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# TOWARD VERTICAL MAN

ISSUES in human affairs are decided, not so much by logical argument and the persuasion of "facts" as by the slow infusion of changing attitudes of mind. The imperceptible subtlety with which such changes take place often makes their explanation difficult, and it also makes historical prediction hazardous. We see this quite clearly in the case of individuals, who learn to get on with one another mainly by arriving at a condition of maturity which changes the quality of their response to the mistakes and provocations of others. Yet cultures as well as individuals may come to maturity; or, more frequently, go through stages of internal readjustment in the direction of maturity, which, because of their uneven effects, may lead to gross misinterpretation.

People often awaken to a higher level of the perception of meaning under circumstances which give little scope to action on the basis of the new understanding. A man may find himself on the verge of commercial success, but suddenly decide that he does not want to spend the rest of his life in acquisitive pursuit; or, while recognizing that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with "success," he may feel that the product he manufactures is not really worth making, since it serves no essential need of human beings. So he quits, withdraws, liquidates, and to his friends and acquaintances appears to be demoralized and a failure. But ten years later, you may find him busily engaged in some constructive activity, filled with enthusiasm for his new life. Or, on the other hand, you may find him marginally occupied, still confused, still looking for a calling that will satisfy his inner hungers.

The historical application of this idea is more complicated, but not impossible. Take the sudden, and, as generally described, "disgraceful," fall of France to the Nazi invasion. The immediate and widespread comment was that France had fallen into decadence, a prey to her own self-indulgence and effete habits. This was the obvious thing to say. But there was another comment, made by Raoul de Roussy de Sales (in the January *Atlantic Monthly* for 1942), to the effect that modern Frenchmen had grown too civilized to be effective in war. In an attempt to balance the two observations, you might say that France had given up the martial virtues, but not yet felt the need to practice the non-martial virtues, and so, being neither warlike nor philosophical, but simply weak and indecisive, she quickly and ignominiously succumbed.

How, then, do you "judge" what happened to France? The best course, probably, is not to judge at all. We do not really have a standard for judging France in the circumstances of this disaster. Yet we can say this: Decadent or too civilized for the barbarisms of war, France in the extreme situation of defeat and occupation produced the moral revolution of Existentialist thinking; she was lifted, almost vicariously, by the genius of a noble daughter, Simone Weil; and after the Liberation she was to host the most exciting and inventive social experiment of the century—the Communities of Work. These may turn out to have been profoundly important contributions to Europe and to the world. In the long run, they may prove to be far more useful to the human race than a military victory. This is of course not an either-or situation. France triumphant might also have had distinguished fruits. Here, the observation is simply that French defeat did not prevent the fruits we have named.

In such considerations, very nearly everything depends upon the position you take regarding the general goals or ends of human development. You have to decide whether human excellence is basically dependent upon the political ascendancy of the group to which you belong, or whether

political power has only a casual or temporal bearing on human achievement. There are times when they seem to be connected, and other times when the connection seems quite irrelevant. That the hideous crimes of the Nazis became the environmental background for the psycho-social discoveries of Bruno Bettelheim and Viktor Frankl is a fact whose implications are not yet understood.

Similar questions are raised by modern literature and the drama. The modern novel is filled with agonizing existential inquiry, not with insights that can be incorporated into new political theories. You could say that basic to contemporary literature is the question of whether authentic human identity ought ever to be made dependent upon membership in the political communities of the age. Actually, we are finding out that a solid satisfaction obtained by embracing some national identity is not something we can enjoy simply by choice. We live in a time of turbulent questioning; for many men, righteousness has become extremely obscure. There is growing distrust of traditional, external authorities, and as yet little replacement of them by an inward monitor. In such a period there is a great deal of ostentatious turning to what men suppose to be "natural," or "organic," or immediate and spontaneous, and thus we see a world-wide withdrawal from ideologies on the part of the young, an extraordinary popularity of jazz and folk music, and the extreme subjectivism of modern art.

It is as though—to borrow the terminology of Paul Tillich and others—the most noticeable innovating tendency of the time is the search for *vertical* connections with Reality, as distinguished from the horizontal arrangements of Church and State. It is as though modern mankind, in the persons of its most perceptive members, had exhausted the benefits of both organized religion and organized political communities, and were now recognizing these social forms as little more than projections of psychological and emotional longings which can never have more than temporary satisfaction through the mechanisms of institutions. This is a conclusion which has obvious religious overtones, yet it is being reached by a curious combination of means which originated outside the conventional sources of religion. You might say that what has happened is the naturalization of religious inspiration, caused by the addition to the classical humanist stance of the subjective discoveries of modern depth psychology, by the maturing insights of a few philosophers—say, Whitehead and Santayana—and by the development of essayists like Joseph Wood Krutch, who see the extreme importance of returning to man the prerogatives of decision concerning his nature and his good. To this must be added the fact that the extravagant promises of the institutional order of society—based upon eighteenth-century political philosophy, nineteenth- and twentieth-century science and theories of socio-political revolution—have not been kept, and that men are beginning to believe they *cannot* be kept. Finally, as a kind of historical accident, there is the overwhelming threat of nuclear war to press men into the most serious kind of thinking. It has become difficult to maintain the emotional security afforded by a status quo which, until very recently, has insisted that only a massive advantage in nuclear armament will keep the world from all-destroying war.

