Bernard Eugene Meland's Unpublished Papers

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Edited by

John N. Gaston and W. Creighton Peden

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To

The Staff of the Hudson Library, Highlands, North Carolina

Who have been so helpful in so many ways for so many years.

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PREFACE

This volume contains the unpublished papers of Bernard E. Meland and is a companion volume to W. Creighton Peden's book *Life and Thought of Bernard Eugene Meland, American Constructive Theologian (1899–1993)* which was published in 2010 by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

These papers contain more than forty-six lectures, reports, and other personal documents that Meland wrote at various times between 1937 and 1979. These papers are ordered by the year they were composed and, within the year, alphabetically by title. Several undated papers follow those for which a date is known.

Where possible, each of the papers was scanned, processed by optical character recognition software, and visually inspected to ensure that it accurately reflected the content of the original. Papers that could not be scanned were entered manually and then subjected to the same visual inspection process.

Because some of these papers are Meland's notes for lectures, reports, and sermons which he intended to deliver orally, he felt free to change, edit, and update them until the moment of delivery and many of the papers contained material that was either marked for deletion or moved to another location. Also, Meland inserted hand-written words, phrases, and emphasis marks into many of these papers. We have attempted to honor his intent by incorporating his editing changes into the text as we prepared these papers for publication. We believe that the resulting document closely reflects the text that provided the foundation for some of Meland's lectures, papers, and reports.

Meland used a variety of techniques to provide references to quoted or otherwise inserted material, including: footnotes, endnotes, and in-line reference notations. In order to assure uniformity, we have converted all footnotes and endnotes to notes and supplied a complete reference at the end of this document. We have preserved Meland's in-line references; because there is no uniformity in the preparation of these references—they have been preserved as Meland wrote them.

Preparing a useful Index is always a challenge. One must search for and identify the concepts and ideas that undergird the author's words as well as provide references to the extensive list of individuals with which

he or she is acquainted. We trust we have succeeded on both counts; however, any omissions or other errors are strictly our own.

Readers are referred to Tyron Inbody's *THE CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGY OF BERNARD MELAND: Postliberal Empirical Realism* (1995) as this work contains a complete bibliography of Meland's published writings

Appreciation is due to the Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library and Dr. W. Creighton Peden, Meland's literary executor, for permission to publish these papers.

John N. Gaston
W. Creighton Peden
—Fall, 2012

MELAND'S UNPUBLISHED PAPERS BY YEAR

1937

Attachment to Life

In his deepest moments, man has always sought union with a vaster reality beyond himself. And the annunciation of that union has been the good news of all the religions. This intuition, wrote the late Havelock Ellis in *The New Spirit*, has found voice in every age.

> It is this intuition which is the 'emptiness' of Lao-Tzu—the freedom from all aims that center in self. This is the great news of the Upanishads. The Buddhist's Nirvana has the same charm: it opens up the kingdom of the Universe to man… This is the great assertion of Christ, "I and the Father are one," and whenever Christianity has reached its highest expression, it has sung over again the old refrain of joy at the new birth into eternal life—the union of the soul through Christ with God… Even the austere Imperial Stoic becomes lyrical as this intuition comes to him. 'Everything is harmonious with me which is harmonious with thee, O Universe!' As far back as we can trace, the men of all races, each in his own way and with his own symbols, have raised, this shout of exultation. There is no larger freedom for man.[1]

Psychologically this union has implied varying conditions of relationship. In the *Tao-te-King* of Lao-Tzu and the native religions of China, it implied at-one-ness with the Way (Tao) of Heaven and Earth. And to the Chinese, Heaven and Earth meant the order of Nature. In the Upanishads and the Buddhist Dhammapa, as well as in certain stages of Christian lore, union meant world denial and an outreach toward a transcendent state of good beyond the horizon of earthly scenes. Union with reality was a condition men longed for, but one that they rarely realized in experience, except in cases where the saving process had become consummated and assured. In present-day empirical philosophies of religion, on the other hand, union with reality implies both a living relationship with a sustaining environment and acceptance of this present, living process as, in some measure, an experienced good. This vital integration with a sustaining environment, accompanied by an affirming commitment to the

living process, may be described psychologically as attachment to life.

I

Man's physical attachment to life is quite beyond his control. He is a creature of his earthly environment in the same sense that all living forms are related to the planetary pattern. And though he has seemingly unlimited powers of flight, he is rooted in nature. His rooting differs somewhat from that of trees and plant life. He is not grounded, yet he is intricately involved in the environing world. Were he able to stand off and observe himself living upon his planet as he views a body of sea life, he would understand that his dependence upon the blanket of atmosphere that envelops him and the soil that sustains his organism is not unlike that relationship that confines the fish to the briny deep. Man is rooted in this planetary home. However mobile his organism, or daring his dreams of flight, he may not venture beyond the bounds of this atmospheric sea, or desert for long the soil that sustains him.

This suggests only one aspect of man's rooting as an earth-creature. There are physical relations growing out of the peculiar biological demands of his organism and the peculiar fitness of the natural environment to serve those demands. There are also psychical connections relating men to the social environment that has shaped his peculiar selfhood. As one pursues the mystery of the human individual participating in his world, he becomes more and more aware of the unfathomable web of organic connections interlacing his life with the life of the planet and with the universe that embraces both. How far this dependence extends, no science or philosophy can as yet tell us. That it is intimate and far-reaching is an assured fact.

