the modernist movement has tried to explore the tension between a picture of an inward stream of consciousness and one of a nonetheless decentered subject, a subjectivism and anti-subjectivism at the same time (456). The world however partly fashions and partly reflects deep divisions about the moral sources that lie behind our contingent but today virtually unchallenged adherence to such moral goods as freedom and self-rule, equality, universal justice, and benevolence (495). These divisions Taylor thinks come from the fragmentation of the original theistic bases for these standards and the proliferation of both "a naturalism of disengaged reason" and an expressive conception of the creative powers of nature. Although these three diverse domains interconnect, overlap, and are not equally forceful for many individuals today, nonetheless Taylor offers these as a "schematic map" of the moral modern identity.

If this is the portrait of the modern identity and these are its most important sources, then what are the major consequence of having such a portrait? The point of this picture of the modern identity is to show how the modern identity itself arises from diverse moral sources. These help us understand at least three characteristic tensions in modern culture. First, there is the problem of moral sources. An uncertainty about constitutive goods, that is, "something the love of which

empowers us to do and be good" (93, 91-107). Second, there is the problem about instrumentalism, the conflict about a conception of reason as disengaged and instrumentalist only. And finally, there is the morality issue, the renewed Nietzschean debate about the mutilating nature of morality. Although Taylor spends most time on the second of these problems and deals with it first, I will summarize each briefly in the order just given.

In the case of moral sources, Taylor emphasizes how strongly modern societies agree about the importance of such goals as freedom, equality, justice, and benevolence. Consequently, the problem lies not in any disagreement about the norms themselves. The problem concerns rather the reasons that can support such strong moral commitments. Traditionally, these reasons derived either from religious beliefs in the goodness of all creation, or from naturalistic views about the inherent goodness of things. But in view of the portrait Taylor has provided of the modern identity the question arises whether either of these ways of seeing things as good can be sustained. Of these two options Taylor inclines towards the theistic perspective. Whatever its own weaknesses, such a perspective Taylor thinks is, on balance, less problematic than the naturalistic one (517-18).

Besides the tensions between these two perspectives in accounting for the reasonableness of the sources of our moral commitments today, further tensions arise from the view of reason as essentially disengaged and instrumental. When we turn to Taylor's portrait of the modern identity, we see historically how such a view is subject to attack on two fronts. First, this view of reason and of a certain ideal for a mode of life as well "empties life of meaning" (500). Moreover, the disengaged, instrumental view of reason "threatens public freedom, that is, the institutions and practices of self-government" (500). The first charge is effectively experiential - an instrumentalist society, the charge runs, makes too little room if any for "richness, depth, or meaning," for "heroism, aristocratic virtues, or high purposes in life, or things worth dying for," for purpose and passion, for magic and the sacred, and for reliability, resonance and permanence in things. Whether through the shallowness of its images, the facility of its distractions, its dissolving force on community, the marginalization of "purposes of intrinsic value," the disenchantment and neutralization of the world, the division and fragmentation of the individual, the ephemeralization of objects, or the revocability of all commitments, an instrumentalist society can be seen as pernicious. The second charge is public - an instrumentalist society destroys public freedom whether by undermining the will to maintain freedom by atomizing the individual, or by generating "unequal relations of power," or by mortgaging the future environment with "ecological irresponsibility" (502).

These charges however, instead of invalidating the very idea of disengaged instrumental reason, set up a tension. On the one hand, the instrumental notion of reason calls attention to a certain dignity that reason acquires when it is seen as capable of working effectively in independence from any divine or deist mandate. But at the same time affirming this value of an instrumentalist conception of reason leads to an effective exclusion of too many other genuine goods. This point touches on the core of Taylor's own view. We must not lose sight of the possibility, he observes, "that there may be genuine dilemmas here, that following one good to the end may be catastrophic, not because it isn't a good, but because there are others which can't be sacrificed without evil" (503). So, yes to a notion of disengaged reason only if yes as well to a correlative notion of an expressive creative imagination.

Thus Taylor believes that his portrait of the modern identity enables us to see better how one-sided a repudiation is, however strong the attacks may be, of either aspect of the modern understanding of reason. His idea is that we need to affirm the package and not just one of its items. And he finds in the Frankfurt School, especially in Adorno's work, a certain ideal: "a notion of integral expressive fulfillment in which the demands of sensual particularity would be

fully harmonized with those of conceptual reason, and in which the domination and suppression of the former by the latter would be overcome. This remains a critical standard, even where it cannot be integrally realized" (506). But Taylor finds even this position too narrow in its enlightenment exclusions of both theistic perspectives and those non-anthropomorphic perspectives often on view in modern art, those that go beyond strictly subjectivist views. Rather the emphasis in modern art on such expressivist ideals as "self-expression, self-realization, self-fulfillment, and discovering authenticity" (507) for Taylor presupposes non-anthropomorphic goods, goods larger then merely the individual and his fulfillment and not just subjectivist values. His argument is that, were the situation otherwise, "a total and fully consistent subjectivism would tend towards emptiness: nothing would count as a fulfillment in a world in which literally nothing was important but self-fulfillment" (507).

While rejecting these successive views as overly narrow Taylor gradually demarcates an area where he can articulate if not develop and argue positively his own view. This domain Taylor sees as a locus of moral sources, a place where the different scientific, practical, and expressive activities of human beings emanate. And he construes this domain as "an order" that is neither merely subjective nor merely objective. Such an order Taylor understands mainly in terms of what he calls "the search for moral sources *outside* the subject through languages which resonate *within* him or her, the grasping of an order which is inseparably indexed to a personal vision" (510). In the absence of any reliable public access to a "cosmic order of meanings" the sole measure at our disposal today for exploring this kind of order lies, Taylor believes, in the resonance certain images like "epiphany", "moral sources", "disengagement", "empowering" and so on set up within personal inquiry (512). Accordingly kinds of inquiry like those in so much philosophy today that set aside the exploration of this kind of discourse cannot succeed: "the subject doesn't permit language which escapes personal resonance" (512).