Quite possibly, the thinking resulting from the need to find an alternative to war will turn out to be of enduring value, by no means limited to the crisis of this juncture of history. An example which may be submitted here is a contribution by a history teacher (in the London University Institute of Education) to a recent book, *Alternatives to War and Violence*, just published by James Clark and Co., Ltd., London. The writer is James Lewis Henderson, who discusses "Psychological Implications of an Alternative to War." Conflict and war, Mr. Henderson proposes, have served in the past to give individuals and human groups a sharpened sense

of identity. Behind the Roman legions marched Roman law and civilization, just as, almost two thousand years later, British civil order followed the empire builders and the fleet. However, whatever truth may be in this rationalization, it does not apply today. Mr. Henderson writes:

> Now that war has become genocide, it can no longer perform this function; it has ceased to be a mode of conflict compatible with the survival, let alone the dignity, of the species. What, then, in the words of William James, is "the moral equivalent of war"? That is the question which this chapter attempts to answer in psychological terms. It is an exercise in understanding how modern man can learn how to respect the law of conflict without being destroyed by its anachronistic expression in genocide. It attempts to define the prerequisites of non-violence as a legitimate mode of conflict.

Mr. Henderson now launches upon a psychological analysis of the subjective life of the individual from infancy, it being his purpose to show that an "enemy," an "obstacle," or what might be called the "not-self," helps the individual to gain coherence in thinking about himself—about who he is. After various encounters, by means of which the child generates the notion of himself and no other, he "makes the grand proclamation one fine day—'*I* did this, Mummy'." Mr. Henderson continues:

> With that statement every individual enters a process of living, which however greatly modified in maturity, lasts until the day of his death. But he trails with him, as inevitably as does his physical body its own dark shadow, his Ego's psychological shadow. This consists of all that part of his personality of which he is either unconscious or deeply ashamed—his "inferior function." And this shadow, which is projected by his Ego, has to fall somewhere on somebody or something: that is the enemy. Of course, where it alights is not entirely fortuitous: there is nearly always something in the make-up of the object chosen, which makes it particularly suitable. The "school-cad" is not merely the victim of the school hero's projected shadow; there is something despicable in him anyhow. Yet the essential truth of this psychological phenomenon remains, and its supreme importance for our present purpose is that without the evidence of one's shadow, resting somewhere, one would have no proof of one's existence or identity. The man without a shadow is no man; without enemies he cannot exist—incidentally, that is perhaps why Christ told us to love them!

The trouble with this proposition about human beings is that the more you think about it, the truer it seems. You see why the myths and hero-legends which capture the human imagination and engage the feelings always have to do with struggle, conquest, and triumph. While they may be lined with a superior and hidden verity, these meanings speak to the universal human condition. Mr. Henderson now applies his proposition to history:

> Without unduly laboring the point it is not difficult to see how this mechanism operates collectively as well as individually. The sciences of anthropology and sociology afford plenty of evidence of the role which an "out-group" plays as the necessary enemy or shadow-container of an "in-group." The most notable spectacle of this phenomenon in recent times was of course the "out-group" of Jews, who bore the monstrously inflated because unrecognized and therefore uncontrollable shadow of Hitler's "blond beasts." Individuals and societies have often tried and still too often try to deal with the problem of the enemy—that strange compound of subjective projection and objective reality—by alternative techniques of identification or elimination. But neither "Evil, be thou my good," nor "Out damned spot," are efficacious methods in the long run. Before war became genocide, it could and did make use, with limited success, of both techniques, but contemporary weapons forbid this and literally put the "Bomb" to our heads with the demand: either discover an alternative to identification and elimination or perish as a species.
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> Our individual and group Egos necessarily produce shadows, which necessarily fall somewhere, and there reside our enemies, without whom we could have no assurance of our own existence. We can neither identify with them nor eliminate them without mutual destruction. The reason why most international relations are destructive of one another is man's inability or unwillingness to recognize and accept this unavoidable split within himself.

This account of the human situation comes a long way from the "humanitarian" and "man-of-good-will" version of what needs to be done to

put an end to war. And it will find no favor at all with those to whom, on the one hand, it spells ruin of their self-image, since their sense of virtue: comes chiefly from righteous antagonism toward some enemy—the diabolical Communists, the exploiting Capitalists, the yellow races, the black races, the white races, the Jews, or the Catholics, etc. When it comes to enemies, there is an endless supply! The political progressives will not like it either, since their theory of the good cannot be applied without a drive to displace from power some class or group of malefactors, and if you tell them that their idea of evil-doing men is their own shadow personified and writ large, you may yourself become the worst "enemy" of all! Political opponents are a necessary part of the drama, and you want to dismantle the stage setting, tear down the theatre, and send all the actors home to look in the mirror.