For the sensitive person, this realization opens up the immense and baffling problem of the vast world of reality with which all the thinkers in religion and philosophy through the ages have been concerned. What does it mean to be sustained by these forces of earth? What is the nature of this order of reality that relates us to these vital sources? How may we know this creative order more clearly? And may life fulfill itself with greater scope and meaning through adjustment to its processes? This is no mere succession of queries. It is a hunger, the unquenchable desire to unite the self with the more-than-self. It is the perpetual outreach for union with the world, and the annunciation of this larger freedom through oneness.

Modern man cannot sing the songs of ancient men and find satisfaction enough in their praise of life. He can be stirred by their exultation, and impelled to seek their peace; but his freedom through union can come only by discovery of what actually possesses him and rightfully claims him as creature. His route to this oneness is to become sensitively aware of the

environing Earth that sustains him. Deep roots hold man inextricably to this vast world of earth-life. To become aware of this rooting and to respond to its demands is to have the elemental experience of the religious man.

II

Oneness with Earth is only one sense in which modern man may achieve his fulfilling attachment to life. Another basic form of it is manifest in the will to live. This sense of attachment to life is the most elemental creature feeling. As long as it persists, life takes on a normal human coloring. People have desires and an eagerness to fulfill them. When this attachment to life wanes a psychical lag ensues resulting in a sense of defeat, a touch of cynicism, or ennui.

The charm of childhood issues from the hearty abandon of these little folk. Life is so obviously worth the candle, no one among them wonders whether or not it should burn. Of course it is unreflective. It is animal faith and the innocent response to the will to live. Then come the transitions leading to the reflective life. Growth does many things to us, the least considerate of which is to thrust us from this sure sense of life's worth. Misgivings arise at an early age. The passage from the *cunning* babe to the awkward, growing boy is a subtle change; so gradual in fact that the nearest observers will not seem to notice that it is happening. But the environmental effects of stimuli-response are unfailing. Soon these changes begin to tell. The enveloping hospitality of once attentive adults shades into commonplace tolerance. Ardor chills into a sober awareness of a disturbing presence. The actual psychological changes in the growing child's environment elude the record. Incidents occur and pass without becoming clear to the growing mind, or hardly apparent to the older ones. Only memories carry the scars. Yet something happens between the ages of four and ten that turns the stride of the eleven year olds from the company of adults, and creates the sense of uneasiness and distrust which increasingly alienates the young from the old, and from the world of life they accept and approve. "Even nice children," writes Walter de la Mare in *Early One Morning*, "and not merely the dour and the saturnine may not care very much for the adult—not as a class. …if given the choice between a tea party event of distinguished grown-ups and a solitary visit (whether or not provided with buns) to the Zoological Gardens, there is little doubt they will prefer the animals."[2] The psychologists have had many things to say about this period of estrangement with its storm and stress. We need not repeat their diagnoses. The fact that is of present interest is the fundamental change in creature relation that comes over these growing lives as they pass from the animal faith of their sheltered years into the

perilous open of wider social experience.

Going to school or becoming exposed to group association is a socializing process. It presses upon the ego in ways that make it yield. But yielding to social pressure is not without its price. It may integrate the self in its surroundings while at the same time dissolving the fragile fibers that once formed the attachment to the web of life in its childlike faith. The maturation that comes through social adjustment brings perpetual shock to the emerging person who, in the very process of attaining the sense of selfhood, must enter also upon the forced experience of losing the self, or of at least merging the self in the larger environment. The so-called revolt of *youth* is more elemental than an intellectual protest against adult values; it is a deep unrest arising from a vague awareness of having been painfully uprooted from one world of being and transplanted to another amid austere environings that only add to the strangeness. Basic to any experience of a confident rapport with life, which is the quintessence of the religious relation, is the sense of being at home in the world. This, the growing child does not have, once he has been thrust from familiar shorelands to embark upon the sea of social reality.

His advancing intellectual life may increase the tension. To the degree that new studies awaken the *mind* to fuller meaning and possibility of exploration, they make for a healthy projection of the emerging self. But this development is always accompanied by a counter process of cleansing the mind of cherished ideas. When the latter process outruns the former (as is so often the case, for the critical awakening is more readily achieved than the constructive ability to recreate concepts of meaningful values) the painful and devitalizing sense of life's emptiness is inevitable. This is the plight of many thoughtful and sensitive youths who struggle on toward intellectual maturity. In many instances, young people have lost their comfortable possession of animal faith through critical reflection, never to rise again above the level of a wistful agnosticism. Some fail to return that far. Thinking is not in itself as difficult as thinking things through. Although I should not wish to argue from these observations for the abandonment of the intellectual search, I am clear that discrimination in impelling young minds to take up the trail is urgent. They who can stand the gaff of the search, who can condition their feelings sufficiently to keep problems posed, and their total organic response flexible enough for conditions of growth toward maturity may find entrance to a world of meaning that is satisfying beyond all expectations. To enter upon this Promised Land unscathed and free from fatal wounds is to achieve the rarest returns of growing up. All the effort and pain in process are as nothing compared to this high turning. But for those who attain this

fulfillment, there are proportionately larger numbers who fail to advance beyond their disillusionment. Some find in this state of mal adjustment a new source of freedom and abandonment. It is not the most healthy form of freedom, for it may readily take the turn of flippant defiance of all that passes as value. Detachment in this form becomes irresponsible and irreverent.