In this larger context than the consequence of Taylor's portrait of the modern identity is that the constitutive goods in the modern world - freedom, equality, justice, benevolence - are seen to allow of further explication only with the help of new idioms of personal resonance (513). Such idioms must resist the competing claims of either a merely empiricist epistemology that enshrines a disengaged and instrumentalist conception of the reasonable self-responsible subject or a non-empiricist epistemology given over entirely to the exclusive conception of a completely dependent self with its reason empowered by a spark of the divine. The task is to forge a critical language of personal resonance that encompasses radically competing constitutive goods in both a responsive and responsible whole.

Besides however the problem about moral sources and about instrumentalism, a third and final set of issues clusters around the problematic notion of morality. Here too Taylor believes that his portrait of the modern identity has important consequences. The crucial tension here is between naturalism and spiritualism. An exaggerated emphasis on the absolute primacy of certain central constitutive goods, for example spiritual ideals, can entail a radical rejection of what are just as central life goods. Conversely, a naturalist insistence on the absolute primacy of certain life goods, for example family life, can entail just as radical a rejection of such crucial constitutive goals as responsiveness to the spiritual. Whether wars of religion waged by Christian knights or wars of liberation waged by atheist militants - in each case the human cost has proved unconscionable.

Taylor argues that in each of these extreme cases, and even in that of the more measured scientific sobriety of a neo-Lucretian humanism, a cardinal error recurs - the belief "that a good must be *invalid* if it leads to suffering or destruction" (519). Taylor holds a different view. Some potentially destructive ideals both can and are directed to genuine goods. Even more strongly, he suggests in conclusion that most of the visions that promise to spare us the long task of thinking through these choices between the "spiritual

lobotomy" of merely naturalistic perspectives or the "self-inflicted wounds" of merely transcendent ones finally came to "selective blindness" (520). Taylor thinks however that this dilemma concerning the equally unacceptable consequences of either a blinkered secularism or a mutilated spiritualism is not inevitable. Rather, the attempt to think through such a dilemma from inside a culture that for historical and structural reasons stifles the spirit should be, he claims, like his book, a work of liberation. At the end of that book he writes:

> If the highest ideals are the most potentially destructive, then maybe the prudent path is the safest, and we shouldn't unconditionally rejoice at the indiscriminative retrieval of empowering goods. A little judicious stifling may be the part of wisdom. The prudent strategy makes sense on the assumption that the dilemma is inescapable, that the highest spiritual aspirations must lead to mutilation or destruction. But ... I don't accept this as our inevitable lot. The dilemma of mutilation is in a sense our greatest spiritual challenge, not an iron fate" (520-521).

II

Moral Frameworks, Incomparable Goods, and The Moral Spaces of The Self

In trying to provide a portrait of the modern identity, to map its major conceptual contours, Taylor thinks that the different stands of what it means to be a human agent have to be seen both analytically and developmentally. The major obstacle in carrying through such an ambitious plan is the practice of contemporary moral philosophy, particularly its narrow focus on rights and obligations to the exclusion of sustained reflection on goods and the good life. Without enlarging this focus Taylor believes we cannot retrieve some of the essential components in the modern identity which are often available only within different linguistic idioms than philosophers today usually explore. Perhaps the most neglected component here is what Taylor calls our spiritual nature and predicament that is part of the background of many of our moral intuitions.

Taylor glosses the key word "spiritual" here by contrasting the narrow notion of moral issues with the broader one of spiritual issues. Spiritual issues involve "strong evaluation, that is ... discriminations of right and wrong, better or worse, higher or lower, which are not rendered valid by our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but rather stand independent of these and offer standards by which they can be judged" (4). Thus whereas moral issues concern such matters as integrity, dignity, well-being, and so forth, spiritual ones center on the independent standards by which these goods are judged as worthwhile and fulfilling. However universal they may appear, our moral intuitions in fact are closely tied to our historical and cultural contingencies. The spiritual issues these intuitions touch on however are implicated in what Taylor calls "a given ontology of the human" (5), including a set of "real properties with criteria independent of our *de facto* reasons" that characterize some things as "fit objects of moral respect" (6). Such properties, although similar in their generality to the critical predicates of modern science, are not to be established in similar ways. That is to say, we cannot articulate spiritual properties by adopting a neutral stance that is independent of our reaction to certain central experiences of human life. Articulating a moral ontology must proceed from our deepest moral instincts rather than from any neutral stance. For example, to understand more fully what it means to say that all human beings are worthy of respect, "you have to call to mind what it is to feel the claim of human suffering, or what is repugnant about injustice, or the awe you feel at the fact of human life" (8). Thus, Taylor aims at describing the moral ontology behind our deepest moral and spiritual intuitions today.

A satisfactory articulation is a satisfactory answer to the question: "what is the picture of our spiritual nature and predicament which make sense of our responses?" where "make sense" comes to articulating "the background we assume

and draw on in any claim to rightness ..." (8-9). Further, such an articulation involves "identifying what makes something a fit object for them [our responses] and correlatively formulating more fully the nature of the response as spelling out what all this presupposes about ourselves and our situation in the world" (8-9). What complicates this task is the fact that people have different moral ontologies in the sense of different reasoned ways of justifying their deepest moral and spiritual intuitions. Moreover, such ontologies are most often implicit. Further, some explicit moral ontologies are often at odds with implicit ones. Again, many of the moral intuitions that presuppose these ontologies are themselves very unclear with the consequence that individuals are not able to identify unequivocally the background moral ontology as for example either secular or theistic. Finally, some moral ontologies require formulation in the way Plato's does, whereas others require the series of qualitative distinctions to be always at work although not to be formulated as for example in an archaic warrior ethic.