Against these objections to the shadow-theory of evil, however, is the tremendous and growing sense of futility which overtakes people who are still trying to cure the world of its ills by putting down their enemies. New enemies are always springing up; the dragon's teeth are an endlessly fecund source of wicked legions, and since we are men, and not altogether fools, we cannot help but see, now and then, how closely they resemble ourselves. There is a kind of end-of-the-line feeling in the air, these days. It is something like the feeling an alcoholic gets when he takes his last drink. Somewhere, deep in his anguished soul, he hears a voice saying that he has come to the *end.* He can't believe it; he doesn't know how he can stop; but he does hear this voice and a quality of wonder, a thin thread of quiet objectivity, establishes itself in his psychic life. If he follows the thread, he will find his way.

Mr. Henderson does not end with a statement of the problem. He finds an answer and a solution in an adaptation of Jungian psychology. In a section headed, "The Shadowless Self," he speaks of "certain evidence to the effect that a human being is potentially, though frequently not realizedly, compounded of a body, an Ego—the center of his conscious personality—and a third something else." This "something else," he continues,

> Analytical Psychology has labelled . . . the "Self" or "midpoint" of the personality—where the total unconscious as well as conscious personality is balanced. Religious language refers to it as the "Inner Light," the "Godhead immanent," the "Jewel in the Lotus," the "Atman of the Brahman," "Still Center." Can its existence be proved? To some extent yes, for it, or something like it, has to be postulated to account for the "transcendent function" which unfailingly appears and operates at the crisis in psycho-therapeutic treatment as a healing and integrating factor. Much more commonly its reality can be verified by the reaction we have when we know ourselves, as a matter of practical experience, to have been in the presence of someone who has the quality of wholeness. Conversely, when we encounter someone who is wholly lacking in integrity we recognize that an element essential to psychic health is lacking. The one undeniable dramatic and utterly hopeful fact is that whatever this "Self" may be called and however various may be the forms in which it expresses itself, it has a constant characteristic—unlike the Ego, it casts no shadow.
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> What exactly does this signify? It means that in the degree to which an individual has become a "Self"—over and above, but by means of, his body and his Ego—he no longer requires enemies to serve his subjective needs; and it also means that he possesses a power which absorbs and dissipates the actual hostility of effective enemies. The reason for this is that the quality of wholeness which characterizes the "Self" requires no external support and evidence, because, not being merely a part, such as the body or the Ego, it does not need to locate any missing part elsewhere. . . .
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> The psychological implications of an alternative to war are that far more men than ever before have to rediscover today that part of themselves which does not cast a shadow. This will enable them to dispense with their psychological need for enemies, on the one hand, while on the other, that same part can find and touch "the self which we share with our fellows," or that of God in every man. Unlike the soldier in Wilfrid Owen's poem, who said to the foe he had slain, "You are the enemy I killed, my friend," these pioneers of nonviolence may acquire the grace to say

to their enemies, "We are comrades, who have discovered ourselves."

There must be at least a thousand ways to suggest the ideas here set out by Mr. Henderson, and perhaps, in the short space allotted to him in this book, he has got it a little too pat. But we are not backing Mr. Henderson as the founder of a new psychological religion, nor proposing that he has things exactly right. We would willingly argue, however, that in this short essay he has blocked in some fundamental realities of human life, and that he is only one of many who, today, find themselves unable to comprehend the inner and outer circumstances of life without making this kind of a vertical connection with meaning.

Something should be said about the book in which Mr. Henderson's essay appears. It also is a significant straw in the wind. *Alternatives to War and Violence* grew out of a peace conference held in Colchester (England) in January, 1961, sponsored by the Colchester Society of Friends. Because of what seemed to them a paucity of materials on peace research, or at least a lack of organization of the material which does exist, the people who attended this conference resolved to put out a book which would reflect the thinking of many kinds of workers for peace. Stephen King-Hall, who has himself written on non-violence, has called *Alternatives to War and Violence*, containing the work of twenty-four contributors, "a most remarkable achievement," adding that "if it had been produced by a large foundation [it] would be acclaimed. That its existence is due to a small group in Colchester is nothing short of astounding." Commander King-Hall's further comment is worth repeating:

> This is a subject that poses the greatest question of the day. A subject upon whose solution depends the future of the human race. The extraordinary fact remains that at a time when every government, not to mention unofficial bodies, should be bending over backwards to study the problem of finding an alternative to the traditional method of conducting power politics through violence, practically nothing is happening in this all-important field of research.

