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East-West Monastic Symposion

BLESSED SIMPLICITY.
IS THE MONK A UNIVERSAL ARCHETYPE?

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RP/mct
1981.-Aug. 15

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EAST-WEST MONASTIC SYMPOSION

Preface: by the editor or the chairman

Introduction:

R. PANIKKAR

The spoken language is not the written one. The spoken language is unrepeatable, it speaks to an immediate audience, it responds to the expectations of the listeners and reacts to their 'vibrations'. In a sense it is a liturgy and each liturgy is unique and for its own sake.

I had already warned the editors and conveners that the tape-recorder does not record the spirit, and that in a symposion you eat and drink words and not just read sentences. We do not like to regurgitate.

F. Tisso's assistants faithfully transcribed the sounds of the recorder and S. Eastham painfully edited the entire material. He made the best he could with it. Joaô V. Coutinho made me aware of the inconsistencies that a reader who has not been a participant is bound to find. Adityānanda has been kind enough to read the entire corrected typescript and strengthen me in my doubts. Thanks are due to them. Besides, I could not recognize myself nor the event when I attempted to make sense of the edited talks. I felt it would be a lie on my part and an insult to the participants to allow the letter of the proceedings to be published on the assumption that the spirit would be there. The value and merit of the symposion was in the celebrating of it. The commemoration should be another re-enactment and belongs to another genre, perhaps to the proper literary genre. But a symposion is for analphabeths. To those who prefer to read one cannot offer a cold meal. The joy and meaning of a symposion is the concelebration. Nothing is lost of what was enjoyed there, even if it cannot be found in this re-elaboration. The participants may perhaps remember and re-enact the experience for themselves. This volume now stands on its own.

The only solution, at least for me, was to rework --now-- my presentation from the notes that I had and the edited transcripts that I read, and insert in the text the questions and answers as they came. I have tried to incorporate in the text

all that was said in the Symposion.

Yet, this written text is more concise, perhaps more academic and 'dry', but probably more appropriated for a wider audience. And yet it is not a life-less, 'scientific' study. The home-work has been done by the intellect and by the heart -- but it remains at home.[1] In corde magis quam in codice. Discretio is a monastic, or at least benedictine, virtue.

My personal gratitude to all drops into silence; it tries to show itself in the fight against 'linear' time I have had to wage in order to present this new text -- all shortcomings notwithstanding.

R.P.
Santa Bárbara
15 - August - 1981

"Assumpta es Maria in coelum":
gaudent monachi
qui de coelis descendunt
super terram.

(1) Many words like modernity, symbol, tempiternity, myth, archetype, etc. have not been sufficiently delineated. The author refers to his other publications for a clarification. Yet, he assumes that the context already provides a minimum horizon for the understanding of all such expressions.

/mct

The Contemporary Monastic Vocation

ὃς πορεύεται ἁπλῶς,
πορεύεται πεποιθώς

Prov. X, 9

Qui ambulat simpliciter
ambulat confidenter.

Vg.

He that walks simply,
walks confidently. (1)

The topic entrusted to me is 'the monk as a universal archetype'. The phrase is ambiguous, as it will become clear in a moment. But its ambiguity is revealing. Here I naturally hesitate: I feel I am breaking rather than constructing something. It is acutely painful to break into pieces what one sees whole; and yet to speak, to explain, to unfold, to spread out in time and space is to break things apart. Like the body of Prajāpati dismembered in the act of creation, it seems that this simple and ineffable vision which for me is the symbol of the monk can only be communicated in fragments. I must begin by taking a hammer and destroying the "universal archetype of the monk", not unlike a child pulling apart its beloved little toy to see what is within... And within we may discover emptiness...

My presentation will have one prologue and three unequal parts. The prologue is a confession on method. The first part will deal with the central understanding of monkhood as a human archetype. The second part will try to spell out the Contemporary Monastic Vocation in seven chapters which unfold a fundamental principle. The third part will be what we called Synthesis at the Symposion in the form of general reflections on this unending topic.

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(1) Cf. Prov. III, 23; XXVIII, 18; Ps. XXIII, 4; Is. XXXIII, 15-16. The text is commented by M. ECKHART, Sermo XV, 2 (n.162).
It is astonishing to read the modern translations of this ἁπλῶς which was so central in the Patristic and monastic spirituality, echoed so strongly in the New Testament. (Cf. Matth. VI, 22-23; Luc., 34-35; etc. Cf. also the leitmotiv of homo viator.

Prologue:

Since my early youth I have seen myself as a monk, but without a monastery, or at least without other walls than those of the entire planet and even those, it seemed to me, had to be transcended -- probably by ~~my~~ immanence --, without a habit, or at least without other habits than those worn by the human family and even those, it seemed to me, had to be discarded because all cultural clothes are only partial revelations of what they conceal: the pure nakedness of total transparency only visible to the Simple Eye of the pure in heart.

You will understand that I feel not only incompetent and unprepared to speak about the topic, but also perplexed about the way to proceed. Probably the best method would have been to take some seminal figures like Buddha, Anthony, Milarepa, Shankara, possibly also more modern ones like Bruno, Ramana Maharshi, etc. and have derived from these the monastic archetype. It would have been relatively easier, probably more fruitful and certainly more interesting, especially for those who may be little familiar with these giants of monastic spirituality. We would have then witnessed a quality of life and a human maturity which could serve us as lighthouses for our shaken human pilgrimage. From their examples we could have arrived at the monastic archetype.

Two reasons have induced me to take a totally different method. First, that the monks already know many of these materials and that it would not contribute enough to the incoming mutation just to present monachism at its best. It would have made all of us proud of such ancestors, but perhaps veiled before our eyes what I consider the challenge of our times. It would have put us on the line of 'try harder' mentally in order to imitate their exploits but distracted us from considering whether our present-day predicament does not require from us a new metanoia, a new conversio, instead of a renewed imitatio.

To a non monastic audience I would say that this presentation speaks to the monk in everyone of us and it does not want to supplant or correct the rich literature on monasticism. It would like to inspire the reader to delve into the sources of this rich human tradition.

The second reason is connected with the first. I am not so much directed to speak about the history of the past or even to venture into the historical future, as I am concerned to probe the transhistorical present -- for us here and now.

In other words, because I am existentially concerned with all our lives and present situation, making use of the ambiguity of the phrase 'monastic archetype', I shall address myself not to describe the monk as archetype, but to explore the archetype of the monk, i.e. monkhood as a possible human archetype.

The distinction is important. The monk as archetype assumes that there is such a thing as the ideal monk that we have only to unearth it bringing to the level of our consciousness and that the monks have incarnated it in different degrees. Besides the perhaps excesive Platonic flavour of this way of presenting the issue, this might have been the best way for a renovatio, a renewal of the pristine purity of the monk. It is legitimate and urgent, but in a certain sense it freezes human creativity in as much as it ties us with the past. It allows only for explicitations and clarifications. The only thing left to us is that of being good or even better monks. The archetype of the monk, on the other hand, assumes that there is a human archetype which the monk has put into practice with more or less success. Traditional monks may have re-enacted in their own way 'something' that we may be called upon to realize in a manner which expresses the growth and newness of the humanum. In a certain sense it gives us a free hand to launch an exploration into the future taking into account the many other factors that shape human life.

But the distinction is also subtle, because it does not allow for any separation. We may have no entrance into the archetype of the monk if we do not study or come to know the monk as archetype. We cannot create out of nothing, nor can we concoct an archetype according to our fancies. It is the crystallized experience of the elders in tradition and the re-enactment of that very tradition that will give us real wings to fly on a human journey and not to desintegrate in mid-air because our feathers were artificial. I hope that we shall have still the opportunity to clarify the distinction.

Yet, the topic is so enormous and the literature so vast that I can do only a minimal justice to it even if I limit myself to the quintessence of monkhood from an anthropological perspective. This implies not only a limitation -- otherwise almost anything can be said about monks and archetypes -- but also an option: the option to look not for sociological common features, doctrinal resemblances, or religious common denominators, but for what we have called the archetype of the monk. Certainly not, I repeat, with independance of the monks, but also not just explicitating things of the past.

The method for this enterprise is rather special. It requires the phenomenological, socio-morphological and historical method regarding the manifestations of monasticism, but it has to proceed a step further. And for this we need a recourse to a kind of philosophical approach and personal introspection. I assume the first step sufficiently known and shall concentrate on the second step.

We shall have to take into account not only the past, as we know it, but also the present, as we understand it, and ourselves as we experience our lives.

One simple reflection may give us the required mood. Whatever monkhood may be, and there are scores of definitions and descriptions, it seems to have exhibited a symptomatic polarity. On the one hand it is something special, difficult, even sometimes queer with tinges of social and cultural disconformity; on the other hand it is something so common, so human, that it is ultimately claimed to be the lot of everyone, what everybody should or is called upon to be -- sooner or later. The awareness of this polarity, I submit, will put us on the right track to explicitate what this archetype may look like.

I - The Archetype of Monkhood

By monk, monachos, I understand that person who aspires to reach the ultimate goals of life with all her being by means of stripping off all what is not strictly necessary for it, i.e. by being concentrated on this one single and unique task (1). The monk is at least in the state of mumksutva or desire to be liberated and for this is so concentrated on it that he renounces the fruits of his actions (ihāmutra-phala-bhoga-virāga) having discriminated between the real and the unreal (nityānitya-vastuviveka or ātmānatma-vastuviveka) and ready for this to undertake the necessary praxis (sādhana) (2).

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(1) This singlemindedness (ekagrata) distinguishes the monk from other spiritual endeavours towards perfection or salvation.

(2) I am very much worried about having to say monk/nun, he/she and his/her all the time. I could replace monk/nun all the time by monkhood but this abstraction goes against the genius of the English language besides that I would prefer to reserve the word monkhood for the archetype. I could say "she" instead of "he" but what we really need is a third article, not the masculine or the feminine or the neuter (which is Solomon's judgement, 'neither the one nor the other' -- for then, you kill the child). Not the neuter but the utrumque, the "either gender" which includes both male and female. For the moment, I shall use Man as Mensch, purusha, anthropos and not give males the monopoly on Man or split the human persons into men-wif-men and males-fe-males (other etymologies notwithstanding). This split does not cover the entire human being either. Where are the children? Where are those who are not comfortable with a he or a she either? Curiously enough, gender only appears when we speak in the third person and objectify one another.

When I say "You", or "I", this invokes the fullness of the androgynous human being. In dialogue, we address each other as persons, whole and complete, with no need to make distinctions like adult or child or black or white or male or female... Only when we start talking about 'third persons' do we have to say "He", "She", "Mother Earth", "Father Sky" and the like: because they are not encountered directly and in person. When God is a Thou, or as I would rather suggest, the I and 'me', the Thou the gender does not enter either. It is interesting to know that in some african languages the only difference betwee 'he' and 'you' is a distinction in tone. Every word should be a prayer, and should be directed to a person. Hence my uneasiness at talking into microphones...

The thesis I have been defending all my life is that the archetype of the monk, although it may find its expression through an institution, is rather a constitutive dimension of human life. When it is institutionalized it begins to lose part of its most genuine characteristic, that of being a unique quality of each person. This conception, I submit, has been an underlying belief of tradition. Something has worried the great monks all over the world when monk becomes a well accepted figure in the world and monasticism receives the blessing of society. It is with this belief in mind that tradition has considered the hermit --the idiorhythmic -- to be the perfect monk: the saṃnyāsin, mōnachos, muni, bhiksu, rāhib (in spite of the doubts of the Qu'rān), etc.

We shall have to ask ourselves a difficult and only partially answerable question: not what the monks think of themselves or what society thinks about them, but what has ultimately compelled them to embrace monkhood, not what socio-psychological motives they had, but what deep anthropological urge was there beyond the languages of the different religious traditions, in so far as this is possible.

The monk ultimately becomes monk not by a process of thinking (about death, caducity of all things, nityāmitya, .), nor merely of desiring (God, human perfection, heaven, nirvāna, ...) but as an urge, fruit of an experience which generally leads him to change and in the last instance break something in his life (conversio, metanoic mumuksutva, ihāmutra-phalabhoga, initiation, ...) for the sake of that 'thing' which encompasses or transcends, everything (the pearl, s'ama, brahman, peace, moksa, God, satori, enlightenment, ...) One does not become monk in order to do something or even to acquire anything, but to be -- that being which is (everything, yourself, the supreme being, nothing, ...).

It is the existence of such a fact that leads me to speak about monkhood as a human archetype, as a constitutive dimension of human life.

Now, this understanding of monkhood as a human dimension ha been obscured by the juxtaposition of many other elements, which have led to the traditional belief that the monk represents the highest type in the human scale; and from here to the next step as being the perfect Man, from the ultimate or religious point of view. Most traditions, in point of fact, will tell us that only the muni attains moksa, only the bhikhu reaches nirvāna; so every one is called to be a saṃnyāsin, in this or another life, as only the sādhu burns away all karma and is not born again; the Christian monachus is the only worthy successor of the martys or martus and thus the perfect Christian; and from here, of course, the perfect Man.

What is human perfection? Let me explain by means of an example.

According to Greek and Latin scholastic theology, each angel is a species. The angel, by the very fact of being an angel, once the period of

trial has passed, has reached full "angelicity" of his particular order. Each angel is as fully "angel" as it can be; that is, every angel exhausts (its) own nature and completely realizes (its) own specific potentialities. There are not more than one angel in each angelic order. Once created an angel fulfils completely that nature. It has reached its natural perfection.

Not so with human beings. Human beings are unlike angels because a human being is not humanity nor can it become it. If one human being could exhaust the perfection of humanity it would not leave place for anybody else. A human being is not Adam, not purusha, not human nature. The perfection of the human individual is not the fullness of human nature; it is not nature, but personhood, not the essence of humanity, but the incommunicable and unique existence of the person. An indefinite number of persons can realize, each time in a unique way, the perfection of humanity. Humanity is manifold. Its name is legion. In this sense the perfect human nature does not exist. It should embrace the whole of humanity, actual and possible, and this is not feasible for any individual person. Yet there are people who actualize their dormant potentialities and other people who don't, people who reach a high degree of humannes, as it were, and other who don't.

From here it follows that the search for human perfection cannot have a single model. The word 'perfection' has to stand for a meaningful, joyful or simply full human life whatever and wherever this 'fullness', 'meaning', 'joy' may be believe to be. Each person will have her proper way of realizing in her own way the perfection of 'humanity'. I shall call the humanum this core of humanity or humanness that can be realized in as many manners as there are humans. Humanity is one, the humanum is that specific form of every individual person when realizing humanity.