For Taylor, three central stands come together in the peculiarly modern, and Western, moral identity. The first consists of "our sense of respect for and obligations to other persons." This strand itself is complex implicating legal notions of respect as based on subjective, natural, and inalienable rights, of autonomy, individual freedom to develop one's capacities as one chooses, the avoidance of suffering, the promotion of human welfare, and the affirmation of the ordinary life of work (production) and family (reproduction). A second separate strand includes those concerns that are larger than the merely moral, the spiritual concerns about what makes a life worth living, what makes a life one of fulfillment and completion. In each of those concerns we are to understand that "strong evaluation" is at work. And a third strand comprises the many concerns that cluster round the notion of dignity, "the characteristics by which we think of ourselves as commanding (or failing to command) the respect of those around us," in the sense of their attitude to think well of us (15). My "dignity" then is the sense I have of myself "as commanding (attitudinal) respect" (15). Whatever their understanding, relation, and relative importance in a particular culture, all three - dignity, the spiritual, and respect for others - Taylor takes as "probably" present in every culture.

In the modern moral identity the first of these strands is paramount and is understood in detail, whereas the second is, with what Max Weber called the disenchantment of the modern world, felt to be especially threatened. With the disappearance of certain traditional horizons, frameworks of meaning have become insistently problematic in the sense that no framework "can be taken for granted as *the* framework" (17). One central consequence is the intuition that whatever meaning might make our lives worth living in the strong evaluative sense is one, whether we find or make it, that we must articulate for ourselves. Another is that the lack of an agreed upon framework in the light of which one can warrant claims to be leading a meaningful life characterizes what is peculiar to the modern predicament - an existential fear of meaninglessness that "perhaps defines our age" (18).

Taylor recognizes that he needs to provide here a fuller description of what a framework is since much contemporary philosophical discussion, still strongly marked by a naturalistic and scientific orientation, has little patience with apparently loose talk of such unwieldy and intractable concerns as "the meaning of life". So, living within such a framework comes to functioning "with the sense that some action, or mode of life or mode of feeling is incomparably higher than the others which are more readily available to us" where "higher" can mean many things whether fuller or deeper or more admirable and so on (19). What unites these differences is the notion of a species of goods that is incomparable with, that is not measurable on the same scale as, other goods. These incomparably higher goods are just those that "command our awe, respect, or admiration". They involve strong evaluations in the sense of their being independent of our desires and choices, and of their representing "standards by which these desires and choices are judged"

(20).

A key example of a modern framework is what Taylor calls "the framework of self-mastery through reason", "the ideal of the disengaged self, capable of objectifying not only the surrounding world but also his own emotions and inclinations, fears and compulsions, and achieving thereby a kind of distance and self-possession which allows him to act 'rationally'" (21). Reason here in its modern guise "is defined procedurally, in terms of instrumental efficacy, or maximization of the value sought, as self-consistency" (21). Similar modern frameworks incorporating incomparably higher goods include secular variants of an ethics of altruism as involving a transformation not of reason but of the will, an ethics of that imaginative vision and expressive power that is indispensable to the very fashioning of a framework, and an ethics of ordinary life that identifies the higher good as the way or manner in which work and family are lived whatever the tensions affirming that ordinariness sets up in the modern identity.

Part of the modern identity however also includes, in the reductive reflex of many materialists and utilitarian philosophers today, the strong challenge to the existence of anything like what Taylor wants to call "a framework." Taylor is sensitive to the many nuances of such a temper. He argues however that even the rejection itself of frameworks involves a framework in his sense since what motivates such rejections is a set of moral reasons some of which are taken to be "incomparably higher goods" regardless of where these goods are situated. The denunciation of the very idiom of a framework, the argument seems to run, entails the affirmation of an alternative that if genuine must include the essential elements that comprise what Taylor means by "a framework": they are, as the title of his opening chapter states, "inescapable frameworks." Just how successful this argument is needs examination.

However, whether frameworks exist or not, that is whether there are the kind of "qualitative discriminations of the incomparably higher" that Taylor insists provide the background, explicit or implicit, for our moral judgements, intuitions, or reactions," a further question arises. Is adopting a framework merely optional and ultimately dispensable (26)? Taylor holds that it is impossible to do without such frameworks or horizons. Such horizons, he thinks, are "constitutive of human agency" (27), and they "must include strong qualitative discriminations" (32).

To make his case Taylor turns to a discussion of personal identity which he sees as defined, in important and central ways, by what the person understands to be of crucial importance. But those most fundamental of commitments that allow the person to know where he or she stands with respect to such matters of crucial importance themselves constitute a horizon or frame. In its absence "they wouldn't know anymore, for an important range of questions, what the significance of things was for them" (27). Hence Taylor holds for an "essential link" between a framework and personal identity - a framework provides an orientation in what Taylor calls "moral space" (28), a space worked out by qualitative discriminations. Moreover, such a space exists independently of whether a person succeeds in orienting himself or herself satisfactorily. The key idea thus is that persons do not invent the qualitative distinctions at issue here; they adopt them or not (30). Taylor concludes: "it belongs to human agency to exist in a space of questions about strongly valued goods, prior to all choice or adventitious cultural change" (31).

