THE GOALS OF HUMAN TRANSFORMATION

The philosophers, logicians and doctors of law were drawn up at Court to examine Nasrudin. This was a serious case, because he had admitted going from village to village saying: "The so-called wise men are ignorant, irresolute and confused." He was charged with undermining the security of the State.

"You may speak first," said the King.

"Have paper and pens brought," said the Mulla.

Paper and pens were brought.

"Give some to each of the first seven savants."

They were distributed.

"Have them separately write an answer to this question: 'What is bread?' "

This was done.

The papers were handed to the King, who read them out:

The first said: "Bread is a food."

The second: "It is flour and water."

The third: "A gift of God."

The fourth: "Baked dough."

The fifth: "Changeable, according to how you mean 'bread'."

The sixth: "**A** nutritious substance."

The seventh: "Nobody really knows."

"When they decide what bread is," said Nasrudin, "it will be possible for them to decide other things. For example, whether I am right or wrong. Can you entrust matters of assessment and judgment to people like this? Is it or is it not strange that they cannot agree about something which they eat each day, yet are unanimous that I am a heretic?"

   —From *The Exploits of the Incomparable Mulla Nasrudin.*[1]

To but one goal are marching everywhere
All human beings, though they may seem to walk
Divergent paths; and that Goal is I.

     —From the *Bhagavad-Gita*[2]

Three institutions are overtly concerned with eliciting change or facilitating a change process in the minds and behavior of human beings: education, medicine, and religion. The nature of the change process that is the focus of each may at first glance seem quite specific to the institution: *development* being the province of education, *healing* that of medicine, and *salvation, liberation,* or *enlightenment* that of religion. Yet, the three were one in the past—when the shaman or primitive mystic was a medicine man, a wise man, a counselor, an initiator, and an artist. Today we seem to be rediscovering the unity of "ultimate concern" beyond the temporal purposes and the irrelevant concerns of education, psychiatry, and religion. Indeed, if we examine closely the nature of the separate quests for growth, sanity, and enlightenment, we may discover enough of a meeting ground among them to warrant the ambition of a unified science and art of human change. Since this book is in the nature of a contribution toward that goal and cuts across the different domains of endeavor that have

given rise to the various ways of growth, we may do well to show some aspects of the commonality that exists among their aims. It is a commonality too often forgotten when we think of their specific means, fields of application, and terminologies.

The Goal of Education

Let us first take the notion of development, the goal of education. Implicit in the art of education is the belief in a spontaneous growth process that may be influenced by environmental conditions. Just as the body needs nourishment and vitamins, exercise, and a certain amount of protection to survive and develop into what it can potentially become, the mind too needs its proper food, exercise, and care.

To become what? Here the discrepancies begin. If the answer is "what it can potentially become," we have a humanistic approach in the true sense of making man the measure: to each according to his individual goals and inclinations. Education becomes the task of giving each individual what he thirsts for, without any attempt to mold him into a pre-established pattern. Just as a gardener trusts that the shape of every plant will proceed from within if he only provides it with the optimum conditions, the educator believes in the innate goodness of man and sees himself as an aid to this intrinsic growth process.

The very word *education* contains the notion of a development of the person from within. The Latin *educare* derives from *educere,* "to extract or lead forth, to draw out something hidden or enclosed into the open." The conception implied in this etymology is that of the human being as engaged in a *growth process* that may *be* facilitated by the agency of others.