For the majority of young adults emerging from these strained, growing years, becoming immersed in the organic processes of the common life, through family responsibilities, and employment may be enough to shock them out of their mental wasteland. Taking a job and becoming married, or assuming an active part in the affairs of the community have saved many an active intellectualist from the career of a desert wanderer. Participation in life does not so much answer the mind's troubling queries; it sublimates them in active effort. It releases the psychic creature in man from the grid of mental obsessions which have developed in situations where intellectual problems have been stressed out of proportion to other phases of life's interests, and plunges him into experienceable events that return him to the *warm valley of human affection* and solvable problems. This return to the common life in a responsible role may, for the first time, create a fruitful situation for clear thinking. Problems will pose themselves in ways that open up pursuable paths. Instead of the inertia of mind, formerly experienced from attacking problems too vast, remote or abstract to cope with, giving issue only to stillborn ideas, the revived person may experience a new quickening. It is an observable fact, in any case, that the attachment to life, once held in childhood, then lost during subsequent years of growth, has returned with new vitality when the youth has become a man, engaged in the normal routine of the mature life. That many do not recover this perspective is the sadder side of the story. And, whether recognized or not, this inability to seize life with the zest of the child's faith, is a loss to the human spirit for which the fruits of sophistication can only partially compensate. No one, who is aware of the facts, will deny that the life of the sophisticate has its rewards. One gets a kind of insight from the perspective of spectator which only isolation and detachment can give. But they who hold to these solitary heights must also yield to the chilling winds. There is a quality of existence, on the other hand, that issues from the organic attachment to life which the child and the peasant unconsciously live with and which some achieve through a more mature conscious commitment, rewarding beyond anything that isolation and detachment can provide. Whoever turns to achieve this quality of existence, turns toward the religious life; for to be religious, in the primary sense, is to attain that emotional relationship with

the environing reality of the universe which releases the creative powers of the creature and brings him to maturity and fulfillment.

III

The words "attachment to life" are not to be taken too narrowly to imply merely the sensuous grasp of experience. There is attachment which is mere creature existence. This is its minimum meaning—mere physical clinging to existence. All sentient creatures manifest this will to live. This elemental relationship with reality is not to be dismissed lightly, however, for it is the fundamental organic fact making for creature striving toward fulfillment. All through the child's early years this unthinking hold upon life, shared with all kinsmen of earth, undergirds his zestful existence and promotes his growth. But the growing child may develop indefinitely beyond this minimum level, expanding the scope and thereby enhancing the quality of his attachment.

The dawn of the reflective life ushers in a new era in the child's career. This is the more heartening side of the story of growing up. At this state of his development, the child ceases to be a little animal and begins to take on dimensions of the human person. The human status carries with it sensitivities, interests, outreaches, and realizations that go beyond mere creature existence. Human intellect not only controls and directs impulse; it projects it expectantly toward new ends. Thus mind is not merely an instrument that regulates activities; it is a roving searchlight, anticipating new activities and interests. This imaginative capacity of intellect lifts the growing human being out of the company of creatures that seek *existence mere* and arouses in him the concern, sometimes the hunger, for significance. Men's yearning for more than existence occurs long before they are able to recognize that for which they yearn.

There are human beings, to be sure, who live below the imagination level. Their intellectual powers may assume a normal competency in the regulation of activities. They become highly efficient in the pursuit of enterprises that promote existence and increase its economy. The scope and character of their participation in life, however, may hardly distinguish them from creatures at the animal level of existence. At best they may be able to refine their animal impulses and actions through the regulatory use of intellect.

Every outreach, however, that carries the individual beyond the mere interest in existence to a qualitative use of existence, extends his human dimension. The child reading his story book is on his way toward this higher destiny. Much of it is of *existence mere*: amusing tales of *queer old Mr. Penny*, living in the house by all those animals, of *The Little Family that lives in a little house that has doors and windows and a chimney on*

top. But when the little mind catches the stimulus of the sounds:

> Some one came knocking
> At my Wee, small door;
> Some one came knocking,
> I'm sure—sure-sure;
> 1 listened, I opened,
> I looked to left and right,
> But nought there was a-stirring
> In the still dark night:
> Only the busy beetle
> Tap-tapping on the wall,
> Only from the forest
> The screech-owl's call,
> Only the cricket whistling
> While the dewdrops fall,
> So I know not who came knocking,
> At all, at all, at all.[3]

or the lure of the lines:

> I must go down to the sea again,
> to the lonely sea and the sky,
> And all I ask is a tall ship
> and a star to steer her by,
> And the wheel's kick and wind's song
> and the white sails shaking,
> And a grey mist on the sea's face
> and a grey dawn breaking.[4]

Childhood begins to open beyond creature existence to embrace the human world of creative adventure.