This type of account is designed to show up by contrast the untenability of any naturalist rejection of the inescapableness of frameworks. It is an account Taylor calls both "phenomenological" and "transcendental" (32). The phenomenology one supposes covers the descriptive character of the account while the transcendental refers to "an explanation of the limits of the conceivable in human life" (32). This turns out to be less grandiose than its naturalist opponent might suppose. For the point of such an account is "to examine how we actually make sense of our lives, and to draw the limits of the conceivable from

our knowledge of what we actually do when we do so" (32). And its result is the claim that, in order to stand somewhere on issues about the good, the self must "orient itself in a space of questions about the good" (33).

Taylor goes on to characterize more fully the notion of the self to which he is trying to draw attention. Thus, he contrasts it with various uses of the term "self" in psychology and sociology. Moreover, he distinguishes the self sharply in four different respects from the objects of scientific study with the consequence that the self is not to be understood as an object at all but as something existing within "webs of interconnection" (36). Identity here exhibits the double dimension of something definable with respect to its perspective on certain spiritual concerns and to its essential bonds with a certain community.

The second of these two elements Taylor believes has become occluded because of the exaggerated importance the modern era attaches to individualism. Yet the very nature of language learning and use exhibits the necessity of essential ties holding between the self and others, between the private and the public, the individual and community. Thus the very nature of the constitutive goods that Taylor is anxious to articulate are closely connected with our sense of our selves as ineluctably implicated, especially by our use of language, in a web of interconnections and not confined to a solitary subjectivist standpoint.

The analogy about orientation to the good leads Taylor to a second aspect of his concern here. For the orientation to the good requires both a framework that "defines the shape of the qualitatively higher" as well as "a sense of where we stand in relation to" the qualitatively higher (42). This second aspect recalls the second axis or dimension of strong evaluation that Taylor discussed earlier, namely the issues that cluster around the question of what makes a life meaningful. However great the variance here is from one individual and culture to another, Taylor believes that being concerned with where one is situated with respect to the qualitatively higher goods in one's life is "not an optional matter" - "the goods which define our spiritual orientation are the ones by which we will measure the worth of our lives" (42). And he goes on to provide an extended description of how such contact with these goods assumes a variety of guises in different forms of life. In each of these situations however Taylor returns to his main claim - "that all frameworks ... place us before an absolute question ... framing the context in which we ask the relative questions about how near or how far we are from the good" (43). The absolute question is the yes or no question as to whether the direction of our lives is oriented to the good at all. And it is a question Taylor believes that not only may arise - it must arise (46). His argument here well summarizes his point. "Since we cannot do without an orientation to the good, and since we cannot be indifferent to our place relative to this good, and since this place is something that must always change and become, the issue of the direction of our lives must arise for us" (47).

In addition to this complex orientation to the good as the incomparably higher, identity also requires one further and for now final element - an evolving self-understanding that assumes the form of a narrative - "we grasp our lives in a narrative" (47). Although this element has been widely explored in recent work especially, Taylor wants to place renewed emphasis on the temporal dimensions of identity that narrative structures bring out. Thus identity has an orientation and a directedness as we have seen. But it also has a past, present, and future or in other terms a beginning, middle and end. This temporal dimension in the narrative grasp of one's identity reinforces Taylor's impatience with influential contemporary views of the self that leave out any understanding of the self as dynamically situated in a context of moral questions and concern. Construing the self after Locke and Hume preeminently in terms of self-awareness only overlooks both the moral situatedness of the self and its incessant narratives about meaning. Selves, Taylor argues, "are not neutral, punctual objects; they exist only in a certain space of questions, through certain constitutive concerns" (50). But this understanding of the self is essen-

tially linked to the need for self-understanding through narrative forms, the stories we continue to tell ourselves about our pasts and our futures. Taylor summarizes: "because we cannot but orient ourselves to the good, and thus determine our place relative to it and hence determine the direction of our lives, we must inescapably understand our lives in narrative form ..." (51-52). We make sense of our lives in stories.

III

Qualitative Distinctions, Moral Realism, and Articulacy

In examining the backgrounds of our moral intuitions, Taylor tries to focus these backgrounds in terms of a "moral ontology" that awards a central place to qualitative distinctions, incomparable goods rather than values. This ontology however has presuppositions which when taken together may be construed as the frameworks that these qualitative distinctions define. Thus the distinctions define our orientations in an ethical space consisting of "questions about the good", while the frameworks themselves "articulate our sense of orientation" in that space. More sharply, the qualitative distinctions are "defining orientations", "contestable answers to inescapable questions" (41). As such, these distinctions have a cardinal role "in defining our identity and making sense of our lives in narrative" (53).

A further question arises now about the relation between these qualitative distinctions and their additional role in providing "reasons for our moral and ethical beliefs" (53). But spelling out this role is difficult, Taylor holds, because of the continuing sway in contemporary philosophical reflection of naturalist "prejudices" whereby attempts like Taylor's to discover values in the world as opposed to describing such values as subjective projections only are seen as falling prey to the "naturalistic fallacy". The general line of reflection that would oppose Taylor's approach has two variants. The first turns on the idea of discriminating between a descriptive and an evaluative level in our use of value terms with the consequence that the voluntary projection of values can be brought under rational control. The second version holds that such a projection is finally involuntary so that values are analogous to secondary properties like colour which the neutral universe inescapably seems to exhibit despite modern science's demonstrations that values are not part of the world. In each case the task is to offer extensionally equivalent descriptive accounts only of value terms.