Needless to say, we are here speaking of an approach that probably cannot be found in pure form in reality, just as a per-

fect circle cannot be found outside the world of ideas. We can
find it as a component of education in general though, and in
some instances as its major component, as in A. S. Neill's *Sum-
merhill,*[3] in the Montessori approach: or in the example of Pes-
talozzi, who inspired so much of the educational re-evaluation
of this century. The following lines of this Swiss educator are
as explicit as any statement about an inner-directed growth
process:

> Sound Education stands before me symbolized by a tree
> planted near fertilizing water. A little seed, which contains the
> design of the tree, its form and proportion, is placed in the soil. See
> how it germinates and expands into trunk, branches, leaves,
> flowers, and fruit! The whole tree is an uninterrupted chain of or-
> ganic parts, the plan of which existed in its seed and root. Man is
> similar to the tree. In the newborn child are hidden those faculties
> which are to unfold during life.[5]

A belief in the self-regulation of the organism — including
the psyche — has grown steadily in the pyschology of the last
three decades or so. The old view of man as an intrinsically
amoral or evil being who needs to be brainwashed is being su-
perseded by another that sees man as a self-actualizing being,
and I believe that this view is flowing in part from psychology
into the culture at large.

In the domain of religion the notion of an unfolding from
within is found in every great tradition, though it is often ob-
scured by the authoritarian structures (and rationalizations) of
religious institutions. For instance, in Zen, we see the trust in
the Buddha nature within each creature which in essence is no
different from the Christian's vision of himself as a prodigal
son of the Heavenly King, destined to return to His Kingdom.
The difference in this case is principally one of emphasis, for
the Christian notion has become a purely theoretical one,

while in Mahayana Buddhism we find a living attitude of trust in the workings of the universe. How this type of attitude has generated specific ways of growth is something that we will have occasion to examine in the following chapters.

In contrast to the open-ended, humanistic view of man's development, seen as a fulfillment of man's inner trend, is any pre-established view of what man's end is, of where his unfolding leads, and of what his most desirable state of being is. The answers to these questions have been the concern of philosophers and prophets through the ages, and as Aldous Huxley has attempted to show in his *Perennial Philosophy*[6] their answers are not as different as might be expected. Beyond culture-bound notions of right and wrong, the wise ones of all lands throughout history seem to agree as to the existence of a way or *path* leading to man's fulfillment and the finding of his true place in the world, not according to a theoretical construction but as a realization. According to such views the development of a child is but a first stage in a long developmental process the end of which may well not be attained within an individual's lifetime.

Those who share this positive conception of man's destiny see the first stages of life as not only the natural time for the beginning of his evolution, but also as the time of his thwarting. In both religion and psychiatry we find, along with the exposition of ideals, a pervasive awareness that man's reality falls short of such ideals, and a lamentation that during his formative years of life a person not only fails to develop but is distorted by pressures in his environment.

The bearing of this perspective on a conception of human development is that, once we regard man as straying from his path because of his social conditioning, we can discriminate between two phases in the journey toward the desirable goal: the treading of the path and, before that, the process of finding

it. The development of the child as it actually proceeds is thus seen as a thwarting of his true direction in the midst of a culturally disturbed environment. Consequently, a conversion will be necessary to reorient his life in view of the true path, a "death" to his outward nature, a renunciation or separation (as in Christ's "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household"), or an awakening. Such notions are inseparable from the mythical accounts in all religions of the fall of man, for the condition of fallen man—humanity—is that of "sin," "illusion," "sleep," "blindness," and his first aim is that of undoing his "fall."

Thus, the first stage in the attainment of spiritual fullness according to Taoism is to become a "true man"; only after this, can man become a "universal man." In Sufism, too, we find the notion of two successive stages in a developmental process, the first of which is in the nature of reowning something that was forgotten or lost. The notion of "forgetting" a higher world is so important in Plato's philosophy that even the word he uses for "truth" (a-letheia) means no-forgetting. And in the poetic monument of Christianity, Dante's *Commedia*, two stages of attainment are depicted. In the first, man reaches "earthly paradise," his original abode. Here he is healed, and Dante says of himself:

> I came back from those holiest waters new, remade, reborn, like **a** sun-wakened tree that spreads new foliage to the spring dew in sweet freshness, healed of winter's scars; perfect, pure, and ready for the Stars.'

Beyond this, a man can still venture into "Paradise," a world of transcendence, where he experiences a unity with the cosmos as conceived of by religious thought.