School days intensify and extend this human outreach. Some children take to it easily. Others writhe under it. Some grow into adulthood as promising human beings. Many fall back into the rut and routine of animal existence. How they who awaken to the life of the imagination, in the course of this human venture, attain a new kind of attachment to life. While they never wholly lose the zestful concern for sensuous existence, they transcend it in a way that makes it assume a proportionately secondary place in their scheme of things. Explorations of the mind, ventures in the appreciation of beauty, participation in the interests of other people, absorption in causes that carry possibilities of new values, or devotion to enterprises that give promise of furthering the frontiers of the growing earth—these, and many other similar preoccupations consonant with the human spirit become increasingly more primary. Attachment to

life here takes on objective form. It becomes attachment to that which is living, growing, becoming in a significant sense. This suggests why the harsh fact of the tragic sense of life does not preclude the praise of life. It merely redirects the praise toward life in its vaster form. It arouses men from their absorption with static value to respond to the lure of the growing good. Attachment to life in this vaster form is attachment to life in its eternal sense.

When one has pushed on through childhood, then through youth, sensing now this intimation of the more beyond, now that luminous vista, growing into wider awareness through appreciations and reflections that develop, suddenly coming, through maturing vision, upon the realization of this growing, creative order, attachment to life takes on transcendent meaning, infinitely more impelling that the mere will to live. One outgrows the simple cause of the one creature life and enters into the creative cause that is beyond all creatures and all creature existence. This is not to abandon life; it is to integrate one life in the vaster movement of living and growing good. To become aware of this vaster and more significant reality in our midst, and to become committed to it as to very God, is to become religiously awakened and religiously related to the eternal aspect of the existent world.

We come back then to this elemental insight which seems profoundly true and peculiarly pertinent for our times: namely, that the sense of the significance of life in the individual person, as well as in the species, rises out of an organic attachment to life. The more consciously aware we become of this deep rooting, the more meaningful becomes our participation in the life of the world. And participation that carries such elemental meaning will bring health to the conduct of life, for it will release energies in affirming says, build up an accumulation of memories to enhance experience, and develop habituated motor response that will condition the mind and spirit for a full acceptance of life with its *gifts and its glories.* This total response of the creature in the form of commitment to the sustaining reality is the praise of life that opens the way for his creative fulfillment. It has impressed me again and again that the quality of life that one senses in the child and in the peasant reflects a spirituality that is both elemental and ultimate. I do not mean to idealize their existence. I am aware that there is much in their experiences that is ugly and crude and without many of the values that the mature and more sophisticated person demands. Yet both the child and the peasant manifest an elemental capacity which the more civilized people among us appear to lack. I call it the *attachment to* life—this simple awareness of elemental experience which the child, because of his peculiar physiological state, cannot escape,

and the peasant, for all his years, has never lost.

Somehow in this environment of increasing civilization, man must discover how to grow to maturity, how to extend the scope of sensitivity and awareness, and to increase his technical efficiency, without severing the nerve that connects him with the Sources of Existence. Somehow he must achieve the capacity to cultivate the life of the mind and the imagination without losing this creature-heritage that is organized and vital to his being.

Bernard Eugene Meland
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Man's Religious Outreach

Seen in long perspective, the religious outreach has been the wistful wonder of the child in man, yearning to feel secure and glad. The concern to be secure has impelled men to nervous preoccupation with the powers or forces that affected life. The impulse to be glad has given the religious outreach the forward and adventurous note, thrusting men toward the ideal, the new possibilities of human experience. As one threads his way through the story of religious cultures he finds both interests interwoven, although one or the other will appear dominant in any specific period or among particular groups. When philosophies of religion come to be written, one interest or the other becomes the dominant theme, and the divine reality is presented either as the God who sustains or the God who lures men to higher fulfillment. Traditional systems of religious thought have been concerned mostly with the God who saves and consoles. Current literature seems to emphasize the more robust outreach toward the creative possibilities of man's life.

This distinction may not be drawn with finality, for in a sense, the two aspects of the religious outreach are always concomitant, even though one may be more articulate than the other. When the modern philosopher stresses the ideal element he is impelled to qualify his assertion by acknowledging its relation to the Sources of existence. And the traditionalist can never ignore completely the creative operations of cosmic life. In the common man's outreach, the divergence has been less marked since the living response tends to fuse and integrate what the intellect finds occasion to divide. In early man the concern for security and self-preservation is so strong that historians of religion have been inclined to make it determining in the emergence of the religious interest.[5] That this was inevitable, any sympathetic observer of early man's life will understand. His precarious mode of existence intensified his concern for survival. Threatened by unfriendly elements in the wilds of nature he was humbled with incurable terror. But there were also experiences that warmed his heart: the coming of the dawn after the dark night, the warmth of the sun, the successful hunt, the sight of folk, and kinfolk. Thus while fear drove him at one time to a despair that became religious in magnitude, gratitude and sheer ecstasy at other times lifted him to a mood of praise.

This impulse to praise life has not been given adequate emphasis in the literature on the origin of religion. While one needs to avoid substituting one oversimplification for another, there may be some justification for advancing the thesis that there is more substantial evidence for suggesting

that the religious response arose out of the impulse to praise life than for supporting the view that religion arose from fear. Without meaning to make too much of this point, I should like to pursue its possibilities.

I.

Since the impulse to act preceded the impulse to reflect, we can understand why ritual, rather than rational expression, was the primary manifestation of the religious response. Actually there is no real distinction between action and reflection. Thinking is acting in a certain way which involves what we call mental elements in coordination with physiological and psychical phases of the organism. What we specify as *action* in contra-distinction to reflection is a form of behaving that proceeds from non-mental impulses—impulses that are essentially feeling responses.