Commander King-Hall makes an important point; but his final statement is hardly correct. Something is happening in this field, and its meaning goes far beyond even the significance of the search for a way to end war. To put it simply, people are beginning to take the important questions of life into their own hands. The big institutions, as King-Hall points out, are indifferent, are not doing anything but drift with the tide of an outmoded and almost obviously self-destructive way of life. Little growing tips of the human determination to live *vertically*, to find the "Self," the "midpoint," or the "transcendent function," and to get their orientation, their concepts of right and ought, from this source, are becoming increasingly evident. If you wanted to put a prophetic, perhaps pretentious, name to what is happening, you could call it the Emergence of Man, or at any rate its small and initial beginnings.

But, someone will say, there is nothing "new" about these ideas. That is of course true. Expressions such as "Jewel in the Lotus," a sacramental phrase of the Buddhists, and the "Atman of the Brahman," a similar phrase of the Hindus, reach back into the past for thousands of years. But these are high religions of antiquity with a vast tradition of many cultures and civilizations behind them. What is new, today, is the spontaneous way in which men are turning to such ideas, as though they were private or independent discoveries.

These ideas are coming to life in a civilization which has been through two great cycles of development, exhausting the possibilities, first, of authoritarian religion, and second, of material or scientific power. There is a sense in which the people of this age are both enormously sophisticated and desperately disenchanted. *They are not about to repeat the errors of the past.* Some of them may try; some of them are already trying; but to enough of the rest of us these sponsors of atavism look like juveniles repeating childish slogans and waving pennants that have

had no serious human meaning for at least a hundred years.

By a slow infusion of attitudes, people are changing their minds. The shell of old habits is still rigid, the tendency to do what we have always done still strong. But it is the nature of time to wear out and make brittle old habit patterns which are not renewed by the ardor of vision. There is no spirit, today, in the mechanisms of war. There is much cleverness, much bought-and-paid-for scientific ingenuity, but little heart. We stand in wonder, like yokels, when the jets scream overhead, and we read in bewildered shock of nuclear warheads and other devastating devices, not to forget the clouds of virus poisons they are preparing at Fort Detrick, to spread, they say, over the country of whatever "enemy" is so hardy as to threaten us. Are these preparations real? When men go marching by with their jaws stuck out, their cheeks tense like movie actors showing "grim defiance," can you take them seriously? What world are they living in? Whence this curious passion to fight and kill? What century are they living in?

The spirit of the age to come may yet be a tender plant. The mood of tomorrow may still be inchoately silent, telling its secret only by a pantomime of odd but determined behavior. But more and more the gestures are understood. People who feel the slow infusion of attitudes springing from within themselves look at one another and know they are not alone.

# *REVIEW*
## ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BUDDHISM

WE have for review the first 150 pages of the *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism,* a scholarly reference work which, it is said, will take ten years to complete and which, when finished, will contain about 15,000 pages. The editor is G. P. Malalasekera, formerly professor of Pali and Buddhist Civilization, and dean of the faculty of Oriental Studies, at the University of Ceylon, and the publisher is the Government of Ceylon. This first fascicule of the *Encyclopaedia* ("fascicule" means one of the divisions of a book published in parts) covers entries from A to Aca. The pages are 7½" by 10" and are clearly printed by the Government Press of Ceylon.

This undertaking is of such great cultural and philosophical importance that it should be described in some detail. The compilation of an encyclopaedia of Buddhism was decided upon in 1955 by the Government of Ceylon, in connection with the celebration of Buddha Jayanti, the 2500th anniversary of the Buddhist Era, as traditionally accepted by the peoples of South Asia where Theravada (or Hinayana) Buddhism prevails. The scope of the work, as planned, is suggested by the editor in his Preface:

> Buddhism covers a vast expanse, both of time and space. The Encyclopaedia aims at giving a comprehensive account of the origins of this World Religion and of the developments that have taken place during a period of more than 25 centuries. To deal with Buddhism is to deal with a whole civilization, in fact, a whole series of civilizations which have influenced the lives of myriads of human beings, in many lands. A satisfactory treatment of the subject should, thus, include information on the doctrines of Buddhism and their growth, the story of their spread and expansion, accounts of the numerous Buddhist Schools and Sects and of their origins and subsequent ramifications, descriptions of Buddhist rites and ceremonies as found in many countries, the history of the fine arts—painting and sculpture, music, dance and drama—under the influence of Buddhism in various countries, details of Buddhist shrines and places of pilgrimage and of the vast literatures connected with Buddhism which developed in many languages, both ancient and modern, in original works as well as translations, and biographies of persons who, in the course of Buddhist history, played important roles in their own countries and made contributions to the development of Buddhist culture.