Following Bernard Williams' lead however Taylor defends his insistence on the naturalness of values by arguing against the possibility of separating "descriptive" from evaluative meanings for a whole range of important value terms, and by contesting the analogy between secondary properties and value terms. For Taylor, seeing "the evaluative point of a given term" involves something very different from deploying a suspect distinction or exploring a misleading analogy. What is required is "an understanding of the kind of social interchange" for a particular society where the given term is current, and a grasp of how persons in such a society make use of qualitative distinctions (54). Although often one kind of understanding is sufficient to see the point of an evaluative term, more often both kinds of understanding dovetail. These interlocking considerations motivate Taylor to reject any naturalization of the goods that value terms evoke whether by assimilation of moral terms to optional matters of opinion, or as here by translation of moral views into descriptive equivalents. In short, "our language of good and right make sense only against a background understanding of the forms of social interchange in a given society and its perceptions of the good ..." (56). In other words values are entirely independent neither of the world nor human societies and cultures; they are neither entirely subjective and relative nor entirely objective and non-relative.

Taylor comes now to the introduction of perhaps his most central precept, what he calls the best account principle. He introduces this principle for the first time as a rhetorical question.

> What better measure of reality do we have in human affairs than those terms which on critical reflection and after correction of the error we can detect make the best sense of our lives? 'Making the best sense' here includes not only offering the best, most realistic orientation about the good but also allowing us to understand and make sense of the actions and feelings of ourselves and others (57).

To make sense of our lives, Taylor believes, requires explaining behaviour from both an outsider's and an insider's perspective. More precisely, we need both third-person explanations and first-person non-explanatory understanding. Such explanations and understandings in turn require terms without which one is not able either to grasp what others actions involve or to grasp what my own deliberations about action involve. Some terms then are indispensable not just for explanation but for self-understanding as well, whereas others are required for one or the other but not for both. Any attempt to dismiss a term that is indispensable for self-understanding just because one can dispense with it for explanatory purposes is therefore seriously deficient. To make sense of our lives we must use terms that span "the whole range of both explanatory and life uses" (58). Such terms are the very ones that must be central, in an ongoing provisional and corrigible way, in the best account I can provide of my situation.

In order to clarify his position Taylor formulates a "potential attack" on those views that incorporate "a basically non-realist position about the strongly valued goods" he wants to champion. His attack comprises three phases and arises from both a "moral phenomenology" and a reflection on what he takes as "inescapable features of moral language" (68). First, for deliberating, judging, deciding, explaining and understanding oneself and others, one must have recourse to strongly valued goods. Second, such goods are "real" in the central sense that "what you can't help having recourse to in life is real" - moral experience supports realism in the sense that, unlike non-realism (Williams), quasi-realism (Blackburn), or projectivism (Mackie), strongly valued goods are not just compatible with our moral experience but are most relevant to that experience. Finally, any attempt to combine both the insistence on some domain of strong evaluation where moral obligation holds on perhaps sociobiological or consequentialist grounds and the non-realist picture of strongly valued goods as projections or whatever cannot work. Even if some rules for survival and general happiness are described in terms of widely held ends, strictly speaking these rules do not yield moral obligation (59-60).

The upshot of this polemic is the recognition that strongly valued goods are not only inescapable; they are also ranked. Persons recognize a plurality of such values. But in establishing their own identity they establish a direction to one of these values as preeminent. This particular good - whether fame or experience fulfilment or good or justice - becomes the touchstone of the person's sense of wholeness. Thus one good enjoys a "qualitative discontinuity" with respect to other goods that also move the individual person. "A higher-order qualitative distinction ... segments goods which themselves are defined in lower-order distinctions" (63). These higher-order goods Taylor calls "hypergoods" - "goods which not only are incomparably more important than others but provide the standpoint from which these must be weighed, judged, decided about" (63). For Taylor, the recognition of such hypergoods is what defines the moral. Conflicts about the moral are conflicts about hypergoods. And when one hypergood historically supersedes an earlier one we have the radical change in our appreciation of the value of previous hypergoods, a change Nietzsche called the transvaluation of values.

But what of the hypergoods themselves? What is their nature? Taylor answers: "the logic of, e.g., virtue terms like courage or generosity is such that they have to be construed as picking out projectible properties, just as "red" or "square" do, an essential feature of which is precisely this value" (68). And his position here is a response

to the underlying question: "How else to determine what is real or objective, or part of the furniture of things, than by seeing what properties or entities our best account of things has to invoke"? (68). He formulates his approach even more clearly in what follows: "If we cannot deliberate effectively, or understood and explain people's action illuminatingly, without such terms as 'courage' or 'generosity', then these are real features of the world" (69). This is precisely the use of the best account principle to determine one's ontology. What is "ineliminable" is what is real.

Hypergoods play the special role in our moral thinking of not just helping in the task of defining one's personal identity but also of providing reasons in the sense of "an articulation of what is crucial to the shape of the moral world in one's best account" (76). Yet "articulating a vision of the good is not offering a basic reason" (77), which is something external rather than the immanent process of explicitating what is basic to our ethical choices. Rather, articulating the qualitative distinctions that inform a vision of the good comes to "setting out the moral point of the actions and feelings our intuitions enjoin on us, or invite us to or present as admirable" (78).