That the religious response, in its primary expression, took the form of impulsive action is not difficult to understand. Early men *felt* their environment before they thought much about it. And their elemental feelings doubtless gave rise to actions before they prompted wonderings and musings which became mental. Havelock Ellis makes the claim that the dance preceded all the arts.[6] We may safely assume also that religious ritual first made its appearance in the form of the sacred dance. Examination of the rites and ceremonies of primitive religions reveals that the dance is not only elemental, but fundamental in their procedures. As one ascends the scale of culture-religions, he finds the dance sublimated by other forms of expression and interest; but never does it completely vanish so long as ritual remains a prominent feature. It may graduate into a solemn and stately procession, but who will not recognize in the rhythmic, swaying vital movement of the procession, the restrained and sublimated steps of the dance.

Perhaps we would come nearer to the primary source of the religious outreach were we to designate rhythm, rather than ritual as the elemental expression. Ritual is the socialized expression of rhythm, and the dance is the most obvious form of ritual which may express the feeling of rhythm.

The thesis that response to the impulse for rhythm, resulting in the ritual of the dance, marks the beginning of religious behavior, points also to the fact that the elemental emotion in the religious response is one of "joy" rather than fear, as has been commonly assumed. That early man feared his environment, no student of primitive life will deny. But the reaction most normal to a feeling of fear is to cringe and recede. This early man also did. Had he done that and nothing more, there is little likelihood that he would have assumed a religious relation with his world. It was while in an ecstatic moment of sheer excitation, thrill, or gratitude,

growing out of some heart-warming-experience: the sight of the sun after the cold, dark night, the successful hunt, a battle, the return of comrades; or out of the exhilaration of anticipated battle, or even the elation of wonder and awe, that this impulse to rhythmic action arose and impelled men to dance out their *vital joy.*

The simple acceptance of life with its elemental joy and spontaneous response gave rise to a normal confidence projecting present experiences hopefully toward their continuance or renewal in the future. This wistful outreach, giving birth to aspiration, thrust man from his confident mood at times, and confronted him with the shadows of fear and impending peril. Men felt the elemental impulse to live and to praise life, and projected their sense of joy into hope and expectation. And this very foretaste of possible destiny thrust them fearfully into the perilous open. "The function of fear," R. R. Marett reminds us, "is in its way no less universal or supreme than that of hope; though, even so, hope is of superior importance, since ultimately we fear because we hope, and not *vice versa*. This priority in respect to value comes out even more clearly as we ascend the scale that leads from instinct up to reason."[7]

We should not overdo the emphasis upon the healthy emotion of human joy being elemental. That would be to make of early man's life a false paradise. Certainly the hazards of his environment confronted him constantly. And the remains of his cave life give evidence of a mode of life that involved grim and menacing moments. This was doubtless to give rise to behavior patterns, modifying the impulsive reactions in ritual to rites designed to cope with the environing perils. But this reveals a later reflective tendency, not a spontaneous response. Early man's primary spontaneous reactions were to cringe when he feared, and to leap with a child's delight when the impulse to praise possessed him.

When he came to think about conditions more soberly, his dance was tempered by techniques that sought security; yet the impulse to self-preservation, which Moore makes basic in his theory of the origin of religion, must be viewed as more than a physiological response. It was a highly complex reaction, suffused with awareness of life's satisfactions as well as of its perils. It was the impulse to preserve life issuing from this elemental impulse to praise life.

When this spontaneous response to the good of life is taken into account as one of the elemental expressions of early man's behavior, the practice of worship takes on new meaning. It is not merely the corporate means of cajoling angry spirits or deities; it is the emotional outreach of the creature in man, responding to this impulse to gratitude and appreciative wonder.

Although the religious response emerged as man's elementary appreciative reaction, it soon took on more sober aspects and more inclusive proportion, when man himself assumed the responsibilities of a systematic livelihood. Here the religious response as an aesthetic reaction assumes its social character and function. Once this stage was reached, the social significance of the religious ritual replaced the aesthetic motif. The aesthetic element remains, but always as an instrument of social ends. Poet and singer kept alive the appreciative impulse, but priest and prophet turned this impulse to more utilitarian ends. Yet these sober, social functions: the tilling of the soil, harvesting of grain, preparations for battle, became, in turn, the subject matter of their song and poetry. Thus the praise motif persisted and became a transmitting influence, enhancing the strenuous and otherwise drab existence through celebration and ceremony.

Fear alone did not make men religious. Like the child and all new-born creatures of the earth, early men embraced life with an unreflective acceptance of its gifts and glory. Their attachment to life impelled them to hope, to aspire, and to dream. And this outreach to hold and to extend the good they felt in life confronted them with the fact of peril. Thus the religious praise of life became deepened with undertones of apprehension. Fear haunted man in his hopeful moments, and at times overwhelmed him with the mood of despair. Taken as a world phenomenon, therefore, the religious life of mankind has been a continuous symphony, alternating the themes of hope and despair.

II.

More may be said concerning the rise and growth of the religious outreach. The history of religions is the story of men groping toward a convincing and satisfying resolution of the problem of living. Many have sought to define this religious outreach in such a way as to bring into their definitions the elements that suggest its motivation. The complexity of the phenomena makes every such definition inadequate and partial. We are thus compelled to recognize that defining the religious response and describing the course of man's religious outreach are rarely one and the same thing.