Just as in religion we find that the ideas of a corrective and of a maturational process go hand in hand (the via *purgativa*

and *via unitiva* of Christianity), in psychology too we find ac-
knowledgment of a need for corrective work and of a develop-
mental process that may take place when not unnaturally ob-
structed. In other words, psychiatry and psychology share with
the religious view both the notion of a wrongness in the condi-
tion of average humanity and that of a developmental process
that goes much beyond the school years. In the terms of dy-
namic psychology, the process of maturation has been arrested
in childhood years and much of the psychotherapeutic process
amounts to a liberation from childish fixations or blocks to
growth. Furthermore, psychology has moved more and more
in the direction of seeing an aim beyond that of healing.
Beyond the correction of a wrongness the psychotherapist has
come to recognize the existence of a void that needs to be
filled, an urge for more that his patient wants to satisfy and
that cannot be fulfilled by material ambitions, by his family
life, or his work. The answers to such a challenge vary, so that
Frankl speaks of search for meaning and logotherapy, Jung
speaks of analytical psychology as the modern process of initia-
tion,* and Maslow points out that the peak-experiences most
people have during their lifetimes indicate the possibility of a
more satisfactory way of being which is impeded by unfulfilled
basic needs such as those for safety, love, and respect. Healing,
according to these authors, falls short of making a man com-
plete or mature in more than a conventional sense; its nature
is that of liberating him to his essential concern which is pre-
cisely that of further growth. The religious notions of a *way* or
path, Tao, and *dharma* find an echo in some contemporary psy-
chological formulations such as that of the self-actualizing
drive of the organism (Goldstein) or Jung's description of the
individuation process.

* See quotation, pp. 139 ff.

As the history of education amply shows, the danger of an educational approach that has in view a preconceived notion of man's goal is in its potential rigidity. In this, as in other fields, a truth that is learned and repeated is not a truth any more but a mechanical act. A statement of man's desirable goal or path may very well be accurate and yet there is a difference between intellectual statements and the understanding that can lead to the application of a truth. Without such understanding, all systems can become ways of thwarting the development that they want to foster.

How much of what we call education is only a pale shadow of activities that had a purpose long ago? The main trait of contemporary education, for example, is its emphasis upon amassing information. This trend received its impetus in the Renaissance, when men turned to a forgotten antiquity in their thirst for wisdom, and the acquisition of wisdom came to be seen as inseparable from understanding the writings of Greek and Latin classics. At first there was sense in this expression of humanism, and we may grant Erasmus that he was still thinking functionally when he designed a method of teaching that would make the child into a Greek and Latin scholar and a pious man. He was no Ciceronian: Latin was to be taught so as to be of use. And, most important of all, he saw that education would have to follow nature to achieve the best results.

But it seems to be a law of history that every good becomes an ought, every God an idol, every meaningful practice an empty ritual. It was perhaps the influence of Sturm, above that of any other single individual, that was responsible for the transition leading from true humanism to the gentleman's polite tipping of the hat. As the tutor of Queen Elizabeth and first great headmaster, he has been regarded as the introducer of "scholarship" into the schools. The means that once sewed the purpose of human development came more and more to be

pursued as ends in themselves; what were tools of certain tasks became objects of worship; and scholarship turned into an imitation derived from what once was learning as a means to deeper understanding. As the contents of scholarship changed with the years, science and history took the place of the classics, but the attitude remained the same: learning things had become the goal of education and taken the place of self-understanding. Learning things for what? The question was never pursued too far; nor was it demonstrated that this was "to train the mind" or "prepare for life."

We could draw a parallel here between the two approaches to human development and parental love, as described by Erich Fromm.[8] The unconditional mother's love finds its parallel in the first (inner-directed) approach, trusting and unconditional; the demanding father's love corresponds to the second (outer-directed) approach, which guides the individual toward the highest ideals. The balance between these two approaches is always an inescapable issue in the educational process. It is a balance between the individual and tradition, the unknown and the known, creativity and the wisdom of the ages.