Each human being has to conquer the humanum in a personal and unique manner. This is the endeavor of every religion: to give a specific possibility for the human being (individually or collectively) to reach the humanum. In this endeavor to acquire full humanness or the humanum, there have been very many ways. A common name for all these ways is religion. Religion is a path to salvation, liberation or whatever conception we may have of this humanum.

Now, this humanum does not only have many interpretations, it has also many aspects and presents the whole richness and complexity of human nature. The poet, the intellectual, the craftsman, the Man of action, etc. are all striving for different facets of it. Each of these facets represents the cultivation of one aspect of the humanum and by and large the human person tries to find an harmonious conjugation between several of those human qualities, like a person of good taste combines the several colors of the different pieces of his or her costume.

One ideal has now and then crept into this human striving for perfection. We could call it the Supernatural or the higher level. Realizing that

many human virtues can become rather obstacles for higher goals, experiencing the mutual incompatibility of many human qualities, and believing in a 'superhuman' destiny of the human being. The ideal of the Supernatural or paramarthika has appeared time and again in the history of humankind. You reach perfection by jumping over just 'natural' and laukika perfections and by short-circuit, as it were, you reach into another sphere the fullness of your life. This supernatural 'saint' can here on earth be a rather quaint figure; later in heaven he will be radiant with light and suffused with all perfection. And in fact there seems to be something in the humanum, as we have defined it, something that transcends mere humanity and points to another degree of reality not to be found on the mere 'natural' level --assuming simply that nature is whatever: spiritual, intellectual or material element is born (naturatum, natum) on Earth.

Most traditional religions have this somewhat transcendent conception of the humanum. The search for this is what characterizes homo religiosus, but we have not yet reached the monk. The monk is neither the homo or his way to the humanum nor the homo religiosus in his search for the full-humanum that appears as transcendent, super-humanum or supernatural from the 'natural' perspective.

My hypothesis is that monkhood (is not one way of reaching the humanum or super-humanum) but one dimension of this humanum, so that every human being has potentially this monastic vocation to realize that dimension. It is a dimension which has to be integrated with other dimensions of human life in order to reach the humanum. Not of bread alone lives Man. When this dimension is somewhat isolated and especially cultivated, it can be called an archetype that forms part of being human.

And it is such an archetype that we find under different names in most human traditions. It is understandable that precisely those religions which have mos cultivated this dimension have tried to institutionalize it. And it is the paradox that once the monastic dimension becomes institutionalized, it begins to fade away as constitutive human dimension. Monkhood is a part, a dimension of the human being, one archetype; but the monastery is a totum, a total organization of human life. At its best it claims to be a pars pro-toto while remaining a pars. The monk within the institutionalized framework often suffers from the fact that his vital impulses towards full humanness are short-circuited because they are merely absorbed in the total institution. Experience shows that he tries to look outside the monastery for that perfection towards which he aspires. I shall defend later the monastery as a living organism and not as an organization.

I surmise that one of the crisis of the present day is precisely this kind of quid pro quo, that something which belongs to human nature as one of its constitutive dimensions loses part of its force and its universality once it becomes a particular form of organized life. Thus, something which, properly understood, would inform all other dimensions of being human, and would or could be an essential element in reaching

human fullness, is frustrated and loses sight of its own power. I am here still echoing tradition when it sees the monk as a solitary (not an isolated) being, perhaps living in a (spiritual) family, but not as a member of a congregation.

Something similar happens when other dimensions of human life, like sexuality, sociability, playfullness or even art, etc. become institutionalized in an institution that purports to encompass the entiretyof human life. The humanum is multidimensional.

But I have not yet said in what this dimension of the humanum consists. It is this. In the search for 'perfection' Man has often looked for oneness, the hen, the monos, the ekam, the unum necessarium (of the Vulgate). I may use a very traditional metaphor here from East and West, in spite of the different emphases: the center. If we look for oneness in the periphery we cannot reach that equanimity, that shama and peace peculiar to the monk, we cannot have that holy indifference towards everything because we are not equidistant from everything. Monkhood is the search for the center.

Inasmuch as we try to unify our life around the center, all of us have something of the monk in us. This center, by virtue of being a center, is immanent to the human being, but at the same time, by virtue of being as yet unattained, it is transcendent. We should bear in mind that we are not speaking of any specific monastic institution in any specific religion, but rather of an anthropological dimension. Monasticism is not a specifically christian, jain, buddhist or sectarian phenomenon, rather it is a basically human and primordially religious one.

To speak of a buddhist monk or a hindu monk or a jain monk or a christian monk, does no violence to the words. The christian, the buddhist, the jain, ... is only a qualification of that center, of that substantive core which is monkhood. There is something qua monastic vocation which precedes the fact of being christian or buddhist or secular (we will speak about that too) or hindu or even atheist.

In short, we must recover the monastic dimension of Man as a constitutive human dimension. If this is indeed the case, then to be a 'monk' is not a monopoly of the few, but a human wellspring which is either being channelled in different degrees of purity and awareness by different people or altogether thwarted . Every human being has a monastic dimension which he or she must realize in different ways. Monasticism in its historical forms would then be not only an attempt to cultivate this primordium in a particular fashion, but to commit oneself publicly to developing in an exemplary way/and according to the cultural environement the deepest core of our human vocation.

I am saying that there is a primordial religious dimension prior to the quality or qualification of being christian, buddhist and the like. And yet

this distinction is a transcendental distinction. This means that while none of us may be able to sever ourselves from ourselves, the distinction is nonetheless real and not just a distinction in our mind. My way of living the monastic tradition may be the jain, the christian, the atheistic, or the secular way. But the monastic dimension is prior to and different from the way in which I may live it. If we go so far as to identify the christian monastic way with the monastic vocation or with monasticism per se, then we commit a serious mistake which will have more than merely theoretical consequences. Fanaticism, misguided missionary zeal, inquisitions and' holy wars' have something to do with it, to say nothing of the self-destructive practices which are too often found in monastic institutions.

And this is, I repeat, in every human being, a transcendental distinction; which ultimately implies that the way I am to live my being a hindu monk is simply by living my monastic vocation in the hindu manner. We do not speak language; we speak each time one language.

Let us reflect for a moment in the metaphor of the center and in the different ways in which this center is experienced by describing in a very approximate manner two classical ways commonly called the eastern and the western.

Indeed, as we shall discover together, the major differences today exist not so much between 'east' and 'west' in traditional parlance, as on the interface between Tradition and Modernity. I should emphasized that these two centers, the 'eastern' and the 'western' are not geographical locations but anthropological categories. Each one of us has an 'east' and a 'west', an orient and an occident. 'East' and 'west' are two symbols which symbolize two main emphases in human traditions which have been, certainly, stressed in some traditions more than in anothers, but which can in no way be considered the exclusive possession of one or other religious family.

First of all, the center is in the center of our being, it is in the middle, equidistant from every single factor of our existence. It is not only a geometrical center, as it were, but also a gravitational one. All stimuli, good and bad, joyful and sad, converge into that center, all arrows tend towards it. But also all impulses and all movements originate there --and in both cases, of course, in so far as we are again centered beings. In as much as we are con-centrated beings, blows may still pain and wound us but when we are thrown into the air, we will fall again on our feet, like the cat, who is a well centered being. And again all our actions, words and thoughts will have the power not only of the particular muscle we display in each case, but will have the weight of all our being, as the blow of a trained Zen master in the art of hitting with the hand.

The center, further, has no dimensions, ultimately it does not exist, it is void and in as much as it is so it will remain immobile while the whirling is on the surface. Another word for it, is to say that it is ab-solute, i.e. unbound, untied, free, and, for this reason, compatible with everything in as much as it remains unattached.

By the same token the center has no value in itself. It is in function of all the things for which it is a center. You eliminate all the other things around and the center disappears, or rather the center reveals itself as what it 'is': no-thing. An entire monastic spirituality could be derived from the study of this metaphor A Zen monk could tell us something about it.

As for a typology of the 'eastern' and 'western' centers, I shall say only this:

Even if every center has to be inside, the 'eastern' center is preeminently immanent. Every center is immanent, but the 'eastern' center is immanence itself. Immanence does not mean a kind of interior transcendence, as it is often interpreted, but that immanent 'thing' is really in the very core of the being and identified with it. Many of the images suggest this: cave, guha, point, emptiness, no-thought śunyatā, the womb, the clear mirror, wu, non-being, etc. The way is introspection, the inward journey.

Within the pattern of immanence the classical acosmism of the 'eastern' monk is understandable. The saṁnyāsi can be acosmic because in the center he 'has' everything. It is the way of immanence par excellence. He can totally ignore the world because the real is within and not outside. Thus he can be absolutely carefree regarding an illusory world.

The center of the 'western' monk, on the other hand, is certainly equally inside and interior, but it is transcendence. Again here we have to warn against the common misunderstanding of interpreting transcendence as exteriority, when what it means is difference (as immanence denotes identity). This transcendent center is 'semper maior', ever elusive, other, non-assimilable. It evokes images of the mountain, the infinite, the sphere, fullness, pleroma and even progress, or using the neologism of Gregory of Nyssa, epektasis, constantly going forward, reaching further, towards the beyond (the Father, the New Jerusalem).

Within the pattern of transcendence the classical involvement of the monk in the ultimate religious issues of the contemporary world becomes comprehensible. The monk can preach crusades and open 'schools of prayer' or simply schools, he can write books and judge the world as a 'guilty bystander'.

We have here two different patterns of understanding, two different ways of living and experiencing one and the same archetype. From the beatific vision to the symbol of the mountain, to the sphere of Parmenides, to the fullness of Christ taught by Paul of Tarsus, you have the same paradigm; which should be compared and contrasted with the paradigm of total emptiness, thought-less-ness, one-pointedness (until this point itself disappears), the cave of the heart... to which you in-gress, not progress. There are in this later model no schools of progression in spiritual life, but only the ingression to the depths of darkness; because in the center, the guha, the cave, there is no light. Let us now be more specific. But before that we will have to give an opportunity for dialogue, clarification and discussion.

ED BEDNAR:

The question I have is this: I have been hearing a lot of negative things said about institutional monasticism; that institutional monasticism is not good; that it is not good for the spirit of monastic life; that it causes a lot of trouble, and so forth. And I want to know why people are saying so many negative things about institutional monasticism

PANIKKAR:

I am glad to hear that question. It should help to clarify the issue. Let me reply in two quick stages.

First: I am not against institutions. Society cannot exist without institutions. But I would make a distinction between institutions and institutionalism, which is when institutionalization takes over the life of the institution. I think an institution should be not only an organization, but also an organism. And the tension between organism and organization is a very delicate one. The organization runs when there is money; the organism runs when there is life. And I think that is more than a metaphor. No amount of money (read arms), will protect the institutions of the First World (or of the Second for that matter) if its organism is sick. The organization needs a frame, the organism requires a body. The organization needs a boss, a leader, an impulse from the outside to let it function. The organism needs a soul, health, i.e. the harmonious interaction for all the parts of the whole. An organization is dientropic, an organism is diectropic. An organization equals the sum of its parts and each part is replaceable by an equal one. An organism is more than the sum of its components and no component can be replaced in exactly the same way, because each is unique. If at all the organism has to regenerate itself from within when it has been wounded. An organism dies when the soul departs, when the heart ceases to beat or the brain to vibrate. An organization has a much longer resistance because its structure is stronger and can function by inertia provided some kind of elementary fuel is pumped in; it has a higher power of inertia.

Secondly, I would not like to say that no effort at a common monastic life should be made. My point is that if I am correct in saying that monkhood is a constitutive human dimension, then, this human dimension can never find its full expression in a closed institution which is bound to be the privilege of only few. If the monastic dimension exists at least potentially in everybody the institution of monasticism should be equally open to everybody. We should then distinguish between monkhood and monasticism.

Of course, people who share a certain common ideal, can and should come together to discover meaningful ways to realize that ideal. This is more than legitimate.

But this is more the justification of other collective forms of religious life than of monasticism. A religious congregation, for instance, in the Canonical sense of the Roman Church, aims certainly at the sanctification of her members, but her raison d'être is the common purpose of the institution triggered by one particular goal: looking after the poor, teaching of the people, defending the holy places, catering for the spiritual needs of priests, healing or helping the sick, the pilgrims, extending the kingdom of Christ, etc. Monasticism as such has no purpose or ideal of this type, i.e. it does not want to fulfill something ad extra, in spite of the evolution of the idea of monkhood in Western-Christendom in these recent centuries. The monastery would then be not the establishment of the monks, but the schola Domini, the school where that human dimension is cultivated and transmitted.

ED BEDNAR:

Well, a further question: You spoke of the common purpose, but the moment that one tries to express that common purpose it is very easy to get into legalism, or to create a monopoly, or to create separation between one group and another. Is there a way of expressing the common purpose -- and manifesting the common purpose -- without getting into those problems?

PANIKKAR:

Indeed, but here is precisely where we need the aid of one another. Let me put it philosophically.

As long as the logos holds sway over the mythos, the impasse is almost impossible to overcome. We need then Constitutions, Laws and Constrictions. We have to regain a new innocence that will allow the myth, and the spirit of the whole enterprise, to take over our lives. The logos is strong. It relies on evidence. The myth is fragile. It relies on belief. Once the belief weakens it is like when the salt loses its 'saltness';it cannot be restored. We need then a new myth, which

in its turn, produce a new logos.

And here we hit upon the vast problem of over-organization, of pre-planning and pre-programming everything and anything -- and often forgetting the essential. In this country, it seems the function of education is to impart -- or impose -- purposefullness in life, a certain notion of success, which I take not only as an assault against the very etymology of the word education (e-ducare, to bring out, to draw forth), but also as counterproductive of the very purpose of education which ought to be to free the subject from very many sorts of conditionings. That is because education has been made compulsory by the State. Indoctrination and socialization takes place in the early years of mandatory education. One of the aims of monastic or religious education is, or should be, to undo or correct that early education. And yet, I think you would agree that despite the difficulties, one probably cannot do utterly without a certain type of institutionalized life. Once again, it is a question of balance

SISTER MIRIAM DARDENNE:

If the contemplative spirit has any meaning at all, it does not need any justification. You said that it is not a means to an end, but like the vocation of the artist or poet, it has its moments of fullness, completeness. And yet it also has its thread, which is playing there, so to speak, as an undergirding theme: It carries much incompleteness.

If I heard you well, you said that the monks are the one who relate themselves fully to that, and do not try to realize the whole humanum. My question is: What about that sense of incompleteness? It is easier to take it ad intra, because the sense of incompleteness then brings you to a further questioning of the who?, of the center, of... I will leave it at that. But what about the incompleteness ad extra? I take it often as a temptation, some dissatisfaction with the narrowness, let us say, of the temenos. Some dialogue between what you call nature (I live in the woods) and culture is always a tension. I do not know what I am saying...