While the *Encyclopaedia* is being published under what might be called *Theravada* auspices, full attention will be given to the doctrines of Mahayana Buddhism, and all articles will be written with the general reader as well as the scholar and the expert in mind. In its alphabetical treatment of the material, the work will more or less follow the pattern of Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.* Acknowledged authorities will be sought for each major topic, with Buddhist scholars preferred to non-Buddhist. Note will be made when different views exist on a single subject, and in some cases there will be more than one article on the same topic. Contributors will be drawn from many lands.

It is difficult to convey in words the rich quality of the articles in the *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism,* as represented by what is no more than the first one per cent of its total pages. While the work will no doubt be highly valued by scholars, its chief service may turn out to be in behalf of ordinary readers who will be led to realize, as they browse its pages, that the cycle of European civilization was preceded, historically, by an extraordinary flowering of culture in the East, and that in many ways this Oriental achievement was more symmetrical, more profound, and richer in subtlety and cosmopolitan understanding than the intellectual and religious monuments of the West. This is not to propose or foster a rivalry or competition between the two cultures, but to suggest that by these studies the Westerner may gain a sense of historical continuity with the peoples of Asia, and a feeling of unity with their thought. At any rate, he will certainly realize that to remain unacquainted with the vast store of ethical and philosophical inquiry represented by Buddhism is to remain a provincial, culturally

speaking, in the modern world. Further, the capacity of the editors and contributors to relate Eastern philosophy and religion to the categories of Western thought is beyond question. The discussions, therefore, tend to create the atmosphere of a single culture for all the world.

Two articles on subjects among the "A's" seemed especially good as introductions to Western readers. One concerns the letter "A" itself, which is also the first letter of the Devanagari alphabet used by Buddhists in India and Tibet during the eighth century. This article begins:

> A: The sound represented by the first letter of many alphabets, Sanskrit, Roman, Greek, as well as of most modern languages of East and West, has served as a mystic symbol for the ultimate beginning or creation, as well as for the Absolute, e.g., *I am Alpha and Omega.* It is the first of all sounds and, hence, the beginning of all knowledge which used to be communicated by word of mouth. . . . Thus, the letter A is considered to be the most perfect letter, which is imperishable even though in its combination with other letters, e.g., in AUM, the evolution, continuation and involution of this world of events is symbolized.
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> Further developments which were carried to far-away lands by Buddhist missionaries had their origin in India, where even to this day their equivalents are found with hardly any difference in the Tantric schools of Hinduism, which flourished particularly in Bengal and South India. Tibetan Buddhism has given much room to the development of such types of speculation.
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> According to the *Mani bKah:hbum* (fol. 31 b.) the sacred syllable symbolizes the noumenal source, the absolute, and around this symbol is evolved the idea of creative sound in the theory of vibration. Well-known and far-spread as this concept is in the mystic East, it was not unknown in the West either. Pythagoras, who himself was an initiate of eastern wisdom, and who was the founder of one of the most influential schools of mystic philosophy in the West, spoke of the harmony of the spheres, according to which each celestial body and each and every atom produced a particular sound on account of its movement, rhythm and vibration. All these sounds formed a universal harmony in which each element, while having its own function and character, contributed to the unity of the whole. This idea of creative sound was continued in the doctrine of the Logos (the Word), partly absorbed by early Christianity, which thereby linked itself with the philosophy of the Gnostics and the traditions of the East even though the link was not maintained by the later Church: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. . . . And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us." . . . .
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> Chinese as well as Tibetan authors have made frequent use of this symbol. In exotetic texts the letter A stands for negation, for the uncreated source, for the beginning, for impermanence. A bodhisattva (a Buddha-to-be), by listening to this sound as a result of former meritorious actions, comprehends the source of all essences. Essences, however, are not thought of as eternal (as in Greek philosophy), but as impermanent; and thus the same symbol can signify negation and essence, for the Void is the essence of All.

The other article which will probably interest the student of Western philosophy is for the entry, "Absolute." Here there are extended comparisons of Eastern and Western metaphysical speculations, with clear exposition of the Theravada Buddhist position concerning any sort of positive postulate or affirmation of a single, primeval substance.

The *Encyclopaedia* articles are critical as well as expository. In the examination of *Abhidhamma*, which is the third (and last) of the collections of the Buddhist canonical books, it is pointed out that this compilation represents "the first serious attempt in the history of human thought to place the study of psychology on a scientific footing." A further comment gives insight into the method of the Buddha, indicating why this aspect of Buddhist thought has been so appealing to scientifically trained Westerners:

> It [*Abbidhamma*] is a system of descriptive and critical psychology which "psychologizes" without the aid of a metaphysical psyche. It claims only to describe and analyze psychological situations as they actually occur. The value of the Abhidhamma in this regard lies in the fact that it gives us an insight into the mainsprings of psychological life in the individual.