There is still a third "answer" to the goal of human development, more implicit than explicit, even though, for this very reason, it is perhaps the most powerful. The goal of this third approach to education is neither that chosen by the individual nor that inspired by tradition, but consists in the adaptation of the individual to the habitual (or modal) way of being in a given culture. Just as the humanistic attitude trusts and encourages the development of feelings and the idealistic approach is predominantly intellectual, this third attitude may be regarded as predominantly mechanistic. Not only does a child mechanically imitate what he sees and hears, from language and gait to personality styles, but much of his socializa-

tion process consists of the positive and negative reinforcement that he receives in terms of what adults like. Behind each command or prohibition there is an implicit statement of "this is right" which most often does not stem from thinking or decision but from having been exposed to the same dogma in earlier years. Thus, it is right to use the fingers in eating in India but not in England; it is right for an Eskimo to share his wife on occasion but not for a Jivaro Indian; it is right to be future-oriented in the United States today but not in present-oriented areas of Mexico or tradition-oriented circles in Japan. Regardless of what may actually be right in terms of human needs, there are societal notions of what is right, the obvious rationalization of a process of conditioning. The source of the cultural traits that are thus transmitted may be in an ideal that became automatized, in economic circumstances, or in the emotional needs of parents. A child's demand for affection, for instance, may give rise to guilt feelings in parents who are falling short of filling his need and cause them to say that it is not nice to cry, that grownups do not complain, etc., and thus contribute to the perpetuation of traits of both independence and affectlessness.

The pervasiveness of the socialization process cannot fail to color the educational endeavor, and it may even become a goal of education to produce the kind of "people that the country needs." Yet this molding process should not be really considered as an approach — adequate or not — to development, but rather as an "impurity" in the approach itself. Conditioning does not posit a growth process or anything like a "human nature." Its goals are those of convenience, its ways may be ways of change but are not ways of growth. This does not exclude that principles of conditioning may be used in the service of human development, as we point out in Chapter IV, but such use generally takes the form of a deconditioning ("de-

sensitization") that allows for increased flexibility and choice, and a reinforcement of the natural developmental process until it is experienced as self-rewarding. This is how behaviorists currently interpret psychoanalysis and client-centered therapy, in which the therapist encourages the act of self-disclosure and expression.

Though the notion of development is the concern of education more than of any other institution, it is also a core concept in religion, when we reach for the true significance of this term, and in psychiatry and psychology.

The Goal of Psychotherapy

The idea of psychological disease was at first a purely descriptive one, defined by the presence of certain symptoms. Later it became a statistical notion according to which "neuroticism" or even "psychoticism" are present in some degree in everybody. Furthermore, psychological disease became divorced from its external signs or symptoms. Thus in dynamic psychology a neurotic personality or action is judged from the point of view of its motivation rather than from its behavioral reality or even the individual's subjective state of well-being or discomfort at the moment. Also, in reaching for a deeper understanding of neuroticism, psychiatry has become more and more concerned with matters such as authenticity and estrangement, the real self, responsibility, and other issues that were formerly the concern of philosophy or religions. In fact, what psychiatry is presently doing is not just curing physical or emotional symptoms of psychic origin, but helping the individual to find the good life for himself —as philosophy and religion had been doing for centuries, prior to becoming riddled with abstract speculation and authoritarian dogma.

Just as psychiatry today tends to see symptoms as the outer manifestation of the failure to meet life with the right attitude,

religions at the time of their greatest aliveness have seen man's behavioral and moral shortcomings as outward expressions of his original sin which is not essentially a moral but a spiritual mistake and is a disease, a source of suffering. *Salvation* comes from the Latin *salvare* which has the same root as the word *salus* (health, safety); in French too, *salut* (salvation) comes from the Latin *salus.* The same connection is seen in the German *heilig* (holy, saintly) and *heilen* (to heal). In the Old Testament and in rabbinical literature, sin is frequently described as folly or madness. In Buddhism, too, the question is one of deliverance from the suffering that man experiences as a result of his ignorance, a condition which is indifferently called sin or disease.