PANIKKAR:

I think you are saying extraordinarily well what I was trying to reserve for the third day'. But that is the beauty. As everything is implied in what I said, your question is perfectly legitimate.

The way by which ~~the incompleteness of the monasticism~~ (the incompleteness of the radical simplicity of monkhood) has traditionally overcome is either by going in or going beyond. The first way is by interiorization: you eat up the outside world, you internali: everything, and you feel that in this internalization you have overcome that incomple-

teness. It is an overcoming by immanence, as it were. In the second instance, by going beyond, you go to the Father of all lights, the Source of all being, and there at the top, the limit, you get everything. It is an overcoming by eminence, as it were.

So, you may fill up that incompleteness by reaching the center, in the interior of your being, where all the radii converge and everything coales ces -- and then the world is there already. There is no dichotomy of me and the world. This is the first way. Or (second way), you go up, or out, or beyond -- even if you hav to wait until the end of time -- where again you also attain everything. It is the panta en pasin (God "all in all") of Saint Paul.

So you seem to be dissatisfied with these two schemes. This is what led me to say that the tension between 'East' and 'West' is probably not enough. If we are to speak of monasticism today, we must take into account the impact, the bite, the revelation or the temptation of Secularity. It is probably Secularity that brought you to make this beautiful témoignage. This is the challenge of Secularity: the double scheme, the paradigm of immanence and the paradigm of transcendence, in the best sense of the words, seems not to convince the present-day mentality. It is not enough to renounce the world, nor to transcend it. Without now saying anything further, the problem is clearly put. We shall have to work at this together, and study, and investigate, and try to see if there may be another alternative.

ALAN HARRISON:

I am from Saint Gregory's Byzantine Seminary in the Boston area. I have a question along similar lines, exploring a third route or perhaps a third center. When you were discussing the two centers, the 'Eastern' center and the 'Western' center, I was wondering if Christianity is not in a way a combination of these two elements, because it seems that Christ himself was an Easterner. I wonder if western Christianity, European Christianity, is not really a grafting of Christianity onto a Western spirituality and whether in the Eastern Fathers, for example, you may have another route which is in some sense a combination of both the East and the West.

PANIKKAR:

This is to me an inner reaction, because the modern Hindu would say a similar thing, and so would the modern Buddhist; and all be right. This is what I consider the serious impact of Secularity. Secularity lets you feel unsatisfied with either scheme. Certainly, the trap of Secularity would let us say, "let us create a new religion." But this is naive and insufficient. We are too burdened by both the weight and the riches of tradition to sweep it out. But the impact of Secularity might lead us to say, "Let us have a better understanding of tradition". And I, as a Buddhist, would then call for a

valid meaning of the pratītyasamutpāda, which would bring me to a new understanding of the Buddhist message. Or I, as a Hindu, would also look for a new understanding of karma, and a new understanding of dharma, which would in turn lead me to a totally revised understanding of the modern saṁnyāsin.

So, this is the right use of Secularity. If we find something viable in what i am calling Secularity, we are going to graft it onto our own tradition. Yet to be viable, the graft must draw sustenance from the roots. All this does not, by the way deny that in the traditions themselves there have already been conspicuous examples of both the attitudes and the effort to overcome either.

SPEAKER:

Just a brief question about Modernity. You said that it is important not to get caught in the trap of Modernity. What do you mean, "the trap of Modernity"?

PANIKKAR:

The trap of Modernity means uprootedness, déracinement. It is to think that the world began yesterday, or the day before yesterday, or that what I learn in school or know in a conscious way is all there is to the world. It is to suppose that the technological megamachine in which we live is the entire world. It is cutting ourselves from the roots of the real, roots which grip deep down into the entire Reality. That is what I call Modernity qua trap. But I would also warn of the stagnation of tradition, that is, when tradition is so thickly overgrown that it does not allow any new growth, or change, or mutation.

I may, perhaps, indicate here what I understand by Modernity without 'trap'. Then, I would use the word Secularity, i.e. that conviction that the saeculum, the temporal structure of the world is something definitive that we cannot dispense with, and thus that we have to take into account also on the ultimate level.

SPEAKER -2:

I just want to try to carry forth the distinction you made between the two centers. When the contemplative finds the center, whether that center be in the guha, the cave, or on the mountain, in the beyond, does not this person reach a point in the awareness of God where the categories of immanence and transcendence -- understoo not as theological categories but as experiences -- converge? Is not there a point where these categories fall away, and there is just God?

PANIKKAR:

I have to say this clarifies our whole enterprise greatly. Certainly, yes. But you describe your own experience, i.e. you describe what you see from within. Here lies the challenge, the danger and the beauty, the temptation and the weakness, of cross-cultural studies. From within, once I have found the pearl, I have found everything. And for me there is no longer in or out, as the kingdom of God in the Gospel of Thomas. You cannot ask me if I am in or I am out, and if you do, I cannot tell you. You are absolutely right: all categories collapse.

And yet, because time is not finished, because we are in this cross-cultural situation, because we are the heirs to many vast traditions, because we stand at this particular symbolon, crossroads where we find ourselves thrown together (sym bolon) because you (or I) are not the only one, having any such experience, for these reasons (and probably many others) we have not yet attained that total unconcern and simplicity and carefree attitude. Or else I just do my thing, and you do not ask me to come to conferences and explain it. It is when I hear other people's experiences that I break that unity, that blessed simplicity and, I find this typology of immanence and transcendence to be valid. But from the point of view of the experience, what you say seems to me correct.

This brings up another problem. It is the danger of passing sweeping statements of the kind: "Ah, you are wrong, you are primitive. You did not get it, because you only went into the guha, ..." It is Yahweh who is responsible for so many crimes committed in his name. This attitude is wrong because we commit the sin of katachronism. Anachronism is what our grandmothers do. They judge the modern world with their old ideas. And we are all very prone to judge our elders to be anachronistic. But katachronism is just the opposite sort of perspectival error. It is when we use present-day categories to judge the past. This is not what the grandmothers do, but what teenagers do, or what we -- teenagers in this emerging world -- too often happen to do. It is naive, besides being false, to judge the past with our contemporary categories of understanding. We need categories which have being tested in the crucible of time past and can survive in time present.

So, your point is well taken, especially because it is most important to bear in mind that this kind of typology does not allow us to judge, let alone condemn, other such efforts that mark the history of humankind.

SPEAKER - 3:

One simple question. Could you simply say what content you put into the word "archetype"?

PANIKKAR:

Hmm'. -Hiranyagarbha. I cannot say it in a few words.

I would say that an archetype is a paradigm which becomes for you the center of your myth. And myth is that in which you believe without believing that you believe in it. This is why we can only speak about other peoples' myths.

The word has a long history and was put again into circulation by Jung, and I would use it partly in his sense. I would not like to say model, which sounds too objective, on the outside and too conscious. Nor would I like to say conviction, belief, faith, or doctrine, which may appear to be too "essential" and equally conscious or conceptual.

Archetype for me represents literally a fundamental type, i.e. a basic constituent or relatively permanent cast, in our case, of human life. It is used as the contrary of a fleeting appearence (phainomenon) and as representing a basis on which at least part of our life is built up. I take from Jung not so much that it is submerged in the collective human unconscious as that it is a dynamis that on the one hand directs and on the other hand attracts human ideals and praxis. I have also used the expression 'constitutive dimension'.

II - The Canon of the Disciple

The reflections that follow do not intend to be a new "Rule of the Master", but rather they hope to express "The Canon of the Disciple", that is, to formulate the thirst of contemporary Man in search of unification as he is confronted by the manifold character of himself and the surrounding reality.

Following a time honored custom as much oriental as western, I will formulate a single principle that will then be developed in one corollary and seven canons, each of which will be followed by a gloss and a commentary. The gloss will present the canon in its most universally valid form, while the commentary will interpret it according the contemporary lights and distinguish it from traditional understanding. The gloss emphasizes continuity; the commentary, change. The two together will describe the contours of growth.

For the sake of presenting more strikingly the facets of the new monk, I shall sometimes overstress certain aspects of the traditional interpretation overlooking the fact that any living tradition is much richer than it may appears and that generally it already contains potentially the more contemporary aspect that I underline. I present this contrast more as a heuristic device than as a historical description.

The problem arises as to whether this contemporary spirituality I shall describe can still be called monastic. The answer may be semantic, but should not be nominalistic. Names are more than just arbitrary labels. Should we still speak of monastic values even though they have changed? Should we still of a modern 'monk' when he has abandoned so many things of the past? Is it altogether the same archetype? Before deciding the alternative, I would voice a double conviction: the first general, the second, specific.

First, in the crisis brought on by the encounter of religions and cultures, the words that express fundamental human experiences cannot be identified with a single conceptual interpretation within one culture, but rather they must be amplified until they embrace the homeomorphic or functional equivalents of other traditions. The word "grace", for example, can not be reduced to what the Tridentine christian tradition thinks of it but must embrace what the shaivasiddhanta thinks of it as well. Thus, in order to determine the meaning of a word a functional approach is essential. The modern monk might have changed in the understanding of many values, but if the thrust remains, he can still be called a monk.

Second, this approach is strengthened in the particular case that concerns us now. In order to understand what a monk, a rāhib, a saṁnyāsin, a muni, a bhiksu, etc. is, we must know not only what each tradition says about him, but also what prompted the monk to take the stance he took.

It could be that in the last analysis we would prefer to do away with the word 'monk' altogether and find another less overburdened one, but this would not prove that what the contemporary monk intends, does not correspond to what the ancients were trying to do. It is still an open question, which probably has no theoretical answer. If the modern monks -- I mean the new monks, not those contemporaries who legitimately repeat the tradition of the past -- call themselves monks there seems no reason to oppose them. Here 'apostolic' continuity is probably more important than doctrinal uniformity. But we shall still have to see whether or not the archetype monkhood has been split into two; whether we have here a mutation or simply another species of religious life altogether. It all will depend on whether we can find one single principle both for traditional monasticism in itself and for the new one. The enterprise is not easy.

We may recall that the great scholar and benedictine Jean Leclercq has written that "monasticism is not a matter of speculation nor is it a problem; it is a mystery" and that the great monk Thomas Merton speakes of monasticism "as a problem and a scandal".

The problem is important not for the status and future of monasticism only, but for religious existence altogether. In our present times in which religious values suffer a rather thorough transformation, perhaps monkhood will become the central religious archetype so as to offer a continuity which may save modern Man from falling into a more than cultural schizophrenia, a split within himself because of a break with his own past.

Our hypothesis about monkhood as a human dimension will have to stand the analysis of the archetype of monkhood in its manifestations. History shows without exception that the monk in all traditions has been a sign of contradiction. Monkhood has been hailed as the divine life on earth, as the jīvan-mukta and enlightened being and equally looked down upon as the vulgus pecus, the novum inauditumque monstrum, the hypocrite and alienated fellow par excellence.

Here appears the consequence of our distinction between the monk as archetype, i.e. the monk as a paradigm of religious life, from the archetype of the monk, i.e. the human archetype which was lived by the monks, (monkhood), but which may be experienced and lived today in different ways.

We shall try now to analyze the main traits of monkhood and to formulate that unifying principle we were refering to.

a) The Monastic Tradition

1.- The Fundamental Monastic Principle is Blessed Simplicity

At first sight, human life is complex: Our body has many organs and divergent urges, our spirit has a plurality of faculties and manifold functions. We are attracted by many things and our very being is the result of very many factors and in itself is a complex being. We become aware of reality when we begin to distinguish and we begin to know when we discriminate. The human person herself is not a single entity but a set of relations. All in us and around us seems to be manifold. We live under the sign of multiplicity, and human civilization tends to further multiply knowledges, distinctions, methods. And life itself: there seems to be a natural dynamism towards complexity. Furthermore, the very many parts of the universe and of our own being seem to be in strife with one another: the mind against the heart, the parts of the body in conflict with themselves and with the spirit, dissension among families and nations, the law of the jungle among animals, cataclysms in nature.

Nor is this all. Everything seems to be fleeting, inconsistent, passing away; temporality is unsatisfactory; we feel the uneasiness of proliferation. Sarva duhkham. Plurality is a fact. The world is complicated and so often we are worried and perplexed because we appear to be incapable of handling the many things that interest and yet trouble us.

Monkhood is a radical reaction against such a state of affairs. If Man has been defined as the only animal that knows how to say No, monkhood could similarly be described as the radical articulation of this No to the excruciating multiplicity of what happens to be. The monk is the non-conformist. The monk of all times has been seen as he who sails against the current of the stream of all things in search for the simplicity of the source. The monk is the one who tries to move upstream to its origin which one supposes to be simple. God is simple. Brahman is utter simplicity. The monk believes that the Absolute is simple and that the goal of his life is to attain that very simplicity. The way may be hard, and at the end there is even no way, but it is all simple. No thing, nothing can quench his thirst, trishna. He will not be satisfied until that very tanha has disappeared, not so much because he has found an object

capable of appeasing his desires (he would soon look for another object), but because the very cause of that urge has disappeared.

The simplicity that monkhood stands for is not a onefoldness without discrimination. It requires an esential qualification. It has to be a blessed simplicity, i.e. a simplicity conquered with blood (blessed) and then made holy, sanctified, set apart in the singlemindness that has reduced everything to its quintessence and reached the ultimate transparency of truth. In other words, the monk does not seek simplicity by doing violence to the real, by chopping off real values, by abusing some of its fields and exploiting others, but rather he aspires to simplicity respecting the rhythms and nature of things, ultimately because he is convinced that the truth of the truth, the core of being, the satyasyasat, is simple.

As an example of this traditional mentality, I may adduce without commentary three fundamental texts chosen at random. I translate the first and the last and give Abhishiktananda's version of the second.

At Home in Both Seas, East and West

(Rg Veda, X, 136)

1. Within him is fire, within him is drink,
within him both Earth and Heaven.
He is the Sun which views the whole world,
he is indeed Light itself --
the long-haired ascetic.
2. Girded with the wind, they have donned ochre mud
for a garment. As soon as the Gods
have entered within them, they follow the wings
of the wind, these silent ascetics.
3. Intoxicated, they say, by our austerities,
we have taken the winds for our steeds.
You ordinary mortals here below
see nothing except our bodies.
4. He flies through mid-air, the silent ascetic,
beholding the forms of all things.
To every God he has made himself
a friend and collaborator.
5. Ridden by the wind, companion of its blowing,
pushed along by the Gods,
he is at home in both seas, the east
and the west -- this silent ascetic.