A later note observes:

> It was a distinctive merit of the Abhidhamma that it systematically unified various doctrines of original Buddhism into a consistent system and gave exact definitions of all Buddhist terminology, clarifying all Buddhist concepts. But it carried with it some shortcomings. The definitions of concepts and the exposition of doctrines were too formal and uniform, with the result that the profundity and sublimity of the early doctrines were lost. For, it is impossible to grasp the stream of concrete practice by uniform and abstract definitions. In original Buddhism, the same terminology conveyed various meanings as the hearers' understanding and ability varied. The abhidhammic definitions deprived the words or concerts of their nuance and flexibility, and the abhidhammic studies gradually deviated from the practice of the path and became mere theories for their own sake, subtle and complicated. The religiosity and practical nature proper to Buddhism were lost. It was to rectify these shortcomings that Mahayana Buddhism arose.

Only a little inspection of the pages of the *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* makes the reader realize that there are direct correspondences between the iconoclasm of existentialism and the general assumptions of Buddhist thought, and between the sophistication of modern semantic studies and the refusal of Buddhist thinkers to become captive to the illusory reality of names and forms. The functionalism of modern Western intellectuality has much in common with Buddhist subtlety.

The headquarters of the staff working on the *Encyclopaedia* are in the University Park, connected with the University of Ceylon, at Peradeniya, near Kandy, Ceylon. This first fascicule offers no information about subscriptions, but a letter to the editor would no doubt produce results.

# *COMMENTARY*
## MORE HEALTH IN US

THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS (second circuit) last month declared unconstitutional that portion of the Selective Service Act which requires conscientious objectors to war to believe in a Supreme Being. Judge Irving R. Kaufman wrote the decision, with Judges Lumbard and Hays concurring. It said in part:

> We feel compelled to recognize that a requirement of belief in a Supreme Being, no matter how broadly defined, cannot embrace all those faiths which can validly claim to be called "religious."
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> Thus it has been noted that, among other well-established religious sects, Buddhism, Taoism, Ethical Culture and Secular Humanism do not teach a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being.

Noting that the population of the United States is heterogeneous, including men of all faiths, the decision observed: "In the face of this vast conglomeration of differing ideas and ideals, it is not surprising that no single concept may be found which is common to all." Judge Kaufman continued, saying:

> . . . for many in today's "skeptical generation," just as for Daniel Seeger, the stern and moral voice of conscience occupies that hallowed place in the hearts and minds of men which was traditionally reserved for the commandments of God. . . . While we are . . . most reluctant to find that Congress, in a sincere attempt to balance the personal rights of a minority with the insistent demands of our national security, has transgressed the limits imposed by the Constitution, we are compelled to so hold. . . . we cannot conclude that specific religious concepts, even if shared by the overwhelming majority of the country's organized religions, may be selected so as to discriminate against the holders of equally sincere religious beliefs. . . . a line such as drawn by the "Supreme Being" requirement between different forms of religious expression cannot be permitted to stand consistently with the due-process clause of the Fifth Amendment.
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> We are convinced that the believer in a Supreme Being is not for that reason alone more entitled to have his conscience respected by a draft board than is Daniel Seeger.

A member of a Friends Meeting on the campus at Columbia University, Seeger had refused to assert belief or disbelief in a deity, urging that such skepticism does not mean lack of faith. Plato, Aristotle, and Spinoza, he said, evolved comprehensive ethical systems without belief in God, "except in the remotest sense." If the Supreme Court upholds the present decision, Congress will have to enact a new provision on conscientious objection.

# CHILDREN
## . . . and Ourselves
### CRADLES OF EMINENCE

A NUMBER of observations in the book of this title (Little, Brown, and Co., 1962) will be of particular interest to MANAS readers. The authors, Victor and Mildred Goertzel, have a background of psychological research—Dr. Goertzel, with the Camarillo State Hospital in California, and his wife, with the National Association for Gifted Children.

In choosing four hundred "eminent" subjects, in order to look into their origins, the authors selected men and women who have had the most written about them, yet were fully aware that "eminence," defined literally, may have little to do with greatness. But a fair proportion of the four hundred represent remarkable creativity, and the observations about their biographical sketches are significant. By and large, the Goertzels agree with conclusions reached by E. Paul Torrance, director of the Bureau of Educational Research of the University of Minnesota. Here are some of the rather startling contributions of *Cradles of Eminence:*

> An unusual degree of intelligence is in itself a social handicap in a society geared to conformity. Highly creative elementary-school children observed by Torrance are younger editions of some of the more teacher-harassing of the Four Hundred. They seem to be playing around when they should be working at assigned tasks. They engage in manipulative and/or exploratory activities, many of which are discouraged or even forbidden. They enjoy learning, and this looks to the teacher like play rather than work. They are intuitive and imaginative; enjoy fantasy; see unusual uses in ordinary objects; are flexible, respond readily to such questions as "What could be done to make this toy more fun to play with?" They have vital energy.
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> Torrance finds that seventy per cent of the children rated high in creativity would not be selected to be members of a special class for intellectually gifted children. He finds some children who are intellectually gifted and are also highly creative. He finds other children of average or superior intelligence quotients who are not at all creative.
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> Teachers, he finds, are partial to the child of high intelligence and low creativity. This child is not a rebel and does the school assignments with dispatch and perfection. The creative child is often thought to have wild or silly ideas or to be naughty. He is not thought of as being serious, or dependable; or even promising—although he is likely to do as well on a standardized achievement test as does the highly intelligent child who is not creative. This annoys the teacher who deduces from this that he could do his classroom work better if he would only try. He makes discipline hard for her, as, for instance when he gives a unique answer to a prosaic question and sets the class laughing.