Regardless of whether we accept the formulations of psychiatry or of religion, one thing is clear: the recognition of the interrelatedness of physical and moral health or illness. Psychiatry today stresses the inability to cope with certain moral issues (i.e., responsibility, perception of values, genuineness) as the sources of psychological or psychosomatic symptoms. And both psychology and religion, in different terms, have also pointed out the cognitive issues at the root of the moral ones: understanding, consciousness, awareness of real attunement to the truth.

However, there is apparently no consensus among present-day psychiatrists or psychologists as to the boundaries of "mental disease" or its defining criteria. The concepts of different schools still range from the strictly symptomatic one of *dis-ease* to those of humanistic or dynamic psychology. It is to the former, restricted sense of disease and sanity that Thomas Merton is referring in the following paragraphs from "A Devout Meditation in Memory of Adolph Eichmann."

One of the most disturbing facts that came out in the Eichmann trial was that a psychiatrist examined him and pronounced him

perfectly sane. I do not doubt it at all, and that is precisely why I find it disturbing.

If all the Nazis had been psychotics, as some of their leaders probably were, their appalling cruelty would have been in some sense easier to understand. It is much worse to consider this calm, "well-balanced," unperturbed official conscientiously going about his desk work, his administrative job which happened to be the supervision of mass murder. He was thoughtful, orderly, unimaginative. He had a profound respect for system, law and order. He was obedient, loyal, a faithful officer of a great state. He served his government very well.

He was not bothered much by guilt. I have not heard that he developed any psychosomatic illnesses. Apparently, he slept well. He had a good appetite, or so it seems.

And later in the same essay:

I am beginning to realize that "sanity" is no longer a value or an end in itself. The "sanity" of modern man is about as useful to him as the huge bulk and muscles of the dinosaur. If he were a little less sane, a little more doubtful, a little more aware of his absurdities and contradictions, perhaps there might be a possibility of his survival. But if he is sane, too sane . . . perhaps we must say that in a society like ours the worst insanity is totally without anxiety, totally "sane." [9]

Contrast the view of mental disease in the above quotation to that presented in the following passage by a psychiatrist:

. . . Let us begin with a very extreme case. Let us take for instance, one of advanced senile dementia. Why does everyone agree to regard such a person diseased? What first strikes us is the loss of his essential psychological faculties; he cannot do what others can do; he cannot, for instance, orient himself in time or space, attend to his physiologic needs, control his sphincters, and so on. Yet it is clear that such an individual is not considered to be sick merely because he cannot fulfill such functions, for if this were the

case, an infant would have to be considered just as diseased. What is pathological here is not his inability but inability where we would expect ability.

After considering other instances, this author concludes that:

> We always evaluate an individual's psychological activity in terms of his optimal potential, and do not regard as mentally ill he who behaves in this or that manner, but him whose optimal potential for performance is altered from within. In other words, his potentialities are prevented their full unfolding because they are hindered from within and in spite of himself, so that they are thwarted and deviated from full expression.[10]

According to such a view the notion of mental disease becomes correlative to our understanding of man's potential, for only in terms of the latter can we say whether an individual is falling short of his optimal functioning. So at this point a medical conception becomes inseparable from a conception of man's nature, man's purpose and destiny, and particularly the direction and goal of his development. In fact, the issues of health and development, the concerns of medicine and education, become one.

It would seem that the existential and ever-present foundation of the quests for both healing and enlightenment is in a dissatisfaction on the part of a fraction of humanity, a thirst that cannot be quenched by objective achievements. A traditional psychiatrist would look upon such an urge as abnormal and think, "Here is a person who cannot enjoy the given and is therefore unsatisfied. He must be cured of his inability to enjoy to the fullest." From the religious, spiritual, or esoteric point of view, the same person may be regarded instead as one who is no more sick (or removed from God, divided from his deeper self, etc.) than average humanity, but who has not become anesthetized to his suffering. Just as physical pain signals

a physical damage, psychological distress may be taken as the functional signal of a psychological wrongness, and many a neurotic may be simply more awake to the problem than a completely automatized, "adjusted" human being.