6. He follows the track of all spirits,
of nymphs and the deer of the forest.
Understanding their thoughts, bubbling with ecstasies,
their appealing friend is he --
the long-haired ascetic.
7. The wind has prepared and mixed him a drink;
it is pressed by Kunamnamā.
Together with Rudra he has drunk from the cup
of poison -- the long-haired ascetic. (1)

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(1) (Notes to numbered verses of Rg Veda X, 136)

1. Long-haired ascetic: keśin, the wearer of loose long hair.
Drink: visa, poison, poisonous drink or, as here, intoxicating liquor which burns inside like a fire (as confirmed in v.7).

He "carries" Earth and Heaven, like Prajāpati, to whom he approximates by divinization.

2. Silent ascetics: munis.

3. This stanza is put into the mouths of the munis themselves.

4. Beholding the forms of all things: here there is a double meaning; a spatial one, due to the association with the sun (seeing all things from above), and a more spiritual one (from a higher perspective).

5. The wind: vata. Companion of its blowing: Vāyu, the divinity of the wind.

6. The spirits, nymphs: Gandharvas and Apsaras.

7. Wind: Vāyu. Kunamnamā: possibly a female spirit, connected with Vāyu.
Cup of poison: visasya pātra. Cf. the later myth of Śiva drinking the poison

The second text is a free rendering from the Brhadāranyaka Upanisad. At the moment, I cannot vouch for its exactness.

In this world,
out of this world,
seer of what is beyond sight,
he goes secretly and hidden, unknown;
mad with the madness of those who know,
free with the freedom of the spirit,
filled with essential bliss,
established in the mystery
of the non-dual.
Free from all sense of otherness,
his heart filled with the unique experience of the Self:
fully, and forever, awake.

The following verses declare the way to ascend the Mount of Perfection and warn against following twisted paths.

The Way to come to the All.

To come to what you do not know
you must go through where you do not know.

To come to what you do not enjoy
you must go through where you do not enjoy.

To come to what you do not possess
you must go through where you do not possess.

To come to what you are not
you must go through where you are not.

The Way to hold the All.

If you wish to know all
wish to know nothing of anything.

If you wish to enjoy all
wish to possess nothing of anything.

If you wish to be all
wish to be nothing in anything.

The Way not to hinder the All.

When you stop at anything
you lose your thrust toward the all.

For to come altogether to the all
you must altogether leave all.

And when you come to hold it all
you must hold it desiring nothing.

For if you desire to have something in all
you have not your pure treasure in God.

Sign that one has All.

In that nakedness the mind finds quietude and rest
because, as it covets nothing, nothing
pushes it upward, nothing forces it downward,
for it rests in the center of its humility.
For when it covets anything, in that it is fatigued.

Nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing.
And on the Mount, nothing.
Here there are no paths -- for there is no law for the just.

In sum, this blessed simplicity appears to be the monastic principle as such as so many witnesses from different traditions confirm. It could be said that the Quest for the Absolute is also another name for it. But this Ab-solute is 'un-bound' precisely because it is both free from multiplicity and frees us from every constriction. The Absolute means not only the liberation from multiple concerns, but also from multiple beings, from multiplicity, in a word.

We call it principle because it is at the very root of the monastic urge and it characterizes monkhood, serving as criterion to discriminate the monastic dimension from any other one. This is all the more important as we are going to underline facets of the new 'monk' which are conspicuously different from the traditional ones and this principle will serve as the criterion of continuity with tradition.

COMMENTARY:

While traditional monasticism tends towards simplicity (ἁπλοτης) through simplification, with the accompanying danger of reductionism, contemporary 'monasticism' seeks simplicity (μονοτροπος) through integration, with the consequent danger of an eclectic juxtaposition. If the temptation of the first is pessimism, that of the second is optimism. Nothing is said about whether this attempt will succeed.

Fuga mundi, contemptus saeculi, kayotsarga, tyāga, nityānityavastuviveka, or in other words, scorn for material values, contempt for the temporal, abandonment of the body, indifference in regard to the political, sense of superiority before cultural values, neglect when not condemnation of the profane, renunciation of the world and of the immense majority of values cherised by Men, etc., constituted basic points of the traditional monastic spirituality, whether jain, hindu, buddhist, christian or whatever. The monk's only concern, at least theoretical, was the supernatural, the paramarthika, how to acquire nirvāna, the only one thing: to eliminate duhkha. In order not to do unwarranted violence to the real this simplification must justify itself by a doctrine that relativizes all those other values and lets them appear as secondary in comparison with the quest of the Absolute. If you truly simplify, you should not eliminate any real thing. It would then be reductionism. You must get rid simply of appearences, 'privations', burdens, and complications. Ultimately you are bound to say that nothing is lost when you suppress the superfluous, because in truth "you are already there". "There is nothing to lose. You only do not know it yet."

Here we have the existential role of doctrines like original sin, karma, the intrinsic evil of matter, the provisionality of time, the caducity of the world, etc. What is certain is that in the search for the one needful thing, the unum necessarium, traditional spirituality forgot, to a certain extent, that this unum has parts and that although Mary's portion may be the better one, Martha's is equally a part of the ἕν toward which the monachos or monotropos, as he was also called in greco-christian literature, strove. It tended to forget that if you are overconcerned with looking for the real always beyond everything you may leave reality behind. Or as Abhinavagupta says: "the essence of reality is to appear".

In sum, what is abandoned is deemed superfluous, when not bad or negative. The monk renounces the flesh and the world, either because they are bad, or not ultimately real, or at least not definitive. The authentic monks (as Dom Colombàs puts it)[1], never cared to give witness, they would have considered it presumptuous and proud and even hypocritical. They were humbly satisfied with not giving scandal.

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(1) Cf. Columbàs I, 35b)

The present day conviction is different: the mysticism of transcendence or immanence has been supplanted by the mysticism of integration, which attempts to include all possible values because of the confidence that the synthesis is possible. It is not necessary to be an eunuch, or lame or maimed to enter the kingdom -- perhaps because this kingdom is no longer situated in a transcendent heaven. One is reminded of that cry of Augustine: "Those who have maimed themselves for the sake of the kingdom of the heavens are no longer males. Oh peculiar foolishness!." (1). How is it possible to consecrate to God a human life if we renounce living it? This was a catchy phrase of some christian monasteries some years ago.

Theologians and exegetes will undertake to adapt the texts to their understanding, but this is not our concern now. We hear it said that Buddha was the first marxist; and that the hindu samskāras were the first rules of hygiene, that fasting purifies the body as much as the soul; and that unquestioned obedience strengthens the will, etc.

The modern monk does not want to renounce, except the bare minimum; rather he wishes to transform all things. Will he succeed? He does not want to destroy but to build; he is not interested in stripping himself of everything but in assimilating it all. The christian Cross itself is not so much a sign of suffering and death as of the intersection of the four directions of the real in one harmonious point equidistant from the four extremes. He strives to arrive at the center converting it, not into a point without dimensions, but into a perfect sphere that embraces everything.

New winds are moving in millenial monastic institutions, be they christian, jain, buddhist or hindu, and new forms of monastic life are springing up in many places. We have to ask ourselves whether this is a betrayal of the monastic calling, or a new mutation in the same direction or finally another form of spirituality which experiences the pangs of a new birth within the womb of the old institutions, but which must go its own way once it has reached a certain maturity. We have to ask ourselves whether we have here a break or a continuity.

We could have put the essence of monkhood in the effort to unify one's life and to reach a unification with the rest of reality. We could have given a true but too general (and flattering) definition of the monk as the monachos, i.e. that person who aspires before all else to be wholly one; not just solitary, 'alone', but

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(1) Cf. St. Augustine, De opere monachorum XXXI, 40 (Columbae I, 345)

'all-one', unified. The monk would then be the person seeking unity with herself first, culminating in unity with the entire universe. This would then apply to any serious person in search of one's own humanness, and so extend the meaning of the word to other human efforts at integration which have never been related to monkhood.

The whole challenge of modern monkhood, it seems to me, consists, at first sight, in the impossible attempt to acquire by simplicity, the fullness of human life. This is the method of what I have called simplicity through integration. In order to realize the importance and the challenge of such a move we may now consider the previous non-monastic attempt at reaching the humanum.

2.- The Alternative

We have declared the blessed simplicity to be the principle of distinction and intelligibility of monkhood. This principle organizes and arranges human life according to that paradigm; but we know that there are many other human efforts at living a full human life which do not draw their inspiration from this archetype. When Cusanus, for instance, presents God as the "complexio omnium" as the encompassing integration of all things, he is no longer in the monastic mood but represents a trait of the European Renaissance. When Teilhard de Chardin, to give another example, sees the evolution of the universe towards an increasing complexity, he equally departs from the monastic ideal. When Abhinavagupta, for instance, says that in order to reach liberation one has to integrate and transform all the elements of the world, he seems also to express a principle alien to the monastic spirituality. When St. John of the Cross, on the other hand, tells us that the way towards the All is to renounce everything or when the apophatic tradition tells us that the ultimate reality is void, nothingness, śūnyatā, all these voices express the monastic ideal. Not without a deeper reason than that found by philosophical enquiry, the founder of the most powerfu monastic institution of the world, Lord Buddha, defended the anātmavāda or doctrine of the non-self as the very center of buddhist life.

We would like to subsume all the other non-monastic attitudes under one single principle also in a similar way as we have done with the monastic one. For reasons I shall explain later, I shall call secularity this other human archetype.

In point of fact there seems to be a double possibl attitude regarding the complexity of reality. It could be expressed in two words: simplicity and harmony.

As we have already indicated, these two fundamental human options, that of monkhood and that of secularity are not taken simply

because of the private opinions of their followers. They are taken because they express and represent two basically different conceptions of reality. You take to simplicity because you believe that the structure of the world is reducible to a single point, because you believe that the nature of reality is simple so that you really do not lose anything in the simplification and, on the contrary, you win not only a subjective wellbeing but also an objective truth.

Simplicity, as the meaning of the word suggests, indicates one single fold, singleness, a one without a second, without duplicity of any kind. Simplicity is only possible on the ultimate level if the multi-plicity is fruit of an unfolding of one single reality and ultimately the manifold character of reality is only secondary, contingent. Simplicity as an ideal implies the belief that there is no way in salvaging all those 'inferior' elements of an only apparent world. There is no point in wasting precious life and human efforts in utopian phantasies of paradise on earth, of a just human order in which everybody will be happy, and the like.

It entails a kind of universal and ultimate pessimism. We have already mentioned the underlying monistic assumption of the way of simplicity. It is an implicit assumption not always patent, because most of the times we do not draw the ultimate consequences of our attitudes, and also because many other cultural and religious factors often counterbalance the latent monistic tendencies with their clear dualistic doctrines. Life after all does not need to be consistent, or rather it is in fact not always logically consistent.

Reduced to its bare bones this first basic attitude reposes on a monotheistic belief in a perfect and thus simple God at the very source of reality. To return to that source is the meaning of life.

On the other hand harmony, as the very word suggests implies the result of 'joining' all elements so that they may fit together in a complex whole, in a concordant and superior unity. Harmony is only possible in the world if the internal tendencies of the different constituents are not incompatible with one another and in the final instance all of them form 'part' of a whole from which those parts have been somewhat detached, from where they have evolved or come from. Harmony as an ideal implies the belief that there is an eminent unity holding everything together. It entails a kind of universal and ultimate optimism.

Those who take the attitude of Secularity, believe that the structure of reality is pluralistic, so that you commit a sin of reductionism against reality if you attempt to reduce everything to a single principle. Reality

is complex and realization implies reaching the highest possible harmony within that complexity.

Reduced at its bare bones this second basic attitude, reposes on a pluralistic belief incompatible with a symbol of a monotheistic God as an ultimate and simple reality.

It is here also clear that at least a dualism of irreducible elements is assumed to be at the basis of this attitude. It is worth the effort to bring in harmony the different constitutive factors of reality, because they are all real and the puzzle can be put in order. It may very well be that the real solution is only on a transcendent plane, at a later world or still coming eschatology. Both attitudes, in fact are dynamic attitudes which do not need to be immediately realizable on the given plane of ordinary existence. This reference to a superhuman point is expressed in the two adjectives qualifying these two basic human options.

Blessed simplicity underscores the fact that it is not an automatic process, but one which has to be wrought with total dedication, an 'extra-ordinary' grace and through a transformation of the very structures of reality. The monastic spirituality is not so naive as to embark us on a trip in which at the end all fades away. On the contrary, it will assure us that at the end nothing is lost, all is regained, but on a higher, incomprehensible sphere in which the 'things' appear as what they in reality are. It is not so, as the novice may tend to believe, that the rivers and mountains are again rivers and mountains, but that for the first time the rivers and mountains are real rivers and mountains.

Harmonious complexity means also that everything has to be transformed so as to be able to be joined and fit together. But here transformation does not mean an ontological change as it were, so that the beings are, for instance, converted into Being, but an enhancement of their actual being -- although here the language is bound to be the same yet the meaning being different.

The two attitudes imply then a process, a becoming, a change. But again the difference becomes clear when we consider that the former stresses the change in oneself. Monastic spirituality is directly concerned in changing our awareness, in transforming ourselves. The latter, on the other hand, is mainly concerned in changing the circumstances, the surrounding world.

We could go on stressing the two mutually irreducible views or rather experiences of reality, but we may turn now to sketching their possible relationship.

The first thing to note is their respective insufficiencies. The entire reality cannot be reduced to one single principle. In spite of all the subtle ontological distinction on the ultimate level, one single principle would consume all the rest. There has to be dynamism and a certain type of pluralism also within the highest unity. This is what, I submit, the doctrine of the Trinity as well as that of Advaita stand for. Or we could put it in the remarkable words of Parmenides at the very start of the Western Tradition: speaking about reality he says that it is given in the now as totality (pân), oneness (hen) (and) complexity (syneches). This is probably the language of most mystics and to it we shall return after having presented the announced seven sūtras with their corresponding bhāsyas and tikas.

b) Seven Sūtras

In order to have an overview of the seven canons we give them here before the corresponding glosses and commentaries:

1.- The Breaking of the Heart
2.- The Primacy of Being over Doing and Having
3.- Silence over Word.
4.- Mother Earth prior to the Fellowship of Men.
5.- Sublimating Spatio-temporal Parameters into Trans-historical Consciousness.
6.- The Fullness of the Person over the Individual.
7.- The Primacy of the Holy.

1.- The Breaking of the Heart.