The Goertzels have often been unable to resist the temptation to confound PTA audiences with the following hoax, listing three case histories and asking teachers and parents to predict in each case the childrens' future development:

> In five years, we asked, would they be functioning as gifted, average-normal, psychotic, neurotic, delinquent or mentally deficient persons?
>
> *Case I.* Girl, age sixteen, orphaned, willed to custody of a grandmother by mother, who was separated from alcoholic husband, now deceased. Mother rejected the homely child, who has been proven to lie and to steal sweets. Swallowed penny to attract attention at five. Father was fond of child. Child lived in fantasy as the mistress of father's household for years. Four young uncles and aunts in household cannot be managed by the grandmother, who is widowed. Young uncle drinks, has left home without telling the grandmother his destination. Aunt, emotional over love affair, locks self in room. Grandmother resolves to be more strict with granddaughter since she fears she has failed with own children. Dresses granddaughter oddly. Refused to let her have playmates, put her in braces to keep back straight, did not send her to grade school. Aunt on paternal side of family crippled; uncle asthmatic.
>
> *Case 2.* Boy, senior year secondary school, has obtained certificate from physician stating that nervous breakdown makes it necessary for him to leave school for six months. Boy not a good all-around student; has no friends—teachers find him a problem—spoke late—father ashamed of son's lack of athletic ability—poor adjustment to school. Boy has

odd mannerisms, makes up own religion, chants hymns to himself—parents regard him as "different."

*Case* 3. Boy, age six; head large at birth. Thought to have had brain fever. Three siblings died before his birth. Mother does not agree with relatives and neighbors that child is probably abnormal. Child sent to school—diagnosed as mentally ill by teacher. Mother is angry—withdraws child from school, says she will teach him herself.

When Eleanor Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, and Thomas Edison had been categorized by our audience as delinquent, mentally ill and retarded, respectively, we then spoke of the danger of making snap decisions on superficial, incomplete evidence and emphasized the need for objective examination and adequate case study in making proper judgments.

The audience in turn frequently retaliated by making us confess that we could not account for the high achievement and resilience of these children from troubled homes.

Another significant generalization can be made in approaching the study of eminence from the standpoint of the atmosphere of the home:

In homes which cradle eminence there are strong tendencies to build directly on personal strengths, talents, and aims rather than to assume that there is a large, specific body of knowledge that everyone should possess. A family, or some member of the family, is likely to take off wholeheartedly on a course of investigation or action which sets him aside from his contemporaries.

This nonconformity is not self-conscious or forced. It seems to happen because the individual is not able to do otherwise. When parents permit the child to be different from his playmates, or involve him in an unusual learning situation, they may be acting from what they feel is weakness rather than strength. They are often self-critical, and argue among themselves. They can become guilt-ridden and anxious by being critical. There are letters from relatives who thought it odd that young Woodrow Wilson was so dull and backward, and expressed sorrow for his parents. The fathers and mothers in these Four Hundred homes are not prescient. The road to eminence is not paved with plaudits, or even scholarships. Boys and girls who are to become famous are not often "all-around," competent, conforming students. To parents who love good books and respect learning this is frequently frustrating. There is a personal involvement with ideas in these homes. There are few passive receptors of fact.

In general, the conclusions—or non-conclusions—reached in *Cradles of Eminence* are reminiscent of the findings of Lewis Terman, reported in his two-volume study, *Genius.* Mr. Terman assembled a lot of interesting information, but he was finally unable to explain why some people turn out to be geniuses, and others do not.

# *FRONTIERS*

## Population Explosions and Such

[From time to time the *Progressive* runs some brief commentary composed in nineteenth-century style attributed to one "Theophrastus Such." Mr. Such is seldom in the mainstream of American thought, even liberal thought, and it is apparent from reacting letters to the *Progressive* editors that his sentiments are vastly annoying to some readers. Theophrastus often moralizes, and sometimes he doesn't seem to know that he is writing for a "liberal" magazine. He appears to be over-simplifying issues, and is accused of maintaining an infuriating air of superiority in presenting undocumented, non-statistical arguments. So his image, for some, is that of a rather impossible old man who should be out in a pasture far enough from the *Progressive* to keep his words from ever getting to the press on time.