The individual, too, may interpret his own urge according to different alternatives presented by the culture and feel, for instance:

"I lack something, I feel unfulfilled, empty; I should study, acquire a wider culture and understanding of things, or travel, and then I would feel satisfied."

"I lack something, my life is not rich enough; I know the answer is in love. I have not found somebody to whom I can give all my love, and who loves me. Warmth and caring is what is missing from life."

"I lack something, I feel unfulfilled. Nothing that I do or acquire will give me the sense of fulfillment that I seek; this I know from experience. The answer lies in myself. I am very far from God. I have been neglecting the inner quest, forgetting that this is what I really want."

"I lack something. No matter what I do, I feel unfulfilled and empty. Is this what psychiatrists call depression, or perhaps neurasthenia, or simple schizophrenia? I should do something about myself, and go into treatment."

The last two answers are similar, in that the dissatisfaction is interpreted as a sign of the pursuit of inner change, but they differ in that one is cast in religious language and the other in medical or psychological terms. The difference between the religious and the psychological interpretations of dissatisfaction is not that between a theistic and an atheistic view, as typically evidenced by atheistic religions (such as Buddhism or Taoism). The difference lies more in the relative stress on the ideas of lack and wrongness. The urge directing the quest for enlightenment is interpreted as a lack of fulfillment, a separa-

tion from God or higher faculties, and the process of attainment is frequently depicted as a reaching of another shore, crossing a bridge, climbing up to the heights or down into an abyss. Man's sickness and sins are the outcome of his lack: that of being removed from the presence of God, which he must become conscious of and repair in becoming one with God. Though the concept of disease is that of a wrongness in the organism or mind, in the psychological view, too, man's sickness and its symptoms are the outcome of a lack which different writers have presented in different ways: a lack of consciousness, of self-love, of contact with the real self, etc. Such a lack stems from a "wrong" pattern of psychological functioning that resists being altered and sets up defenses. Whatever language we choose to describe the inner events that are the issue of both psychiatry and religion, we can see that wrongness (illness) and deficit (de-ficiency) are interdependent. For the emptiness to be truly filled, it is necessary first of all that it be acknowledged as emptiness by removing defenses and substitute contents, much as the Zen worker Nan-in indicated to the European university professor who visited him at the turn of the century:

> Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup full, and then kept on pouring.
>
>   The professor watched the overflow until he no longer could restrain himself. "It is overfull. No more will go in!"
>
>   "Like this cup," Nan-in said, "you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"[11]

This may be enough to indicate that the concept of mental health, just as the idea of development, is only one element in the understanding of a process of human change that is the common concern of education, medicine, and religion. And

just as the practical goal of education represents a compromise between a nurturing of the individual's development and the demands of society, so psychiatry and psychology, too, serve two masters: the individual patient, and the local culture. Also, as in the domain of education we can contrast the view of a development from within and the belief in such a thing as human nature with another view of cultural relativity in which the good can only be defined in terms of the needs of society, so, too, in psychiatry we can discern a developmental view that stresses some constancies in human nature and self-actualization, and another that stresses cultural relativity and the goal of adaptation. It is undoubtedly the latter that has led many humanists and those concerned with the spiritual endeavor to question the relevance of psychiatry to their own interests, and has put the term *headshrinker* in the mouth of many a common man.

The Goal of Religion

Let us now turn our attention to the nature of the religious quest associated with expressions such as salvation, deliverance, enlightenment, union with or rejection of God.