GLOSS:

The monastic archetype lies hidden beneath the ordinary appearences of things and of human life. It is not a superficial whim. One cannot begin the quest for Blessed Simplicity just by abandoning things or wandering around to escape the burden of one's own responsabilities and duties. The world literature is hard on monks. The harshest words against the fake specimen of monks are spoken by monks themselves. Suffice to read the Rule of the Master. Of the four kinds of monks only two are worth the name, and the other two are condemned with the most execrable words. Monk is not just the one who wishes to be it. It requires initiation, a diksa, a new birth, and you have to be a twiceborn a dvija in order even to begin. All monastic traditions stress the compunctio cordis, the conversio morum, the true metanoia, the firm resolve to leave behind the 'things of the world', the laukika and the stern urge for liberation plus the practice of all the virtues. The Vivekacudamani could serve as a classical example here.

There has to be a rupture of planes, as any initiation requires, but the plane here is especially the plane of one's heart.

The heart here stands, of course, for the center of the person. This heart has to be broken, or rather once the heart is broken one can begin anew by wanting to make it whole again in a wider and deeper way than it was before. The heart breaks because of hamartia, sin duhkha, suffering, avydyā, ignorance, injustice, war... pervades the world. "Save me from death, afflicted as I am by the unquenchable fire!" is the typical plea of the Hindu candidate to the monastic way as Shankara writes. Monkhood is not just the mere continuation of 'ordinary' or empirical life. An initiation is needed.

In the Christian tradition, for instance, the primitive monks never claimed to do anything else than to take seriously the baptismal initiation, to have punged into the waters of death and resurrection and to begin to grow in that christic sphere where the entire renewed Body of Creation begins to expand. Christian monks did not want to be especial Christians, but just Christians. It was only when people felt the praxis of evangelical demands began to relax that the monks were singled out as the example for all Christians, not because they did something peculiar, but merely because they tried to practice Christian virtues -- which since Paul have

been summed up as ἁπλότης καρδίας (1), simplicitas cordis/simplicity of the heart. This simplicity already at that time meant also the purity of the total person at her source.

This break has to be both personal and public or sociological. It is not enough to have felt in one's heart the all pervading reality of duhkha, the prison of samsāra, the ἁμαρτία τοῦ κόσμου, the sin of the world.

; it is also necessary to fall at the feet of the guru, to leave your house and/or your family, to 'go to the mountains', to renounce the world, to publicly become a renouncer, to enter the sangha, or a similar act. You need to break with society, even if this means that you no longer perform the sacred rites. The entire monastic literature is full of sarcasm against those who deem it possible to be monks while living with their families or in the bazaar or town. The fuga mundi is more, although certainly not less, than a merely 'spiritual' attitude. The habit does not make the monk, but certainly the monk does makes the habit. You may hide the pearl for sometime, but at a certain moment you have to sell all that you have and buy that pearl. The monk goes extra mundum. Monastic asceticism is both inner and outer.

It is necessary to underscore this first sūtra, not only because it is essential to the monk, but also because it is perhaps its most visible and probably specific trait. Many a mystic, without being a monk, may have many other or all of the other sūtras. This one has a sociological aspect specifically monastic.

It is also necessary to stress its importance because of misunderstanding, on one hand, and difficulties to put it into practice, on the other.

There can be no monasticism without this breaking of the heart, without this experience of conversion, of turning around and in, of stripping off the so many things that cling to us, of abandoning the 'usual', 'normal' and even secure and often reasonable way. As one Upaniṣad says: "On the very day one is

(1) Cf. Eph. VI, 5; Col. III, 22

'broken-hearted', on that same day one becomes a renouncer"; a broken-hearted, i.e. an indifferent to the world, a disillusioned person. This experience can take, obviously, the most variegated forms and does not need to be a psychological shock, but at any rate it has to be a break from where there is no return, as texts from East and West affirm.

The 'broken-heart' is only an onesided metaphor, for in truth it is only a negative expression when seen from this shore of samsāra, of mere creatureliness. It is the old heart that is broken and opened, often with violence so that it may give way to a new heart and a healed person with throbbings of the new life of compassion, love and true understanding. The metaphor is onesided because seen from the other shore, from the already new life it is not that of a broken but of a new heart. Monastic life is also a life of peace, joy and serenity. The heart that has been broken was a wounded heart, a sinful one, a heart of stone. It had to be broken because the human condition is unjust, ignorant, sinful. The monk has to break through this thickness of callousness and selfishness in himself and around him, he has to break through mere temporality and inauthenticity in order to be on his way.

Now, who is going to open his heart? Nobody can do it by oneself, and the mere will is of little avail. No amount of personal suffering and of social disorder is sufficient either. Many see it and escape or fall into despair and their heart remains closed. Here we touch the mystery of this first sūtra. Somebody, something, God, the ātman, grace, love... has to touch or strike my heart and open it up. I am somewhat passive. It happens to me. I cannot give any ultimate reason, because it is a gift, although it may often appear as a burden and even as a curse.

Furthermore, except for very few cases and even those have to maintain that heart, open, pure, simple, time and again, for most people this is a continuous process, an increasing opening, a constant purification of the ego that returns persistently to where it has been dethroned. Here is the place of sacrifice as a constitutive element of the actual nature of the real. Sacrifice performs this exchange of hearts, this opening of our lives, this rupture of planes, this throwing us away from the banality of mere instinctive life.

COMMENTARY:

The modern monk cannot bypass the need for conversion, he cannot do without the initiation and every initiation means not only the beginning of a new life; it implies also a break with the previous stage of existence. But there are at

least two important variations in the way in which this vairagya, this compunctio cordis penthos is experienced.

First, many praxis of the ancient style seems not only obsolete, but harmful and negative. The corporal mortifications, for instance and the detachment from the affairs of the world appear often incompatible with the contemporary monastic spirit. The 'world' has shifted from the 'bishops and women', to quote faceciously from the first Christian monks, i.e. from the dangers of the social life of the community, civil and religious, to the political and socio-economic structures along with the ideologies of all types which represent a danger to combat and an enemy to conquer.

This shift of parameters of the world is all the more important to underline as many of the traditional forms of monasticism still operate in the institutional way with the old pattern while anthropologically the new pattern has already emerged -- creating thus sometimes unnecessary tensions. It is not that the world and its ways have not to be renounced; it is that the world is no longer seen in the theater, in the schools, in the 'profane letters', in sex or political activity. The world is seen, instead, as we shall have still occasion to show, in the 'wordly spirit' that today takes prevalently the forms of social injustices of all sorts, political manipulations of all kinds and in general the prevalent System of a competitive society when the people do not have the same tools, talents, opportunities and desire to compete. Perhaps money is here the invariant.

Much has been said and written about world-affirming and world-denying spiritualities. And all too often one has not sufficiently considered the very conceptions of that world which some spiritualities are supposed to affirm and others to deny. If a certain Vedāntic monasticism, for instance, rightly or wrongly according to our opinion, but in fact so, believes the world to be pure illusion the corresponding world-denying attitude amounts to a true-life affirming and reality-affirming attitude. The modern monk is interested in many things of 'this world' because he believes that the shaping of this world is a religious and even a contemplative concern not alien to the monastic vocation. The dichotomies temporal and eternal, sacred and secular, the human and the hindu or christian or the religious in general, the natura and the supernatural, etc. are no longer considered by and large valid by a good number of people. I shall call it the impact of secularity and shall explain later.

The second innovation that present day mentality introduces in this first sūtra is the secular link between the individual monk and the rest of the world, including all the social values and secondary causes that seem to run the destiny of humankind. In other words, the Disciple goes to the master because his heart is broken and asks for instruction and guidance; but he is uneasy and often revolts if he feels that what the master wants is to break further his heart, obliging him, for

instance, to do irrational things. The famous watering of a stick could serve as an extreme example. The new monk, first, has lost the innocence so as not to see clearly through the psychological motiviations of the superior. Secondly he feels humiliated not in his pride, but in his dignity to be treated in that artificial manner. Thirdly, he is also concerned with the stick and with the real plant and taken it to be an affront to the earth, the possible plant and the stick to indulge in such mockery. Or was it only an injunction to check his sense of humor?

The breaking of the heart does not mean that others have to break my heart artificially, but that I have arrived at such conviction, certainly with the painful aid of authentic experiences and not artificial experiments. By all means the monk wants his will to be set in tune with the will of God or the master or simply with the nature of things or of reality, but not just to be broken for the sake of it so as to be prey of no matter what injunction may come to him.

To be sure, I have forced the colors of a certain traditional spirituality in order to put the variation more forcefully, but we may have perhaps succeeded in doing it.

2.- The Primacy of Being over Doing and Having

GLOSS:

Being is or can become unified one. Doing and Having entail multiplicity. All monastic spirituality defends the primacy of being although it may consider it empty, śūnya, and in fact non-being, asat, wu; or full complete, plēroma and in fact supreme or absolute Being. But in every case it is being before doing and having that prevails. Different schools may consider that what is to be more or less dynamic or static or accept, on the other hand, that being is pure act but what is essential is just to be there, here grounded in reality.

One of the words consecrated by usage to express this second canon is "contemplation"; that is that activity which situates us in an open space from which we can observe and contribute to the course of the universe; or as the Gītā will say, that activity that delights in the wellbeing of all beings, or that maintains the world in cohesion (lokasaṁgraha). This contemplation begins by purporting to be the ultimate means to obtain the final end, of human life, namely, to sustain the cosmos, on in terms of christian mysticism, to create, redeem and glorify (divinize) the universe along with God. But soon it is recognized that

the human condition cannot transcend itself. The ultimate means become thus in itself the very end of life, the fullness of existence. Therefore, for the contemplative it does not make sense to speak of a model to imitate or even of a path to follow. The contemplative life is simply life, life in its fullest sense: for some it is the discovery of the person, or of the human being; for others, the discovery of the being of all beings. The value of each being lies in its being what it is, not in what it does or has. The intuition of being thus stripped of all spurs or inducements -- that is what the monk glimpses. We do not have to justify our existence by what we do or by how useful it is to others. That would only instrumentalize our lives and convert them into a mere means for some other thing, for a better future whether in a vertical or a horizontal line. Life is an end in itself.

Many other words may serve to express the same trait. The monk, for instance is monk because he is in search of enlightenment. His whole life is geared towards it. And yet he knows that the very desire for it is somehow an obstacle to it. Paradoxically we could say that enlightenment is thus the goal of monasticism, but not the aim of the monk. You are after satori and to get it you become monk, but you do not look for it as it were. You are open and perhaps full of hope, but not of expectations.

At any rate monkhood is not primarily concerned with doing anything or having something. The central point is the development of the core of the human person to its fullest.

COMMENTARY:

But what is this life? This primacy of being came to be understood traditionally as primacy in regard to doing: as theoria before praxis; as the jñana-vādius before the karmakandius, as contemplation being more important than action; or as the scholastics formulated it: operari sequitur esse (action follows being). Further, this being aspires to become the very absolute Being in which there is no distinction between having and doing, being and becoming -- or in other words, between 'being' and 'non-being'. Being is not only opposed to doing or praxis but also to having or to the means. This having is not simply wealth or riches but is also doctrine. Having is the means to obtain an end in itself. Being is not a means for anything, it is an end. The contemporary monastic spirit equally defends this primacy, but this being is not considered to be merely a theoretic vision, or pure gnosis or mere darshana; it is not seen just as an intellectual operation which relegates praxis to an inferior plane. To continue the scholastic dictum cited earlier, its reverse is here equally stressed: esse sequitor operari. Praxis and theory are not in any dia-

lectical opposition. It is not a case of the former ruling the latter nor vice versa, because ultimately the one does not exist without the other. All praxis has a nucleus of theory and all theory is the fruit of some praxis. True action is contemplative and authentic contemplation acts. Such a dicotomy does not exist in reality.

The new monk stresses the unity of being and doing. Having, on the other hand, can exert a deadening weight on being. The lighten being in order that it may truly be is the task of monastic spirituality. Having is everything that being has not yet been able to assimilate. I have stocks of food, but the daily bread is not having; it is being. Having is the artificial trappings that we accumulate; it is the knowledge stored in our memories or in books and not really transformed into our very being. Having is all the accessories that serve some purpose in the beginning but further down the line leave us entangled in the means without allowing us to reach our true goals. Having is all that weighs us down in our sack of provisions. Having is what prevent us from performing contemplative action in all our doing. Having is all the fabricated interests that impede the true purifying action that many would call revolutionary. The Eucharist is to be eaten, and not just enthroned in gold; the Buddha is to be discovered in oneself rather than adored in emerald. The contemporary monk does not want so much to wash his hands of all doing and to free them of all having, parigraha, precisely in order to put them to use for their proper task. He does not want to have chains on his feet. He wants to be able to go where the spirit leads him with all his being which has no longer having because it is pure act. Will he succeed?

3.- Silence Over the Word.

GLOSS:

Silence is one. Words are many. Strictly speaking, this gloss should be left blank but priority does not mean exclusivity. In trinitarian categories we could stress the attention the monk gives to the Spirit over the Word, without this implying absolute priority. It implies, however, to be ever attentive to the spirit in the word. Expressed in philosophical categories we are dealing with the priority of myth over the logos. And speaking with moral overtones, we could explain this canon saying that it deals with the new innocence that nolonger has anything to say because it feels that everything has already been said and that speech is nothing but the cloak of reality and all too often, its tomb. Those who attend to the silence out of which the word emerges often have no need of the silence from and those who have not discovered this silence the word will conceal it. The kevala-jñani, the perfect jain monk who has already

obtained omniscience neither speaks, nor preaches; he has even dispensed with teaching the saving doctrine. The monk speaks and writes little and often does not sign his writings, although through their disciples we know their name. The Buddha commends the noble silence and the 'silent one' is a synonym for monk. Each word comes out of silence and when possible accompanies it.

The experience of silence is itself silent and therefore does not compete with the word. The very formulation that speaks of priority is deceiving. From the side of silence there is not any kind of priority nor is there any from the side of the word , since it would represent a contradiction for the logos to affirm by means of the same logos that there is something preceding it. Yet nonetheless, human experience throughout the ages tells us repeatedly that the Tao that can be expressed is not the Tao; that those who know do not speak and those who speak do not know; that it is understood by those who do not understand and is not by those who understand; that it is those whose spirit is poor who truly shall see God, etc. There is a spiritual experience that is not conscious ot itself. There is a meditation without thoughts: it does not think, much less think that it does not think; and nonetheless it is not simply a dream or total unconsciousness. There is something awakened in us which later on can possibly be incarnated in word, but which allows us to see perfectly clearly that the word is word, precisely because it is itself incarnated by the work and grace of the spirit.