The major obstacle, Taylor insists, to recognizing these truths about our situation is the naturalistic temper that is so much an essential part both of modern culture in general and of modern moral philosophy in particular. A key example is utilitarianism that accords happiness, benevolence, and rationality the status of hypergoods without recognizing these incomparably higher goods as values. Further, the stress on the sciences as the paradigm form of knowledge, the narrow construal of morality in terms of a guide to action only, and the specification of a moral theory's task as "defining the context of obligation rather than the nature of the good life" - all conspire to leave no place to the good either in the sense of the good life or in the sense of what is "the object of our love or allegiance" (79). The consequences are clear - "moral philosophies so understood are philosophies of obligatory action. The central task of moral philosophy is to account for what generates the obligations that hold for us. A satisfactory moral theory is generally thought to be one that defines some criterion or procedure which will allow us to devise all and only the things we are obliged to do" (79). Providing basic reasons for criteria that pick out obligatory actions has come to take precedence over articulating qualitative distinctions in a language of "thick descriptions" (Clifford Geertz), i.e. rich, culturally bound descriptions that articulate "the significance and point that the actions or feelings have within a certain culture" (80). Similarly a procedural conception of ethical thinking has taken precedence over a substantive view - what counts in ethical thinking is not whether one has a current view of qualitatively different goods but whether one has come to one's view by rational argumentative thinking.

Thus, the peculiar combination in modern moral theory particularly of a naturalist temper with certain epistemological, metaphysical, and moral ideas leads to a "pragmatic contradiction whereby the very goods which move them, push them to deny or denature all such goods" (88). Modern moral theories thus "narrow our focus to the determinants of action and then restrict our understanding of these determinants still further by defining practical reasoning as exclusively procedural. They utterly magnify the priority of the moral by identifying it not with substance but with a form of reasoning around which they draw a firm boundary" (89).

But however articulate these views, a further question arises here: What is the point of articulacy about the good? Taylor thinks that any particular vision of the good only comes to us through some kind of articulation. "A vision of the good becomes available for the people of a given culture through being given expression in some manner ... articulation is a necessary condition of adhesion; without it, these goods are not even options" (91).

But why must articulacy take a narrow linguistic form when so much of our sense of the good finds expression in non-linguistic forms such as religious ritual or artistic representation? Answer-

ing this question leads Taylor to sharpen several of his key distinctions between strong and constitutive goods. Strong goods we have seen are taken as "whatever is picked out as incomparably higher in a qualitative distinction" (92), goods which are part and parcel of a good life, or "life goods." Examples are universal justice, freedom, self-fulfillment. Some strong goods however are what they are because of their intrinsic reference to some still fuller good. These latter goods Taylor calls constitutive goods in the sense of their being a moral source, "something the love of which empowers us to do and be good" (93). Examples include Plato's Idea of the Good or the personal God of Christianity. These constitutive goods both define a substantive content for moral theory and empower those who adhere to such contents "to love what is good." Constitutive goods moreover need not be external if they are to be moral sources. Thus Kant's understanding of rational agency for Taylor is an internal constitutive good that functions as a moral source in exhibiting a distinctive dignity that inspires awe and "empowers us morally" (94). More generally, the contemplation of constitutive goods engenders a profound respect "which respect in turn empowers whatever fills this role as playing the part of a moral source" (94).

In this light one can see that even modern strictly immanent humanism, say Camus' sense of human dignity being rooted in the courageous capacity of human beings to confront a meaningless universe, even such humanisms, that reject any constitutive goods or moral sources still include analogous elements, in this example unbowed human dignity. Yet the climate of modern moral philosophy leads us, Taylor thinks, to overlook the presence of moral sources, to leave them unaddressed.

The issue of linguistic articulacy then comes to the central importance Taylor ascribes to retrieving and redescribing the overlooked and unaddressed moral sources, the constitutive goods particularly of our modern immanentist moral humanism, the directions as he writes of Iris Murdoch's work "of attention and desire through which alone, ... we can become good" (96). His case for linguistic articulacy goes like this. "Moral sources empower. To come closer to them, to have a clearer view of them, to come to grasp what they involve, is for those who recognize them to be moral to have or respect them, and through this love / respect to be better enabled to live up to them. And articulation can bring them closer. That is why words can empower; why words can at times have tremendous moral force... the most powerful case is when the speaker, the formulation, and the act of delivering the message all line up together to reveal the good..." (96). And for Taylor such cases most often assume the forms of narrative.

Taylor recognizes that one of the strains in modern thought is to eschew articulation with respect to precisely the most important matters that seem rather to enjoin a silence. And there are many good reasons that support being silent. But Taylor thinks that "the silence of modern philosophy is unhealthy" largely because of its invalid "repudiation of qualitative distinctions and rejection of constitutive goods as such" (98). Because of the sway of modern moral philosophy and its prejudices, the injunction of silence should give way to the task of articulating the good, of investing the hidden and unacknowledged moral motives of modern moral philosophy, and of formulating "the visions of the good that actually underlie our moral reactions, affinities, and aspirations" (100). And this task needs to be undertaken both with respect to the mainstream moral theories of our times like naturalism and utilitarianism and various neo-Nietzschean perspectives like Foucault's. The irrevocable negative judgments these philosophies entail about some of the most central of our moral sources today require that their silent inspiration be examined. So long as silence is enjoined, "this inspiration is hidden, where it can't come up for debate" (103).

Articulating these implicit inspirations Taylor believes means that one needs "to invent language here, rather presumptuously claiming to say better than others what they really mean" (103). But the approach must also be historical,

a recourse to the past, especially with respect to modern naturalist views "in order to get some model of the kind of sense of the good which is still openly avowed by them but is suppressed from awareness now" (104). Articulacy then must be both linguistic and historical. And since articulacy is focused here on what remains implicit in modern moral philosophical perspectives, the accent needs to fall not just on explicit philosophical theories but on mentalities as well. "To trace the development of our modern visions of the good... is also to follow the evaluation of unprecedented new understandings of agency and selfhood" as well as our conceptions of society and kinds of narratives and narrativity (105).