As in psychiatry and in education, we find here many "schools" which differ from one another not so much in their essential goal, but in their symbolic and conceptual language; in the admixture of elements, other than the concern for whatever man's ultimate concern may be, into the complex phenomenon called religion. Even more than in the domains of education and psychotherapy, perhaps, the invisible power of socialization has seized religion, using it for its own end of molding people into conformity. It is because of the local ethical and dogmatic difference in religion that some prefer to speak of mysticism when referring to the common core of reli-

gious experience out of which the different religions have sprung. Others speak of mysticism in connection with a particular modality of religious experience and development and use the word esoteric in reference to "the transcendent unity of religions." [12] Furthermore, within some religions such as Taoism or Buddhism an esoteric or inner circle is found where the essence of religion and man are the issue, and there are other esoteric groups (of varying authoritativeness and quality) that are not bound to any single "religion."

According to the esoteric tradition, many world religions have originated from a single stream of transmission of living understanding in which their leaders were initiated, a stream which remains independent of each of them and is still alive today.[*]

Whatever the historical truth concerning the idea of a single stream of teaching behind the diversity of religions, we may still accept the existence of a single stream of meaning and intent beyond the diversity of religious forms. The deterioration of such forms is feelingly expressed in a tale by Ahmed-el-Bedavi (died 1275) who, "according to dervish lore, was accused by Moslems of preaching Christianity but repudiated by Christians because he refused to accept later Christian dogma literally." This is how the story begins, according to the version of Idries Shah:

> Once upon a time a man was contemplating the ways in which Nature operates, and he discovered, because of his concentration and application, how fire could be made.
>
> This man was called Nour. He decided to travel from one community to another, showing people his discovery.

*This idea runs through the books of Guénon,[13] for instance, or from a journalistic point of view, through the pages of Pauwels' *The Dawn of Magic*.[14] Interesting documents concerning a surviving and ever renewed science of man are Lefort's *The Teachers of Gurdjieff,*[15] and Roy Davidson's compilation *Documents on Contemporary Dervish Communities*.[16]

Nour passed the secret to many groups of people. Some took advantage of the knowledge. Others drove him away, thinking that he must be dangerous, before they had time to understand how valuable this discovery could be to them. Finally, a tribe before which he demonstrated became so panic-stricken that they set about him and killed him, being convinced that he was **a** demon.

Centuries passed. The first tribe which had learned about fire reserved the secret for their priests, who remained in affluence and power while the people froze.

The second tribe forgot the art and worshipped instead the instruments. The third worshipped a likeness of Nour himself, because it was he who had taught them. The fourth retained the story of the making of fire in their legends: some believed them, some did not. The fifth community really did use fire, and this enabled them to be warmed, to cook their food, and to manufacture all kinds of useful articles.

After many, many years, a wise man and a small band of his disciples were travelling through the lands of these tribes. The disciples were amazed at the variety of rituals which they encountered; and one and all said to their teacher: "But all these procedures *are* in fact related to the making of fire, nothing else. We should reform these people!"

The teacher said: "Very well, then. We shall restart our journey. By the end of it, those who survive will know the real problems and how to approach them."

The tale goes on telling the failure of this attempt, tribe after tribe, until the wise man and his disciples returned to the lands "where fire-making was a commonplace and where other preoccupations faced them." There the master said to his disciples:

You have to learn how to teach, for man does not want to be taught. First of all, you will have to teach people how to learn. And before that you have to teach them that there is still something to be learned. They imagine that they are ready to learn.

But they want to learn what they *imagine* is to be learned, not what they have first to learn. When you have learned all this, then you can devise a way to teach. Knowledge without special capacity to teach is not the same as knowledge and capacity."

If "fire-making" is what we are speaking of when we talk of growth-healing-enlightenment, the fable is telling us that many of the concerns of humanity are inspired by it and yet they only mimic or substitute the real accomplishment. We hope that our survey 'of ways of growth may be as free as possible of such idolatries.