When Tylor[8] defines religion as "belief in spiritual beings" he is characterizing a particular religious mental set. Frazer,[9] in describing it as "propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man, believed to exert control of nature and human life" is stressing the same element in the religious response. Durkheim,[10] in suggesting that religions sensitivity arises from group stimulation is dealing exclusively with the crowd phenomenon in the social expression of religion. Crawley,[11] King,[12] Ames,[13] and Coe[14] all purposely diffuse the meaning of religion with a

view to identifying it genuinely with the pursuit and celebration of life's values, preeminently its social values. Haydon seems to come nearer to a general characterization of the religious outreach of mankind in saying that religion is the cooperative search for the good life.[15] There is much in the pageantry of ancient and modern religious practice to document this view. Consider the growth of religious rites and ceremonies. Ancient men at the pastoral stage developed the cultus around the interests of sheep raising and the herding of cattle. Their rites and ceremonies took form as techniques to secure the resources upon which their livelihood depended and to enhance the pursuit of that livelihood. Sentiments clustered about oases, the green hills that gave them pasture, and the shade trees that offered shelter from the noonday sun. Prayers and hymns were chanted to the "shiny ones"—the sky gods who hovered over them through the long nights, and throughout their journeying. The consolation of their constant companionship in the midst of changing pasturelands made them indispensable allies to these shepherds and herdsmen. When men turned to agriculture, whether in the delta of the Nile, the plains of the Punjab, or the Jordan Valley in Palestine, their religious rites celebrated the seasons of sowing and of harvesting. Wherever community life assumed pronounced political importance, civic religions replaced the agricultural and pastoral cults. This is the story of Ptah-Re in Egypt. It is the story of the rise of the civic cult of the Greek states. It is manifest in the persisting social struggle between the Hebrew prophets and the cult of the ruling class. One who reads the plaintive tale in Walter Pater's *Marius*, *the Epicurean*, will know the Roman version of this universal development. In every culture of the world, with the exception of modern Europe and America, the strands of the religious cultus have been inextricably woven into the fabric of society. Consider the worship of the Sun-god and the Osiris worship of Egypt; the religion of Judaism in ancient Palestine; the civic cults of Greece; the old Roman religion and the later emperor worship; Hinduism in its many forms; Confucianism, Shinto, and Islam. Where Buddhism has been dominant, as in Burma, Ceylon, and to a considerable degree in China and Japan; it too has been assimilated into the cultural quest. The cultural history of Christianity is unique in that it has moved in cycles, alternating between assimilation and revolt. Everett Dean Martin has noted in his book, *Liberty* that to Christianity belongs the credit for initiating that form of freedom which sets the religious conscience above, and at times at variance with, the state. A glance at the broad periods of Christian history will disclose these alternating cycles of freedom and absorption. For three centuries Christianity combated Rome, and then became the religion of the Roman world. When Roman culture fell, Christianity survived, becoming

the formative influence shaping the medieval world of the West. For a full thousand years Christianity remained the culture religion of the West. When this cultural synthesis reached high tide, dissolution of the bond between Christendom and western culture was in process. The cleavage within Christianity, giving rise to Protestantism, turned the issue from one of religion versus culture to that of rival religious cultures. For, following the break in Christendom in the sixteenth century, Protestantism entered rapidly into coalition with the emerging capitalistic culture. Now after four centuries of mutual development and rapport between Protestantism and Capitalism, a new revolt is threatening, aiming to extricate the Christian religion from cultural entanglements.[16]

Inquiry into the historical development of other religions of the world will disclose sects within the religious culture that have developed independently of the common cultural quest. The mystery religions of Greece and Rome, and the thirteen sects of Shinto are clear examples. On first thought the several sects within Hinduism such as Buddhism, Yoga, Bhakti, and the several philosophic cults would seem to belong in this category. Yet India presents a unique situation. While Hinduism in its historical development never achieved the degree of solidarity found in Egyptian sun worship, the Hebrew commonwealth, the religion of the Greek state, or Confucianism, it did develop a cultural social mind that was oriented to a common objective. The coordinating elements were beliefs in transmigration and dharma. However distinctive these several Indian faiths might appear, they all represent various methods of achieving the Hindu ideal: namely, release from the cycle of rebirths. In this sense, Hindu cults, with all their diversity, present a common quest.

When one views man's religious outreach, then, not as a single universal phenomenon, but in terms of the diverse developments in the cultures of the world, the social motivation implied in Haydon's definition seems evident. Religion has been a *cooperative quest* for a satisfying life.

Two important qualifications, however, need to be noted: One is that within every religious culture, the forward thrust toward the religious ideal has rarely been dominant, except in creative periods. The other is that in each of these cultures, the religious outreach in its most mature and qualitative form has been a solitary venture going beyond the cooperative quest for the good life. The limitations of the strictly social conception of the religious life become apparent in these considerations.