Personally, we like Theophrastus Such, and are glad that the *Progressive* editors continue to include the Such touch. In the August, 1963 issue, Mr. Such had a boxed two-column essay titled "The Explosion Kick." It is, we think, an admirably brief presentation of a point of view that is easy to overlook, but should not be forgotten.]

THERE used to be a statistic around showing Vassar graduates with 1.3 babies each—*horribile visu!*—while the non-Vassar (and non-Wellesley and non-Smith) girls were spawning like crazy. In the face of this threat to the elite, the Vassar girls were urged to step up production and save the world for democracy. But I never heard that they did.

I suppose—Freud aside—that the multiplication of the already too numerous poor explains the fascination the "planned parenthood" crusade has always had for rich women. They have as many (or, more precisely, as few) babies as they want, and they don't want the wrong kind of people—the Franklins and the Lincolns—to have more.

But the wrong kind of people, getting access to food and medicine and shelter, are getting to be more numerous than ever. Actually, it isn't the rising birth rate as much as the falling infant mortality (and the increasing longevity) that is doubling the population of Asia and Africa every two weeks. (If food, medicine, and shelter necessarily raised the birth rate, ours would be the world's highest.)

So the rich are in a dither about the population explosion, and America is the land of the rich. Americans want to talk about the population explosion—and to talk about it in preference to the explosions and impending explosions that are nearer home. We are spending three million dollars *a day* just to warehouse our rotting agricultural surpluses, and employing most of our people in the production of either superfluities or the means of mass destruction; and we can't for the life of us figure out how the world's poor are to eat if they go on having children.

The fact is that we are terrified at the prospect of sharing our glut and more terrified still that the wrong kind of people will, without our help, manage to beef themselves up and move in on Fortress America. In a world where nearly all the people earn the equivalent of less than forty dollars a year, the world's per capita costs of non-productive and non-consumable weapons of war is forty dollars a year.

And now comes a distinguished writer (in, of course, the *Reader's Digest*) to urge the Women's Strike for Peace to forget all about the nuclear dandruff on their shoulders—and in their children's milk—and crusade *instead* against the population explosion away out there somewhere. Leave war and peace to the government (which has always managed them so well) and tell the Africans and the Asians to use contraceptives.

It's the old moral dodge: Attend at once to the remote and avoid the immediate. Bear down on the impossible and leave the possible to the Pentagon. Whatever its inherent reality, the population explosion is here and now a diversion from our mortal problems and a flight from our mortal guilt. We know of old that when men learn war no more, the desert will bloom as the rose and the hungry be fed. Then, and not before.

THEOPHRASTUS SUCH

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[We are also impressed by the sincerity and the impressive arguments of neo-pacifists and other liberals in behalf of the benefits to be gained from "population control." There is no denying the fact that the illiterate tend to produce much more rapidly

than the literate. But what we are not at all sure about is that this problem is going to be solved "scientifically" in a way that will not create others—unless it is accomplished by a kind of education which considers irresponsible overpopulation as but one symptom in a culture sadly deficient in philosophical understanding.

Mr. Such's raised voice is a lonely one because he stubbornly refuses to regard "over-population" as a separate problem by itself. The ancient philosophers did not have to consider over-population for the world at large, nor even for their own principalities. But it is clear enough from the *Upanishads* and the *Dhammapada,* from the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the New Testament, that it was the quality of men and not their quantity which they held to be crucial. And if you argue that irresponsible reproduction is destroying "quality" you may have a hard time defending yourself in certain levels of philosophic discussion; for the philosopher would say that there is no ideal social system, that no social system can produce enlightenment in the individual—and that there is nothing wrong with a considerably greater population if the ideas and ideals which govern culture carry a diffusion of inspiration from the highest levels of intelligence to the lower.

Whatever you believe about birth control, the point is simply that if we hope to have a satisfactorily-planned society for the entire world on the basis of relating all available arable land to the total of mouths to feed, we may neglect some even more important considerations while talking about this millennium. It is not over-population, really, that may be held accountable for the depressing evaluation in the concluding chapter of Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Measure of Man,* a portion of which is printed below.]

If man has always been partly the creator and partly the creature of his total environment; if he has always been partly what he was made as well as partly what he made himself—then it may seem that the balance is less in favor of the autonomous, creative side of his nature than it ever was before. If some men have mastered to a degree never before approached the technique for exploiting the mechanical, predictable, and controllable side of man's nature, it may seem hopeless to try to oppose to them forces which, on their part, have, if anything, grown weaker rather than stronger.

Moreover, if those individuals in whom the human spirit is conspicuously stronger than the conditioned reflex are less numerous than those concerning whom the contrary must be admitted, and if the new methods of organizing majorities make these majorities more powerful than they ever were before, then it may seem that the engineers must achieve their ultimate aims and prove that they can, as they sometimes assume, successfully ignore even when they do not deny, the existence of all forces which they cannot use for their purpose.