The good of this articulacy both linguistic and historical is a reconciliation within ourselves and our societies of many of the moral conflicts of our age by a recognition of "the full range of goods we live by" (107). This recognition Taylor sees as the result of "a search for a way in which our strongest aspirations towards hypergoods do not exact a price of self-mutilation" (106-7). The idea is to win through to a release of the empowering forces that the range of our actual moral sources include. Accordingly, "articulacy is a crucial condition of reconciliation" (107).

These views however, just as those we have already surveyed, need to be situated inside Taylor's protracted historical narrative before we can take up finally and fairly their critical assessment. I turn to this task in Part Two of this essay in the next issue of ***ELEUTHERIA***. sent.

TRANSCENDING MODERNITY: ALBERT SCHWEITZER AND BEYOND

James Lowry

I

THE SCHWEITZER LEGACY

Schweitzer is, as a personality, a figure for all time. In himself he tried to bring together, without being aware of it as we can be, the contradictions of the *transition* from modernity to its beyond. His struggle was with his own time, but it was, as with any great thinker, poet, artist, or religious leader, a struggle of *all* time, of *all* place. Positioned as he was at the end of the nineteenth century and within the twentieth, *all* the forces of dissolution were compelled within him. He was learned in both Religion and Science. He put Thinking above Emotion. Yet he put Will above Thinking and Mysticism beyond Knowledge. The *way* in which *all* these forces came together in Schweitzer is of the highest importance, because he came to see with prophetic vision, as seen from deep within himself, the necessity that *ethics* is the final coming together of life and being. He tried to think this through and to will it. He made, as he said, "my life my argument". He could finally only find meaning in doing. But his doing was never a doing for the sake of doing, but a doing out of reverence, out of what he called *Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben* (Reverence for Life). And he insisted, and this was the instinct of genius, that such a doing could only "be" the doing of an "individual". Schweitzer recognized, as his contemporaries did not, that the *individual* was the focus of life, was what *lived*. He intuitively knew that this meant that *individuality* must be seen to go *beyond* humanity to *all* beings. This is the immortal implication of Reverence for Life. At

the same time Schweitzer was never able to grasp *how* this extension of ethics could be *really* explicated. This is *why* he could not finish his greatest work *Kultur und Ethik* (*Civilization and Ethics*). He could see that ethics must be comprehensive of all life, affirming of all being; but, yet, at the same time, he found humanity cut off from this link by the self-awareness of it. On the one hand there was solidarity with nature, on the other there was an unending, infinite, toil against it. Pain was to Schweitzer a greater devil than death and was the surd he could not really fathom.

For Schweitzer humanity must wrest its meaning from the meaninglessness of its condition. He himself chose action and affirmation, but saw it as a *choice* to be *continually* made. The old Kantian duty was for him not just universal will but the endlessly *reverential* will of each *individual* to instantiate it in the given.

Thus, Schweitzer will wrest paradise from the jungle but in a non-technological way. Individuality will for him be neither overcome by the universality of nature nor by the impersonality of universality embodied as it always is in a form of mass, whether of the uniformity of technology or the mass hysteria of totalitarian tyranny. Schweitzer had an uncanny grasp of the insidiousness of these forces, while at the same time he was able to act and to be a scientist. Unlike existentialists like Sartre, who had a grasp of individuality but only at the expense of nature and society, or Heidegger, who in hatred of technology was drawn into natural totality, Schweitzer had no anguish about acting, about making decisions. He neither felt that he made decisions in a void, nor that he must await direction. His religious being gave him the instinct for measure; his empirical self the instinct for action; his trust in *thinking* his confidence in both.

That Schweitzer was regarded in religious circles as an heretic, and in scientific circles as insufficiently technological attests not so much to his weaknesses but to the sureness of his suspicions that civilization needs a stronger glue than either religion or science can give. He could not find this in philosophy because he felt finally that philosophy should be ethics, and he could find no way in which he could develop "philosophically" the basic ethical principle (*Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben*) which he came to intuitively after thinking through the history of philosophical thought. Schweitzer claimed *Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben* was a "necessity of thought", but he found that he could only justify his discovery by proclaiming it "mystical" and by further contending, and this was typical of his tendencies, that all profound thought was in the end mystical. And he proceeded to give as historical evidence the experience of religions comparatively understood, of Jesus and Paul and of Buddha, and the experience of art ultimately expressed, of Bach and Goethe. To understand Schweitzer's dilemma properly we must remember that he was deeply imbued with the "historical" spirit which has so incapacitated the later phase of modernity. He wanted always to know what happened historically. This was how he first came to study Jesus, and to study Bach. At the same time he came to realize that history could not be the milk of life but only one of its conditions. He always sought to go beyond history, to what he called the "elemental and simple". His mysticism was in the end genuine in that, as in all mysticism, he sought the One. For him it was not the One of Parmenides, nor the One of Plato, nor the Trinity of the organized Church, nor the Matter of science; it was the One of *reverence* before being, of *solidarity* with life as positive and good, of the *responsibility* to act against the forces of dissolution.

Schweitzer had all the right instincts. He understood, as no one before him, the priority of ethics and the individual, but he could not unify them *philosophically*. He could only think it as a oneness; he could not comprehend the multiplicity. He "felt" it and was honest enough to see the beyond of his thought-ful conviction as finally a matter of will in the face of the unknowable. The religion in him, his adherence to Jesus; the science in him, his adherence to experience and to proof and to history,

he tried to bring together, to think. In his life he succeeded where in his thought he did not. The task he left, the unveiling of the mystery, the putting together what he "thought" must somehow "be" together, the *unity of reverence* that he staked his being on, that he strained every nerve to attain, is *now our* task.