True orthodoxy is not the correct formulation of doctrine but the authentic experience of the glory of the truth. It is nothing but the other side of orthopraxis. The monk does not understand doctrinal disputes when they are extrapolated outside of their context. What in modern times has come to be called the 'sociology of knowledge' is what monks of all times have experienced, that is, that all formulation is dependent on a set of factors that relativize it.

To cite more than one tradition: "In the beginning was the word"; but the word was not the beginning since it emerged out of it. It is not that there exists a thing which cannot be said; or that there exists an ineffable something behind the logos. Silence does not speak nor has it anything to say. Silence has no message. Authentic silence is not the repression of the word, but rather the non-reflexive consciousness of the very womb of the logos; but this is true in such a manner that if the umbilical cord uniting the two is severed, the silence disappears and the word dies. For this reason, the cultivation of silence cannot be commanded nor does it consists in the repression of the word. Recalling the classic humanist distinction between nature and culture, the word belongs to the latter, and silence to the former. There is no culture of silence; it is natural or it is not silence. You keep naturally quiet when

you have nothing to say.

Paradoxically, albeit understandably, the traditional monk takes relief from his silence in prayer, be it individual and silent or communal and vocal It seems as if more often than not the silence is not broken by 'talking' to God or reciting interminable mantras. In a cenobitic setting, the most marked characteristic of the traditional monk is a life of prayer. Silence blossoms in prayer. The monk only speaks to others on rare occasions; but on the other hand, he chants, recites, studies and meditates constantly; his politeia," his 'conversatio' is in heaven." It is the others below who climb up to the high places where monks live to ask their advice. The monk does not speak, but is questioned. Curiosity is a sin. It does not even interest him to preach by example. He has submitted everything to God, to the Dharma, to what is, and he is not concerned with interferring directly in the course of events. His silence is acosmic.

COMMENTARY:

The modern disciple has learned well the lesson of his predecessors and will not fall into the temptation of trying to use the 'mass media' to make himself known or to influence others. However, he is equally aware of an unbreakable bond between silence and the word, and fears that the former degenerates if it does not incarnate in the logos, if it does not descend into the market place of Men and at the very least listen to them. He fears that his life will be short-circuited if he isolates himself from the clamor of his fellow Men who ask for bread, demand justice and sing and dance to the sun, the moon, the seasons, or to the religious and civil events and festivities of their time. The disciple wants to listen to the world although this later may trouble his silence. But at the same time, it will make it more vital and perhaps more fruitful. The demons and asuras of the cold and lonely regions have been converted into the shouts and cries of the human centers below. But there they go, the modern monks. The daily papers with their news have been converted into spiritual reading because subject of meditation.

The silence of the modern monk is not only at the beginning, as the very source of the word. The modern monk does not like high walls, enclosures and lonely places where the clamor of the world does not reach him. He tries to find the silence at the end of every word also, he would like to let the exuberance of the word land again into silence so that the perichoresis or circumincessio of the word returns into silence.

4.- Mother Earth is prior to the Brotherhood of Men.

GLOSS:

The Earth is one; people are many. The Earth is simpler. Man is complex. If it is certain that the monk has his gaze fixed on the invisible, often called 'the beyond', the 'center', transcendence, God ātman, nirvāna, etc. It is no less certain that he has his feet firmly planted on the ground. The monk stands, in a certain sense, between heaven and earth with the consequent danger of forgetting the intermediary world of his fellow Men. Of the three worlds, triloka, of which almost all traditions speak, the monk seems to live in the nether world of spirits, demons, asuras; more in the telluric than in the human-social world in which so-called civilized humanity moves and bustles. The monk has a certain chthonic-telluric consciousness that characterizes him; he does not belong like the bees or other humans to a productive society, but to a living cosmos like that of the seasons, even if it is called evolutionary states of consciousness. The monk cultivates this earth and all the spirits that vivify her. The monk lives in communion with the cosmos, he is in contact with the saps of the earth.

Certainly it is not solely the privilege of monks to live with the seasons and celebrate the caturmas, the arrival of spring, advent, new year and the festivals tied to earthly, astrological and atmospheric cycles; but it is the monk who primordially celebrates such festivities with the gratest independence from their socio-logical or agricultural effects. The monk leads a cosmic existence which then allows hir to forget or at least neglect, the historical aspect of human life. Social issues, for example, have never been his strength, nor historical problems. Between heaven and earth the monk seems to live in a vertical posture inclining toward Mother Earth only so as to better lift himself to look toward God, or the Gods, or the nameless Mystery above his head. He wants to live alone because he feels in his being the vital current that descends from the above to the depths of the Earth. He has little time or interest for the horizontal currents that circulate between human beings. Only when heaven and earth seem to meet (like in the Crusades of the European XII Century) the monk seems interested in 'politics'. And often he betrays a lack of historical understanding (as the same example of the Crusades shows).

COMMENTARY:

The Canon of the Disciple faithfully follows the Rule of the Master here: 'ora et labora', and labor consists in the cultivation of himself and Mother Earth. But the population of the earth's primitive inhabitants bhūtas, angels, asuras, elves, yaksas and marauding demons has been seen to dwindle.

But what is important for the modern monk is the earth herself, she too is a victim of the voraciousness of human beings who have abused her more than all the other living beings put together. Humans have not simply taken their sustenance from the earth but they have further expoited and violated her, trying to climb to heaven even though this Tower of Babel begins to crumble even as it is built. It is no longer so much the living spirits who still populate the earth that worries the modern monk, as he tries to re-establish a relationship of harmony and collaboration with her, but the living earth herself. To work the earth does not mean to exploit her, nor is it to one's own gain but rather it means to cultivate her as one would a friendship or a garden, and not as one would exploit a mine. Traditional monasticism offer us examples of this cultivation of cheese, wines, honey and crafts. Mother Earth is returning to life and recovering the soul which from ancient times she has always been believed to posses: anima mundi.

The attitude of the monk before the earth should not be confused with a fundamentally aesthetic posture. It is not so much the beauty of a garden that engages him so much as the pulsing life of a forest; it is not the immensity of a landscape, as much as the freedom of the waters and the spontaneity of the natural cycles. The monk is not a primitive but he can claim to be a 'primordial', not limiting his life to the merely rational or aesthetic. It is not only that he attempts to recover his own body, but equally he tries to save Mother Earth. We are not referring here simply to a franciscan or Zen attitude with regard to nature; we are trying to point out a more generalized sharing of a community of destiny and vital metabolism with the earthly. A major part of cult, or sacrifice, consists in the linking of Mother Earth with all her elements to the revitalization of life -- from the vedic yajña to the christian eucharist the examples can be multiplied. The vedic keśin or the jain digambara do not go naked, they walk chothed in the wind and covered by the air; as the famous rig-vedic hymn sings: Mother Earth protects them.

The unification of life cannot be carried out without the collaboration of the Earth and without it too being integrated. It is not only the body that it is raised, it is the Earth as well. The monk seeks solitary places but he does not exile himself. He does not flee from the Earth; he roots himself in her. Many take vows of stability; others carry the earth with them; the majority caress it with their bare feet and the sādhus when they die are not cremated like everyone else but buried in the bosom of Mother Earth.

But the modern monk is not satisfied with this alone. Can he live in communion with the Earth and in community with his fellow beings as well? He does not wish any longer to retire to the deserts; he has seen these visited and populated by instruments of atomic destruction. There seems to be a shift from the

cosmic to the human. And also an inclination to find the divine more in Man than in the Cosmos.

It is here than the Canon of the Disciple situates and frames monastic prayer. The monk is traditionally the Man of prayer. But his rite is as much cosmic as human. His prayer is not so much petition as praise and in many traditions is more a participation in the rhythms of the universe than hymns of glory, or cries for help. The monastic prayer of the disciple is all of this, but it is primordially a contribution to the 'interactions' that govern the universe, an active introit to the co-redemption of the cosmos, a revitalization of the spiritual content of the world and a contribution to the total atmosphere of reality in which all beings breathe. Cult is the celebration of the order of reality.

5.- Overcoming Spacio-Temporal Parameters.

GLOSS:

Monastic existence does not move solely or principally in time and space. Interiority, on the one hand, and transcendence, on the other, are classic monastic categories. The spacio-temporal involvement is foreign to him. Reality goes beyond time and space. Human destiny is not exhausted by the achieving of our goals in time and space. Again we see here the principle of simplicity at work.

True life, traditional monasticism would say, has little to do with this mundane life that unfolds in time and space. The monk bears witness to the beyond, to the overcoming of 'wordly', temporal, transitory, cares and tasks, etc. "The life above is the true life." At best this one here below serves to make us worthy of the other.

To be sure the overcoming of the spatio-temporal parameters cannot be achieved overnight. Monastic formation takes this into account and leads the candidate through a whole process of purification and enlightenment. There is place for growth and room for becoming in traditional monasticism, but the goal is clear: total disentanglement from the structures of this cosmos, samsāra, world.

COMMENTARY:

Here also there exists a tension between classic monastic spirituality and its contemporary interpretation. While the former understands this going beyond to necessitate an abandonment of material parameters as a prerequisite for achieving

the definitive end, the latter interprets this same going beyond as the discovery of a new dimension which does not render superfluous the material elements of reality but rather complements and transforms them. While the first emphasizes transcendence, the second underscores the immanent. We must immediately remark here that this immanence should not be considered merely as a negative transcendence, that is, as a transcendence interior to each thing. Immanence is not something that is so interior to a thing that it has somehow already transcended the thing itself, but rather something that dwells in the very marrow of the being in question and constitutes it without thereby being totally identified with it.

The contemporary monastic mentality seeks a spirituality that is not exclusively 'spiritual'. It wants to integrate and not exclude all the spacio-temporal parameters of human existence. Its fundamental category is transformation, metamorphosis, transfiguration. Not only by bread alone do we live, but certainly by bread as well, and without it we cannot subsist. But the bread must be assimilated, that is, transformed and converted into the very material of our beings. The modern monk wants to recover the ancient alchemy. Here the modern monk rejoins existing but somehow neglected threads of tradition. Many a mystic, East and West, show an extraordinary contemporaneity.

The reality that the monk tries to discover and adjust his existence to is not supra-or infra-temporal. Perhaps it could be called trans-temporal in the sense that it is inherent in temporality itself, although it transcends it immanently The lived experience of tempiternal awareness, for example, is not that of an existence faced with an untemporal and in the last analysis post-temporal eternity, but rather the experience of those tempiternal moments of this very existence in time and space. The modern monk is child of our contemporary time and shares many insights of a Sacred Secularity. He does not await the 'other' life, but cherishes the hope of discovering in 'this' life his own soul, that is, the very Life of life, including his own. The monastic formation is aiming toward the aperture of the 'third eye', toward opening our senses to a reality hidden in the very ordinary things and events, a dimension that reveals itself as long as our vision is pure and our heart untainted. The monk does not cultivate the expectation of the future but the hope of the present; he does not want to live looking toward the past, but tries to drink in the whole transtemporal content of the present. The redemption of time and space implies a transformation of spiritual alchemy which is comprised of all his asceticism, sādhana, tapas, training and ardor. Many trends, ancient and modern, meet here.

The unification of being toward which the monk inclines becomes here more arduous. Not only will he not scorn any human value, but actually

he attempts to cultivate them all, nonetheless is ready to offer them in a sacrifice which does not destroy but transforms them. True wisdom here consists in the transfiguration of all true values. Because of this, the monk loves everything that exists and is even passionate about everything human without excluding the material and temporal. In a certain way, the more ephemeral the value, the more it will awaken his interest and attention: it becomes all the more urgent to rescue and redeem it before it disappears.

The contemporary endeavor is audacious and difficult, because all that is not gold glitters. Viveka, discernement of spirits, is here needed. There are pseudo-values and there are allurements that distract us from the ultimate meaning of life. It has been written, that no one can serve two masters, that nitya is not anitya, paramārthika has nothing to do with vyavahārika, nor the World with God, nor flesh with the spirit:"Render to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's", and cease to lead a divided existence. "Take quick action because it is better to enter into the kingdom crippled than to remain forever excluded from it". "I have come only to teach the way that will free you from suffering; all the rest is superfluous and therefore an obstacle to obtaining nirvāna." The majority of monastic spiritualities teach this, albeit with some major refinements due to the exigencies of human nature.

Present day religious consciousness tries to realize an integration without falling into a compromise, to achieve unification without degenerating into mere juxtaposition. Is this possible? The theoretical answer which has been proferred for sometime still holds: the devil too is a servant of God; the temporal is the very manifestation of the eternal and its shadow; appearances are precisely that, the appearing or revelation of reality; the world is the creation of God himself and as such is good; the real human spirit is an incarnated spirit; Caesar himself belongs to God; true simplicity is that which has integrated all the elements of reality; amputation is not necessary when an organism is alive and retains its regenerative powers; freedom from suffering is only the other side of that first step necessary for the achievement of happiness; it is the very obstacles in our path that allow us to overcome them and ourselves in the process; etc. Reality is neither monistic nor dualistic, but advaitic, trinitarian, vital, that is, pluralistic although without separation, etc.

But theory is not practice. Current monastic asceticism tends to make possible what until now would have seemed inconceivable. It is asked, "how is this possible since I do not know man?" Is this force powerful enough to realize such a harmony and integration? And the answer that encourages it is to hear also that "there is no word impossible for God." And this is precisely the task: to achieve what at first glance appears impossible: to unite heaven and earth, flesh and spirit, the

World and God, the masculine and the feminine, the secular and the sacred.

The dilema of modern spirituality is formulated without palliatives and carried to its ultimate consequences by the contemporary monk. Either the perfection to which we have aspired throughout the ages is a pernicious alienating dream since it cannot be realized, or else we must be able to achieve it overcoming but not abandoning the spatio-temporal nature that constitutes us. A perfection that is not als in someway corporeal ceases to be human; a happiness that must be left for after, ceases to merit the name. Is there a middle way between an obviously insufficient and ultimately non-existing humanism and an equally unreal angelicism? The monk poses the problem in all its acuity to cure us once and for all of half measures and beguilding short term solutions. This is the challenge of monastic spirituality in our day. Many pray, "on earth as it is in heaven", but sometimes they understand: "since not on earth, then at least in heaven." The modern monk challenges: "if not on earth, then not in heaven", because "to him who has, more will be given" since we only have what we are. The monk also "has heard it said", itivutaka: the Kingdom is neither without nor within, but between us, in the interregnum of cosmotheandric interaction. And to this end he strives: to be a light unto himself.

ED BEDNAR:

Now we begin the question-and-answer period.