Some of the religious concepts associated with the goal of the human quest are implicitly negative: salvation is salvation from sin, liberation and deliverance imply something to be liberated from, and nirvana (extinction) implies that there is an illusion to be extinguished. Other concepts are positive, like enlightenment, awakening, or union (with the divine). Yet the positive and negative aspects are interdependent, as we have noted earlier in defining the relationship between deficit and wrongness. Thus, enlightenment, according to Buddhism, puts an end to the "three evil roots"—delusion, craving, and hate. Sin, in Judaism, is a rebellion in the face of God's Law (man's duty toward the Law being inherent in the doctrine of God's kingship). And God's Law, behind the six hundred thirteen Commandments delivered unto Moses on Mount Sinai, is one: "Seek the Lord and Live." * It would be futile to attempt to define in a few paragraphs the ineffable goal of religious endeavor, but we can probably agree that in its negative aspects it is closely related to the notions of healing and outgrowing, while in its positive aspect it is in the nature of a growth or ev-

* For a commentary of this, see the chapter entitled "The Torah in Its Aspect of Law" in Schechter's *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology.*[18]

olution of the mind. Indeed, the symbolism of generation and development pervades all religious thought; rebirth, emanation, and the tree of life are only a few examples of the central role held by these symbols.

On the whole, the West has laid greater stress upon the negative formulation of the religious goal—salvation—and, accordingly, Christianity has emphasized the *via purgativa,* purification, and the experience of repentance. The East, on the other hand, has emphasized more the positive aspect of the religious goal—living in the Tao—in attunement with one's nature and one's true place in the cosmos. Enlightenment and full awakening of the intrinsic Buddha nature are concepts of the *via unitiva* rather than of the *via purgativa.* Yet both aspects, at the conceptual as well as the practical level, are really two sides of the same coin.

A realization of the commonality between psychotherapy and religion has had to await a deepening in the understanding of emotional disorders and a "de-dogmatization" in the grasp of religious phenomena. Increased communication with the East has been a factor in the process, as well as the work of those who have expounded the essential unity of religions.* In the present book we are taking for granted the existence of a meeting ground and a common direction of intent among the different formulations though not necessarily implying an identity in the goal, for the ultimate goal of spiritual regeneration—"universal" or "cosmic" man—seems more ambitious than the goal of the minor mysteries and of psychotherapy. And we shall not be mainly concerned in this work with the convergence of theoretical formulations in various streams of thought but with that of the practical ways to the unfolding

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* See Bhagavan Das, for instance, and the works of Mircea Eliade. For discussions of the relevance of Eastern disciplines to psychotherapy, the interested reader might refer to Watts,[19] Boss,[20] Fromm,[21] Jacobs,[22] Jung,[23] and Zimmer.[24]

of man which have originated within the different spiritual disciplines, therapeutic schools, and educational approaches.

We have seen both psychotherapy and education as composites of two conflicting attempts, one toward socialization and the other toward liberation of the individual from the ills of his culture. Similarly, in religion we find a discrepancy between the One Quest and the attempt to indoctrinate people into a given cultural pattern—through fear of hell, hope of heaven.

How far "religion" today is from fulfilling the function it purports to serve may be seen in the fact that, despite the convergence of its goals with those of psychotherapy, no piece of psychological research has yet established a positive correlation between "religiosity" and well-being, humanitarianism, or sanity.[25] In view of this, we might consider not using the term "religion" at all for what is commonly regarded as a religious issue, or else restrict "religion" to the degraded cultural forms of the phenomenon and not use it when speaking of the quest for growth. Yet, if we were to do this we should also, for consistency, do the same with the terms "education" and "psychotherapy."

To what extent is our education, for instance, a case of *educere*, a "leading forth" or drawing out?

All three-education, psychotherapy, and religion—at the same time pursue and are hostile to the One Goal of human growth. To the extent that they serve the One God they are one; to the extent that they serve Caesar, they are specialties. Yet, paradoxically, Caesar has the best intentions. If we examine his motives, we find that he also serves God, only with little understanding. His decisions are based upon insights that once constituted wisdom but fail to apply any longer; his institutions are the echo of others that once served their true function.

According to one story, when God created the world and saw that it was good, Satan joined him in his appreciation, and exclaimed, as he gazed from one wonder to another, "It is good! It is good! Let us make it an institution!"