The creative and venturesome note implied in Haydon's view of religion can be discerned in certain periods of the world's religions. It was evident in the thrilling religious reform is Egypt under Ikhnaton. It appeared in the pioneer period of the ancient Hebrew religion and again in

the reforms of the eighth century prophets. The recrudescence of Hebrew culture in the emergence of Judaism, following the exile, provided another marked instance of it. The Galilean youth movement which gave rise to Christianity presented further evidence of it. Buddhism is the clearest expression of it in India. Other examples could be cited. In our own day, certainly the religious Humanism, which Mr. Haydon views as the contemporary extension of man's age-old quest, is a clear expression of the search for the good life. But these rising tides of prophetic religious striving are the occasional waves upon a vast sea whose waters for the most part have remained placid. Conventional control of cherished values has been more evident at times than the search for the good life.

This reveals again the difficulty of characterizing the religious outreach as a single phenomenon. The impulse to enhance the common life through religious emotion has varied in expression according to circumstances and leadership. Bergson has presented this contrast in somewhat different terms, distinguishing between *static religion* and *dynamic religion*.[17] Except for his metaphysical expression of this contrast, his thesis would seem to further the distinction between the priestly and the prophetic elements in religious cultures.

The second qualification we have noted carries the meaning of the religious outreach beyond the sphere of social effort and enterprise. It focuses the religious response in the light of the solitary heights, reached by such rare spirits as Ikhnaton, the Buddha, Jesus Christ, St. Paul, Plotinus, St. Augustine, to mention the seers. There have been writers who have insisted that religious experience in this high solitary sense is the only response that may properly be called religious. Whitehead, for example in his *Religion in the Making*, writes: "Religion is solitariness, and if you are never solitary you are never religious. Collective enthusiasms, revivals, institutions, churches, rituals, bibles, codes of behaviour, are the trappings of religion, its passing forms. They may be useful, or harmful. They may be authoritatively ordained or merely temporary expedients. But the end of religion is beyond all this—. In its solitariness, the spirit asks, what, in the way of value, is the attainment of life? And it can find no such value till it has merged its individual claim with that of the objective universe. Religion is world loyalty."

Hocking brings these two emphases together in saying:

> Speaking broadly, there are two distinct phases of experience wherein God is apt to appear: in the experience of Nature and in social experience. Not everywhere in Nature, but at special points, well-known and numerous enough the awareness of God seems, as it were, to have broken through, or to have *supervened upon* our ordinary physical experience of those objects.

> When man has acquired so much imagination that he is capable of being stirred by Nature, he seems capable at the same time of something more than imaginative stirring—namely, of superstition, religion. If that element of the man is present which we call the sense of mystery, then the apparitions of heaven begin to work upon it, and to cooperate with it; the infinitudes of space and time are teeming with presentiment and omen; and man's nature-world is on its way to be judged divine.
>
> So of social experience: it is not everywhere, but at special junctures and crises, that the awareness of God has come to men; at the events of death and birth, of war and wedlock, of dream and disease and apparition. Given the imagination, the sense of mystery, and withal so much self-consciousness as is required to make the idea of soul, or double, or shadowy spiritual counterpart; and these crises of social experience become clothed with a significance not limited to this visible context; the unseen world becomes peopled with spirits, and in time, with gods…
>
> Although we have here two different regions of religious suggestion, destined to great historic careers in relative independence, it is evident that in looking for original sources we cannot keep them apart nor assign to either a priority over the other. For the *religious experience of Nature* means nothing if not finding Nature living, even personal, thereby socializing that experience. Whereas the religious meaning of social experience arises in the first place only as birth, death, and the like are regarded as the work of that same inexorable power displayed in Nature."[18]

How then, shall we interpret man's religious outreach? One reply is to view it in the same general manner that we interpret his political outreach and his economic outreach. The terms political and economic are broad abstractions, each covering a wealth of organized activity in respective fields, aiming to serve a singular purpose. By calling them abstractions, we do not minimize their reality; we simply recognize them as too inclusive in meaning to be restricted to any specific form of manifestation. Man's economic life, for example, may be understood to include the savage finding nuts and berries, or hunting game and fish. It covers the nomadic labor of the herdsmen and of the shepherd. Man's economic life applies to activities that develop in connection with that pursuit. It becomes more clearly relevant in our modern mode of thinking to the intensive efforts of commerce, industry, and transportation. And within these three phases of modern economic life, we have a vast variety of individualized vocations and modes of activity constituting the day's work.

Man's political life is likewise greatly diversified in its concrete expression. Everything from tribal rule to the democratic state is included in man's political activity. The chieftain of the tribe is every bit a genuine exponent of man's political life as the Oriental monarch, ruling over a vast domain. Their realms differ, their procedures differ, almost every concrete

form of activity differs, but the pattern of action, in both cases, remains political.

The reason we are not perturbed by this diversity of meaning in the words "economic" and "political" is that neither is forced upon us with normative implication. We engage in economic activity, in whatever form it presents itself to us, as a matter of course. There are no priests or prophets impelling us to do so. The drives of the human organism provide incentive enough. Likewise, we respond to political demands with less conscious awareness than in matters of religion. Nevertheless, the cult of politics is a more pronounced form of overt organized expression than the cult of labor or industry. Yet, somehow, neither the word economic nor political has come to have the disputed meaning that applies to the word "religious." We use the word "economic" in a purely descriptive sense. When we raise the question of a matter of being "economical," or of "good" and "bad" economics, however, we do touch upon a normative problem, for we then enter into debatable issues upon efficient and inefficient ways of doing things or even into the more fundamental area of sound or unsound economic theory. In the latter case the word "economic" entails emotional implications comparable to the tensions and urgent feeling manifest in religious matters.