To fulfil his promise "we" must think ever again and we must think "anew". Schweitzer's failure is not without precedent but his achievement makes it *more* necessary to make good than before. The consequences of lacking an ethic that is the *ground* of will he foresaw, *as no one before*, just *because* he lived under the threat of the atomic bomb and in the knowledge through experience of World Wars I and II and of the African jungle, of just what mankind in all the kaleidoscope of his natural condition and technical achievement is capable of. At the same time he had to struggle to comprehend the implications of the new cosmology which Einstein had inaugurated. He too felt the Nichts of nihilation and the Angst of ambiguity. He could see the consequence and he thought his life to be the argument of the answer. It is up to us; we are responsible; we can enhance or destroy. The decision is ours and it is an ethical *not* a practical or theoretical one. The problematic is contained in the difficulty that Schweitzer's life is too particular to be instantiated immediately. This, too, Schweitzer knew. This is why he emphasized that *Ehrfurcht vor dem Leben* was an "attitude", was a spiritual state. But though he could see that dilemma of transference, of instantiation, he could not see how to resolve it except by example. This is the root of his mysticism. What he "knew", he could not "think". And this is the contradistinction to his claim that Reverence for Life was a philosophy. That he was on the right track we need not doubt. The twin poles of our condition, our *self-imposed* condition - the threat of nuclear destruction, of the nihilating of earthly life; and the necessity that we become one with the inherent harmony of ecological structure, of the inherent interplaying affirmation of beings - are empirical proof enough that we must have an ethical will in just the sense that Schweitzer meant.

But we can truly only have that will when we have it as the "result" of thinking, and *not* as a condition beyond all understanding. Even of this Schweitzer was aware, but he was unable to fulfil the connection. And the *reason* is this: he was unable to *ground* ethics *upon* metaphysics. Like his contemporaries Schweitzer suffered from a suspicion of theoretical castle building, from a suspicion that argument is the nemesis of action and of immersion in reality. When he went to philosophy to understand civilization he tried to isolate the ethical element upon the assumption that ethics does not rest upon a metaphysical ground. This is partly understandable as a result of his study of Kant, who was, in the end, anti-metaphysical, and partly his own preconception. And indeed if metaphysics was as powerless as Kant and his successors or as overweening as Hegel and his might think, it must be an eternal block to truth. But if metaphysics is such a block, there is no going around or over or under it. Try to do so, and Truth simply, along with reality, ceases. *This* is the problem of Schweitzer's own time - of the last phase of modernity. This is the problem of nothingness - of the nihilation of being. And we *too* must opt, as did Schweitzer, for Being, for Life, and for Thinking. Only we need not affirm it in a sea of pessimism. With his help we can get beyond him; help that is ever needed and ever reverenced. With Schweitzer science makes its "journey" to the East. But we must *also* journey to Greece and back to Christendom from whence in *his* case the "journey of being" began.

II

BEYOND MODERNITY

For us to go "beyond modernity" we will have to be able to see how we can view modernity as a whole. Historically it is the result of a transition that took place when there was a cosmological shift *away* from the Christian

world in which both God and the World needed to be *proved*. At the same time in the movement away from Christianity science as a definite secular activity was born. Its standpoint and cosmic assumptions formed the basis of modernity. If we look behind Christianity to the ancient Greek world from which Christianity sprung, we find a cosmos that does *not* need proof, but which *simply is*. Yet it is a cosmos that can be understood, that does not have to be believed in. The Greek world marked the *discovery* of thinking and the *movement* from religion to philosophy. When we look at the pre-Greek world we find *no* distinction between religion and philosophy. There are no such distinctions. There is simply a divine world. There is *no* secular world. Such a cosmos, which is best represented by its highest forms in Hinduism and Buddhism, is the direct antithesis to modern secularity. Eastern pantheism is a religious mysticism that is far removed from Western secularity. "East is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet". But this is as false as true. It is only true in so far as East and West are separated from each other by Athens and Jerusalem, by Greek philosophy and Christian theology. It is false in so far as they meet one another immediately. When they do so meet, we find a deep kinship. Modern physics and Maya are very close. The mysticism of Nirvana and the Nothingness of Being are of the *same* "language". Only the traditions differ. It should not be a wonder that modern technology is so easily assimilated inthe east or that eastern peacefulness and oneness with nature is so longed for by westerners who think through their science and busy, serialized, secularity.

If we understood *how* it is that there can be an immediate opposition and an immediate union between East and West, West and East, we will, I think, be able *for the first time* to transcend the bonds of modernity and be able to avoid in so doing *for the first time* the bounds of historicity and be able to embrace the limits of phenomenology, in the sense I define it as opposed to history; as the perennial or eternal structure of endlessly instantiated time. To formulate this *all together* would be to develop what I call ***mentaphysics***. And it is *this* development of thought *into itself* that can maintain for the first time the elemental place of *speculative philosophy* as the *comprehension* of science and religion *without* reduction of either to itself or to one another. *Only* upon *this* foundation of speculative philosophy, of ***mentaphysics***, *can* it be possible that the historicity of human contingency will be at peace with the perennial nature of its phenomenology. At the same time, though paradoxically, the apposite claims of religion and science, as properly subordinate to Reason, can be understood as legitimate and fulfilled.

* * *

This essay is excerpted from a book by the author entitled, ***Metaphysics: Thinking about Thinking - Perennial Problematics and Their Perennial Solution***. The manuscript is slated to be published in serial form in forthcoming issues of the Institute's publications.

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