GURU JOHN SINGH KALSA, from Sikh Dharma: The question I have is about the definition of monk and monastic. When I hear those words, I automatically translate "monk" to equal spiritual aspirant in a more universal sense, and "monasticism" or "monastic" is translated immediately in my consciousness as spiritual community, or the global spiritual community -- not limiting it to a definition of one who sits in a monastery or ashram, secluded from everything, but the actual sādhaka or one who practices sādhana. I wonder if this is in line with what you are saying?

PANIKKAR:

This is very much in line with what I have been saying. The monk is precisely an expression of a constitutive dimension of the human being. So any sādhaka would be considered on the way to this monastic spirituality. A sādhaka is one who tries to unify his or her being around the center. These centers are interpreted in different ways, the sādhanas may be different, and the sādhakas may have totally different natures, but that would be monastic spirituality.

BROTHER LUKE:

Father Panikkar, the only thread that I had some uneasiness about was the third thread that you talked about today: Mother Earth is prior to the Brotherhood of Man.

I was wondering: Does that really fit into Christian monasticism?

PANIKKAR:

I think it is good that I have a chance to make this a little more precise. Prior, to me, does not need to mean exclusive, or even more important, but simply before: I spoke of consciousness that the filiation with the Earth comes before the fraternity or sorority with human beings. And the history of monasticism, East and West, seems to vouch for this particular thread. Monks choose a place to live more for the sake of the place itself than for the sake of its inhabitants, whether they are nice people or not. Sometimes they went to the desert to fight the demons as cosmic forces, not Men.

Now, Christian monkhood has been quickly aware that human fellowship is paramount. And this is precisely the wellknown movement within Christendom which led first the Mendicants (Franciscans, Dominicans) and then the Regulars (Jesuits, etc.) to shift from a sturtly monastic spirituality to a greater involvement with the world. The more recent development of the Ramakrishna Order within Hinduism could be another case in point.

This I have called the crisis of Modernity, which is not the same as saying contemporaneity. Things that went without saying -- that first came solidarity with the Earth,and thenhuman community -- are now in the throes of a certain tension, which may well bring about what I am calling the third stage in the monastic tradition, the New Canon of the Disciple and the further awareness it implies.

But look where the monasteries are, East and West. Not in the inner city, certainly, where individual monks today may feel impelled to take up residence. I was also trying to say that this tension should not become a destructive, dialectical tension, but a creative polarity. Without ceasing to be loyal to something which is traditionally understood as monastic, we may still live with our eyes open to our own reality, which certainly is quite different and may indeed elicit from us a certain mutation of our self-understanding of monasticism.

FRANCIS TISSO:

You spoke about the modern monk, and his or her concern with transformation. But yesterday you used the term Modernity, and I wonder if you could explain that term. It carries a tremendous amount of power -- it seems that when the spiritualities of the East or the West, whether immanent or transcendent, encounter Modernity, a tremendous explosion and transformation occurs. Could you discuss Modernity in light of the "modern monk"?

PANIKKAR:

That is, again, something I was trying to reserve mostly for tomorrow, but as the question is also implied in today's presentation, I may advance just one trait which is for me the very essence of Modernity.

Undoubtedly, any tradition has its past, its present and its future, and consciousness of its present, so that in any tradition you have some sense of modernity. So, no tradition is without that sense of getting up-to-date, modernizing itself or whatever is needed to carry on the tradition. No tradition is alive if you do not carry it on and pass it over -- which is what the very "tradition" means. To speak of modernity in that sense would then be just one case among so many. I think you detected very well that when I used the words modern monk or nun and modernity in my presentation, I was not using them in this way, relative to what is past. I would like to stick my neck out and present the thesis that today's all-pervading secularity is the fundamental feature of Modernity.

By secularity, I do not mean the history of the European churches, or of secularization, about which we all know. Nor do I mean the realm of the profane. I would make a very fundamental distinction between profane and secular. The profane is, by definition and etymology, that which is not the sacred, that which stands in front of the fanum, profanum, in front of the temple, that which is not encircled by the sanctum. So the dialectic between the sacred and the profane should be carefully distinguished from the dialectic between the secular and whatever else. The distinction sacred-profane is a priestly distinction. The realm of the priest, qua priest is the fanum, the temple, the numinous, the sacred. The realm of the lay person, of the non priest is the profane. The monk has little to do with this dialectic -- although in the Rule of the Master (I, 6) the tonsure prohibits calling the monk a layman. Yet, monks are not purohits, priests and it belongs to a peculiar trait of christian history the tendency of monks to be also ordained as priests. It was perhaps needed a process of secularizatior in order to bring about the meaning of secularity -- as I would like to use the word.

Until now, due to very many factors, I shall not elaborate, the secular has been more or less identified with the profane. I think it is time to disentangle the identification of the profane with the secular, and to discover that the secular does not necessarily mean the profane, but something else altogether.

And here again I align myself with that accumulated and crystallized wisdom that we have in the words themselves: saeculum, which comes from the Etruscan, most probably, and has connections with the Greek aïon, aeon, and with the Sanskrit āyus, which means life-span. Saeculum means time, or rather the time-span, the life-span of the world. Per omnia saecula saeculorum: what does

it means? Secularity, which I now relate to Modernity, means the saeculum, i.e. the temporal span, i.e. temporality, that is time, the flow of time, the temporal character of trhings. This temporality is now being taken not only as something that matters but as something definitive. The temporal structure of the world instead of just being fleeting, passing, ephemeral, represents an uneliminable coefficient of reality. The most important single factor impelling a mutation in our time --for good and probably also equally for ill -- is that the temporal structure of reality is no longer considered something you can dispense with, or even utilize (i.e. manipulate), in order to reach... something more important. The change is that the secularity, the temporal character of things, has become something with which you cannot dispense. And thus all the temporal structures can no longer be dealt with as only instruments, means or whatever.

This raises a very important theological and philosophical problem: How do we deal with this secularity and at the same time stand for something which has traditionally been called eternity?

Here is where I would venture a non-dualistic approach. Monism would be wrong, pantheism would be wrong. To identify without qualification the temporal and the eternal, the divine and the human, etc., would be wrong. By the same token, to defend a dualism which puts a chasm between the two which you ultimately cannot bridge -- the natural and the supernatural, the spiritual and the material, the temporal and the eternal, etc. -- is equally wrong. Is there a possibility of a non-dualistic approach? And here I would not say a non-dualistic "bridge", because if the non-dualistic approach is correct, it is correct precisely because it denies there is such a bridge. It denies that the reality is the two extremes, between which I try to concoct a compromise. Just the opposite: the non-dual concatenation is the real, and the extremes are one-sided visions of that reality. Because what is the funcamental insight? If Christ is not a split personality -- i.e. not half-Man and half-God, one thing here and another thing there, and then we try to put it together -- then the primordial insight is that theandric unity. And then afterwards, when you see it from one side you call it human nature, and from the other side divine nature, and so forth -- but nevertheless it cannot be divided.. I refuse to say that Christianity is monotheistic. but I equally deny that Christianity is tritheistic. It is neither the one nor the other. The whole advaitic approach is at the very core of the Christian intuition, in my understanding -- let alone of the Vedantic insight, where advaita (non-dualism) is perhaps more familiar.

So, secularity would then be the sign of Modernity, and -- having already exposed myself -- an advaitic approach could be the way by which I keep myself from falling into pure secularism, or some other type of agnostic or purely

atheistic or just one-sided view of that reality. And this is a reality so rich in itself that it has life, and having life it has an integrity which I, from my limited point of view, cannot perhaps help but see as complexity, though in truth it is a sign of the very highest simplicity.

Perhaps, I should have said Secularity from the very beginning and describe it more extensively avoiding the word Modernity except for saying that the trait of modern i.e.present-day Modernity is Secularity. But again I am not saying that all problems are solved and the symbiosis between Tradition and Modernity achieved. I understand our whole symposion as an effort at one such aggiornamento.

ROBERT VACHON:

You spoke about contemplation, and listening, and I think that generally when we are talking about East-West dialogue we are talking about listening to other religious traditions, contemplating the mystery within, the transcendent and immanent mystery, and so on. And about six years ago, I started becoming aware that in contemplation there was a dimension that we were neglecting, namely, to contemplate the cultures and the cultural dimension of reality, of the various so-called ways of life: the economic culture, the political culture, the juridical culture, even the "cultural" culture.

We have a tendency to neglect the cultural matrix, and it seems to me very important to look into that, particularly as it is all part of the secular world. In a sense, the traditional religions have a secular dimension; they have always had a secular dimension, which is not often emphasized. We have, I think, to discover the truly secular dimension of religion. It is a reality of which we are perhaps not aware, but I think it is part of the awareness of the secular, and I would hope that the contemplative life of many religious contemplatives would really come to grips with that, and not limit ourselves simply to looking at the "God-dimension" of life. It is high time we began looking at the depths of culture in all its dimensions, and contemplating it with the same deep respect with which we contemplate the Mystery, as being a dimension of the one Reality.

Now this relates to Modernity. If we call this a secular world, and we talk about "the modern", I think there is a danger that with our evolutionary preconceptions we think that "the modern" is only what is now, but we have a tendency to neglect the whole secular dimension of the past. This will have to be recovered, not only in the sense of going back to the past, but of course reenacting it...

PANIKKAR:

Amen.

I feel that is a very positive contribution more than a question, and I can only agree

with everything you have said.

I would make only a footnote that the word "modernity" means just fashion, fashionable, modus, something which just last for a moment and passes away. So, I would not like to stress the word "modernity" very much, because its very meaning is something which -- if you do not like it today, wait until tomorrow. But I still do feel that ultimately we want a cosmological change in the self-undertanding of the different cultures, which vouches for my suspicion that we are assisting at a mutation in human consciousness, for which I would like to use the codeword of secularity.

Certainly all traditions have had their own secular understandings and, as you were saying, each tradition has a world of life -- economy, politics, art, and all the rest. The relationship between religion and culture is a very intimate one. In that sense, I think what you are saying is very valid and very healthy. We need a reminder that our reflections on monasticism and monastic spirituality should not be one-sided. So, agreeing with what you said, I would stress that the understanding of secularity today is somewhat different from the secular aspect of the religions of the past.

KEZITO THOMPSON, monk of Spencer:

Given that the monastic dimension is constitutive of the humanum, perhaps three related questions: Is it possible for everyone to give expression to this dimension? And to what extent is it necessary for them to give expression to it? And who gives the expression, who identifies it for them?

PANIKKAR:

I would not like to quibble by giving a subtle answer: I feel it is necessary for everybody to live that dimension.

If we use the metaphor, for what is worth, of the vertical dimension, I think that this dimension is constitutive of every human being, so that for the fullness of the humanum you have to be trying to unify your being -- you have to be something of a monk, and somewhat religious.

Now, if by expression we mean just expression, I would say yes, it is absolutely necessary. And if this is stifled you have not only stomach trouble and psychiatric disorders, but very many other problems too. And I would say that any culture which stifles the expression of this innermost core of the human being is doomed by an explosion from within.

Now, this expression does not need to be a conscious

expression. Man is more than reason alone, the human being is more than logos alone, and cultures cannot be built on the logos alone but also need the pneuma or the myth or what have you. So the expression does not need to be a conscious expression, where I subscribe to the tenets of a church or belong to some religious organization or consider myself "religious" in the current or common sense of the word. It can be in a thousand other, different, ways. If I were to say that the prostitutes will precede you into the Kingdom, I would be saying something of this sort. They are not an "approved" expression of religious life, but it seems they take a certain precedence -- at least in the Christian Kingdom. So that is my answer to your second query

Your third question asks whether there are -- let me use the wrong word, just to be clear -- specialists, whether there are "mad" people as in the reading about the kesîn, people who are as we would say in India "God-intoxicated". I would say yes, without a doubt. There are people whose lives are geared, centered in this dimension (and using the pejorative word "specialist" underscores the difficulties you may have in accepting what I am trying to say). There are people whose main concern, main vocation, main calling is to succeed in bringing the two other factors of your neatly hierarchized question together, so that the unconscious, unformulated, unarticulated expression -- your first level, which is necessary for everything -- and the second, the conscious expression, becomes really incarnated in you as an institution. And the "you" can be in the singular or the plural. And that is what would be considered monasticism strictu sensu. This implies a certain type of institution, which is where I would like to consider the institution / a living organism and not necessarily an organization.

I said that 'specialist' is a wrong word, and it is. We cannot speculate about very special vocation. We cannot institutionalize them. It would destroy them by obliging them to become 'normal', 'ordinary', 'common' . But they exist. You are bound to admire some sadhus, but you are not supposed to imitate them. Woe to them if they become conscious of being models for admiration; nevertheless the ideal of the perfect traditional monk is oftentimes more like an ikon to wonder at than an image to imitate.

SPEAKER:

About the question of the sacred and the profane: In the Old Testament teaching it is sinful to disregard the division between the sacred and the profane. It is sinful to violate the Sabbath, it is sinful to violate the temple, it is sinful to violate marriage. The separation between these things and many other things -- some profane, some sacred -- is very basic and fundamental to the Old Testament. And some of what you are saying seems to be that it is sinful to separate the sacred and the profane. And

in that case, I think that there is a collision involved there.

PANIKKAR:

Well, I have not used the word "sinful" at all. I would abide by your exegesis of the Old Testament. I would not perhaps understand myself to be saying that it is sinful to maintain separation.

But I remember a young rabbi of Nazareth who violated the Sabbath in the most outrageous way -- which, according to the text cost him his life. So, I may not be on the best of terms with the Old Testament, but I may perhaps have another Testament in my favour. So, I am not in such bad company...

I would not like to say that keeping sacred and profane separate is sinful, because I would uphold the distinction between the sacred and the profane. I would just not identify it with the distinction between the secular and the sacred. Indeed, as I am going to say tomorrow, the priority of the sacred constitutes the final thread in the sūtra of monasticism.

ED BEDNAR:

Father Panikkar, could you begin the morning's program?

PANIKKAR:

I am trying to do the impossible, but that is obviously the only thing worth trying. So we shall continue with our sūtras.

6.- Transhistorical Consciousness Above the Historical Task.

GLOSS:

Although the avatars of monasticism on this earth have contributed substantially to the history of their people, the monk, as such, lives primarily in an a-historical compass. The concepts that we forge of the absolute or of reality certainly fall under the historicity of the human being, but the monastic invariant does not lie in such notions. Rather, we find it in the yearning for total unification which can never be content with the distensions inherent in historical, temporal events. Time is always fragmentary and the monk would like to embrace all the three times together. Yet history does not allow it. There is no event complete in itself; it must always have an antecedent and a sequel. Peace does not exist in history because history must always

advance, and peace also means repose and quiet. However, there exists in us a consciousness that is not exhausted by historicity. We can call it mystical, supernatural, intuition, wisdom, anubhāva, prajña, jñāna, dhyāna, samadhi, love or whatever we wish, but there is something besides history to which the monk bears witness.