In no instance, however, does the economic or political tension in the mind of the common man raise the normative question, "What do you mean by economic, or by political?"

A further explanation of our readiness to accept the meaning of the words economic and political is to be found in the degrees of their apparent use to man. The results of economic life are tangible and its neglect brings immediate and imperiling effects. The political relationship is neither as immediate nor as imperative as economics; but it is more so than that of religion.

The implications of the religious adjustment may be so remote as to be experienceable only through projected imagination or a disciplined sensitivity. In this respect religion is like the arts, music, and poetry. The cult of religion may, in fact, openly announce that the religious life has nothing to do with the practical pursuits of the common life, as in the mystical quest, or in the highly ritualized religious expression of other-worldly sects and movements. The seeming remoteness of religious value has doubtless been the chief reason for its neglect among common men, which in turn gives basis for the frequency of the inquiring smirk, "What do you mean by religious?" Underneath this query is the implied question, "Are you talking about something relevant to my needs and worth my concern, or something esoteric and fraudulent?"

The results of this discussion come to this; actually there is no more reason to expect singularity in the descriptive meaning of the word "religion" or "religious" than in the terms economic or political. And the reasons for the common insistence upon singularity and consistency issue, not from any difference of bestowed expression, but from differences in their respective relevance to the pursuits of common man, and the varying capacities of men and women to discern the human values of the religious life.

If then, we choose to speak of "religion" or the "religious" in a singular sense, let us be clear that we thereby make of these terms, abstractions which will prove cumbersome when applied to specific acts of the religious life. Since there is value in employing abstractions for deriving generalized meanings, this should not discourage our use of them. Only let us recognize their limitations and their degree of distortion. John Dewey has seen fit to distinguish between *religion* and the *religious*, meaning by the former, specific cults or organizations that promote religions interests in terms of a certain creed and through certain forms; and by the latter, any and every act or event that brings the ideal into actuality.[19] It must be recognized that this distinction rests upon a normative judgment which itself is creedal; if not in statement, at least in implication. It is a judgment to which many of us, persuaded by the demands of contemporary life, would accede. But so far as clarifying the historical problem of designating the religious outreach, the distinction seems of doubtful value.

To say that "religion is what one does with his solitude" and that "if you are never solitary you are never religious,"[20] seems also to be a subjective characterization. It selects a certain form of religious activity as primary. Or again, to conceive religion as the cooperative quest for the good life, though more inclusive than either Dewey's or Whitehead's view, excludes or minimizes what Whitehead, for example, holds to be genuinely religious. The definition of Wieman that religion is devotion to that which is supremely worthful for all mankind, opens the way for correlating the descriptive and normative conceptions, although in its given form it implies a normative selection of meaning. Descriptively it would imply all the forms of devotion that have resulted from what men historically have considered to be supremely worthful. Normatively, it would call for a theory of value which would demonstrably determine what actually is supremely worthful for all mankind. Wieman, in working out his conception of Supreme Value in terms of the growth of connections making for mutual support, enhancement, and meaning, has placed his view of religion upon significantly defensible grounds. His historical error, if it may be so designated, would seem to be in dismissing all other

forms of devotion as not being genuine religion. This is the language one needs to use cautiously. The counsel of Santayana and of Hocking is pertinent: "Religion," says Santayana, "is never false or true; but 'only better or worse."[21] Hocking has said: "Religion has been a force of huge potency making for good and evil."[22] When this fact is recognized, namely that religion, like politics and economics, is multiple in expression and graded in value, one is in a position to observe it historically as it has appeared throughout the world and through the centuries, and to evaluate it philosophically and ethically as it has functioned for the increase or decrease of defined and tested value.

III.

The historical task of arriving at a descriptive understanding of religion thus seems fairly clear. We need to ask: What have been the various forms in which man's religious outreach has expressed itself? There have been at least six recognizable forms, beyond the elemental ecstasy, rising out of early man's *vital joy:*

1. *The religious outreach as the emotional counterpart of the will to live*. In early man this was paramount. Self-preservation, as Moore has pointed out, was a primary felt need, and gave rise to every form of device that seemed to aid this pursuit. It still continues in this form, despite the fading of the primitive characteristics, where the will to live is abnormally thrust to the fore by threatening circumstances. For many people, religion, rather than science, still serves this function.

2. *The religious outreach as the emotional enhancement of the economic life*. The ancient Hebrews developed their rites to accompany the sowing; to encourage the growth of crops, and ceremonies to assure a successful harvest. "Tilling the soil," writes George Foote Moore, concerning the agriculture of early people, "is not only an art but a religion; from the breaking of the ground to the ingathering of the harvest, religious rites attend every stage."[23] This economic expression of the religious life continues straight through the rise of more complex civilizations until the methods of economic activity become clearly defined in terms of empirical cause and effect. Yet, in its most developed states, the haunting fear that something more than human effort and design entered into the affairs of business has persisted. Great cultural crises have intensified this feeling. Broken business men have turned to religion to restore their faith in life and their confidence to carry on.

3. *The religious outreach as the sober counterpart of the aesthetic experience*. Dance, song, and ritualistic pantomime continued to develop out of the stimulus to effect practical ends through religious ritual. Through such means, soil was fertilized, crops were increased; wars were