We have here again the principle of simplicity at work. Not only is time threefold, but also history is manifold and polyvalent. The monastic urge is to transcend such multiplicity. The problem is how.

COMMENTARY:

While the Rules of the Masters have dwelt on the eternal, perennial, nirvānic, in a word, on the suprahistorical, the Canon of the Disciple emphasizes a transhistorical awareness of Reality. The former attitude permited the monk to place himself above the disputes of Men. He was a valid eschatological symbol for all those who believed, in some form or another, in eschatology. But this attitude loses its symbolic force the moment its power is not recognized. A symbol is always a symbol for someone, but the symbol is at one and the same time trans-subjective and trans-objective; its (subjective) interpretation is as necessary as its (objective) position. A symbol ceases to be a symbol if it is not recognized as such.

The trans-historical consciousness that dawns to the minds of contemporary Men, although it could already be found in a certain kind of mysticism throughout the ages and across the continents, recognizes no kingdom 'above' or 'beyond' this world, but rather it discovers a more hidden dimension of reality which in a certain manner transcends history and yet remains still immanent to it. This is the experience of tempiternity which is not a more or less perfect temporality nor an eternity impervious to the temporal, but the perfect and thus hierarchic integration of apparently two factors (time and eternity) of the one single tempiternity. Salvation, moksa, nirvāna, and other expressions of the ultimate end of human life are no longer projected into a future that has been somewhat purified or perfected, but are discovered in the very fullness that we are capable of experiencing in time and not "later". This awareness discovers in and through the temporal the tempiternal nucleus of the fullness of our being -- or however we would like to describe this reality.

The consequences for a contemporary spirituality are incalculable. It is not a question here of projecting into a linear future what was formulated in a vertical future, as has often been attempted by a certain kind of dialectical materialism. Nor is it a matter of merely interpreting the vertical existence of the other life with new cosmological and/or metaphysical parameters. Rather, the problem

lies in experiencing this other dimension in this same everyday reality which normally presents itself to us as spacio-temporal. Human salvation will then be the realization of the greatest fullness and happiness of which we are capable 'while' we are living, although transcending, mere temporal duration. It will be the experience of the Life in life, if we can be permitted to express it by thus paraphrasing the prophet of Israel. The monk will try to live this reality and his life will remind others that the meaning of life is not so much in anxiously striving to obtain what we do not have, but in being intensely concentrated in order to discover and even conquer that which we are. It is not the historical victory, whether of the individual or the collectivity which matters but personal (and thus also communal) happiness, the re-velation that strips us of the veil of inauthenticity so that we can enjoy the reality of that which, thus appearing, is. Here the christian symbol par excellence is the transfiguration. The apostles see, feel, and speak a Christ reality in time and space which nonetheless has transcended that sphere. Not only is the past with Elias and Moses present, but also the future, since the one they have before them is not the historic Jesus but the resurrected Christ, and in fact they speak about the forthcoming events.

The buddhist symbol manifesting the same intuition is the buddha-nature of all things which needs only to be discovered as such. The mahāyānic tradition will express it saying that samsāra is nirvāna and nirvāna, samsāra. Vedantic hinduism will emphasize that we are already brahman, even though we fail to see it. And jainism together with gnosticism will tell us that the ātman and the real are simply buried or enclosed in karman and matter and one needs only to be freed of them.

Cosmologies, anthropologies, and theology very and are often incompatible; but the deep intuition goes always in the same direction. In modern parlance: history is not the sole dimension of the human nor even the central dimension of reality. And nonetheless it is not a matter of denying the reality of history or of temporal events, as some of the traditions mentioned have done. Nor it is a question, and here is the relative novelty of our times, of superimposing on temporal reality a second atemporal, super-spacial, eternal story and relegating to this above or beyond the ultimate meaning of life. Rather it requires that we open ourselves to the -- taboric, if you wish -- revelation that reality is non-dualistic, trinitarian, and simple but with a simplcity that is at the same time multifaceted and whose interpenetration --περιχορησις-- is not always given to our experience.

Perhaps the lesson of the last six thousand years of human historical consciousness begins to convince us that history leads inevitably to war.

Perhaps the monk is the harbinger, on an effective sociological plane, of the awareness that we cannot be reduced to merely historical beings without thereby more or less schizophrenically dividing our existences between a world here below and a kingdom above and beyond.

Transhistorical consciousness confers on the monk an irreplaceable calling in the realm of the secular, as we shall later describe. It is not only a matter of underlining personal and intimate values, transcendental values, the 'peace of soul' of the traditional language. Trans-historical consciousness summons the monk to cultivate that hidden core of human being which makes that this being is not less but more than mere historical being. May be that humankind is beginning to become aware that it is on the threshold of a new and radical mutation: that of ceasing to be an animal species with an historical consciousness, understanding historicity as something more than just the remembrance of the past, as an intellectual memory which enables Man to accumulate his past, to relive it, to assimilate it in spirit in order to enrich his present. Perhaps the historical epoch and not merely an historical period is coming to an end: the atomic catastrophe is in the long run inevitable, the ecological deterioration inescaple and the violent explosion of the present paneconomic and technological system is very probable. After the catastrophe, the human being will not live looking forward towards the future, it will no longer experience time as the western world mainly experiences it, that is, as a succession of more or less homogeneous and therefore quantifiable temporal fragments but as a new and instantaneous creation with no other guarantee than the immediate experience of the transtemporal moment. The dimension of interiorization which is characteristic of monastic spirituality is here translated as a conscious breaking open of the temporal shell of existence in order to savor its tempiternal kernel, not only at the individual level but at the level of the entire mankind. It is not necessary to subscribe to millenarian, eschatological, joachimist, teilhardian, aurobindian, messianic or evolutionist theories of any type to accept what I want to point out here, although all of them can be seen as concrete insights into the fact that the present day human species is not the end of the whole creation nor the completion of the actuality of what human being carries in its womb. Monasteries would then be the 'high places' of this transformational alchemy of man on his ascending way toward a cosmotheandric reality which surrounds him, which he himself is, although it surpasses him.

Transhistoric consciousness makes us perceive that the meaning of life consists in reaching the greatest happiness that each of us possibly can, freeing us in this way from the desire for happiness where it cannot be found. Salvation, says an immense majority of religious traditions, consists in joy, beatitudo, ānanda, sukha, nirvāṇa, heaven, etc. The fact that this happiness was not seen fulfilled in the lives of the majority of mortals during this life and the fact (or because of it) of a certain cosmological interpretation of time and space, has deferred and transplanted happiness to another otherwordly sphere. It is for this reason too that the majority of traditions believe that ----------

it is only a very few who are saved: Very few reach happiness and peace in this life. The rest are either miscarriages that do not carry through to the true life (and this failure is hell) or else they must return to recommence the cycle of inauthentic existence with the hope of someday freeing themselves from it -- or even without such hope, as with the jain abhavyatva or the calvinist predestination. And in this non-dualistic conception equally few are those who reach this fullness compared to those who might otherwise have reached it had circumstances been more favorable -- thus the religious importance, although never ultimate and definitive, of sociological structures. The monk is precisely the one who witnesses that we can still reach the peace and joy of our plenitude even in a filthy favella ('suburbio') or a 'bidonville' concentration camp: we can reach our salvation.

7.- The Fullness of the Person Over the Individual

GLOSS:

By individual I understand that which results from the expedient of cutting a sizeable and useful part of the human being. An individual is the result of a pragmatic cut of a certain number of diverse constitutive relationships of the human being in order to create a practical subject of operations. The individual is an abstraction, in the precise sense of the word: all that would make Man too complex and unmanageab is abstracted from the human being. An individual is a manegeable entity of clear-cut bounderies. It is an identifiable piece standing isolated on its own. It responds to an 'identification card' (miscalled 'identity') and supports a social security number. The person, on the other hand, encompasses the whole complex web of the constitutive relationships of Man with no limits other than those which spontaneously appear in each case. An I is a person only to the extent that it does not isolate itself: a Thou is precisely required in order to be an I. And vice versa. Further, both need a place of action conditioned by the so-called third person, even if this be a thing. And this takes place not only in the singular but in the plural as well. The we, you and they belong equally to the person, which has neither singular nor plural, nor feminine, masculine or neuter. The gender of the person is the utrum. It embraces all that we truly are because we participate in it without the obsession of private property or exclusive possession. The person can reach to the very limits of reality; it reaches up to where we in fact stand when the stance is authentic, that is to say when it is the true dwelling place (estancia) of our being. La persona es, en donde está. The person is where there-it-is, in its Dasein. Personality is measured precisely

by the different limits in the stance of each individual. The isolated Man has no personality; he is drowned in himself, whereas the boddhisattva or saint has a personality which reaches to the place where his action makes itself felt because he has put his heart even to the limits of the universe. The monastic ideal does not seek an egoistic perfection (that is to say, of the individual), but places the meaning of life in the total perfection of the person which reverberates in benefit for all of reality. Monastic spirituality does not try to reform the world by direct action upon it, but tends rather to reform Man with the conviction that such reform is not his egotistical individuality but his whole person, which on the one hand reflects and on the other transforms all of reality. Here there is a striking difference with other forms of spirituality. The emphasis here is on the human person and not on the reform of structures social, material or even intellectual.

Traditional monkhood had it without great difficulty because the sense of individuality was not so developed as in more recent times. The fullness of the person was felt to be in the sangha, in the community, in the Body of Christ, in the totality.

The principle of simplicity works here in a peculiar way. It entails getting rid of the complexity of the individual in favor of the simplicity of the person. The individual does not need to succeed or to become endowed with a great spiritual dowry. It is all left to the free interplay between person (s). You do not need to keep anything for 'yourself' because the real self is not a private substance of your own.

COMMENTARY:

In our times, we are witnessing an anthropological change regarding the awareness of the extent of the field of personal being. The new limits refer both to those of a certain conception of the absolute and to those of the world around the person. Monastic consciousness has been universalized, so to speak, by grounding itself in what is specifically monastic and then placing monkhood before the historical ties of belonging to a nation, race, or even religion. Buddhist and christian monks, for example, seeking a shared monastic experience, will not be deterred by the fact that they belong to different religions.

But the fundamental distinction between the traditional and the contemporary understanding of monkhood consists in the surrepticious dualism of the traditional monastic anthropology contrasted with the underlying monism of the contemporary conception, although in both cases they try to avoid falling in the respective

temptations. The traditional monk is precisely a monachos, because he is not a dipsuchos, a being with a two-fold soul, with a double end and a double life. Between the paramārthika and the vyavahārika, sat and māyā, God and the World, the temporal and eternal, nirvāna and samsāra, etc., the monk has chosen the first and renounced the second. Or rather, in moral terms, greed, envy, worry, sin all this belongs to the world. The monk wants to jump to the other shore where he will be free from all this. We need only to read Buddhist and Jain Scriptures along with Christians books to be convinced of this. To be sure, the monk is not yet an arhat, a bodhisatva, a saint, but on the way. Now monastic spirituality in order to overcome the dualism of the two Men, two shores, two realms will have to say that perfection consists in realizing that samsāra is nirvāna, that one has already arrived at being at least potentially a comprehensor and is not a viator, that we all are a jivan-mukta and not a mumuksatva, saints, and not only aspirants who still lives in confusion and distortion; that the union with God who is all in all, is the destiny of everybody. But this perfection is only at the end of the path, of the sādhana. Monastic perfection is reached by living with one's face turned towards the absolute and turning one's back on the relative, 'seeking God', concentration on the one, the ekam, with a single intention in one's heart and mind, ekagrata, without any kind of compromise. Liberation, moksa is all that matters. Everything that divides ἀμέριμνα : the world, woman (for the male and male for the female), passions, pleasures and especially one's fellow Men is scrupulously avoided. One must live free from all cares and worries, stripped of and unattached to all that is earthly, contingent and perishable. Personhood is forged only in contact with the Absolute. God alone suffices ("Sólo Dios basta"), kaivalya.

The fundamental category in classical monastic spirituality was obedience. Through obedience the monk attained his perfection, and by it the bikkhu forged his destiny and the muni achieved his goal. Fidelity to the path, the dharma, the rule, the ideal came to be symbolized in and through obedience, the ob-audire: knowing how to listen to the mysterious and ultimate voice embodied in the Tao, the dharma, the śastras or the will of the guru, the abbot, the father. The objectivity of what is commanded matters only in part. What is important is the subjectivity, and from this point of view it amounts to the same whether watering a dry stick or caring for a sick person. What matters is the intention. What is important is the subjectivity that is expressed in fidelity to the master, the only thing that will help us free ourselves from ourselves and leap to the other side of the barrier, since the will itself is the ultimate refuge of ahamkāra, egoism abhimāna, af the more or less proud vanity of individual value. This is not pure irrationality: the monk should see that he must obey, that is, discover the power within the command that

evokes obedience (the 'obedientality'); but he does not need to see the intelligibility of what is commanded. All the vows, vrātas, can be reduced to this fidelity above all, where objective judgement is transferred to the superior and we are left with the inalienable subjective insight of our willingness to obey because we are convinced of the obedience due to the rule, 'the will of God', the dharma, the Absolute, the very voice within us whose echo can only be discerned when we hear it from the lips of the master, ācārya, or whatever we may call him or it. That this obedience must be interiorized, that it is not true obedience unless it is from the heart and without any willfulness are obvious stages that must be reached in the ascent of the mountain of perfection "until the morning light dawns in our hearts."

The winds of contemporary spirituality may come from the same Source: God, Vāyu, Pneuma, but seem to blow in the opposite direction. They seek the same perfection and plenitude of the person, but this is not seen so much in traditional isolation or autarcheia or self-sufficiency as in the realization of the person through the cultivation of the bonds that unite it to the fathomless riches of creation. The monk does not want to be a Man set apart, but one integrated into the whole. Perfection is seen not in the immolation of the person on the altar of obedience in order to arrive at ἀπαθεία "blessed indifference", as in the possibility of actualizing the sleeping potentialities of our being.

The new winds are being felt in three almost antagonistic directions, although at heart they are perhaps complementary: corporality, intimate personal relations, and political awareness. The famous plotian saying of living alone with the Alone does not strike a chord with the modern monk who does not envision the monachos as a solitary but as a unified being. But then this unification is certainly not individualistic. It can only be realized if we assume the fullness of our being, unify our divided existence and integrate our life in the destiny of the community. Or, in other words, the body, sex and politics belongs to the perfection of the human person. Let us try to describe these winds without attempting too quickly to direct or judge them.

Corollaries

a) Corporality:

Without reaching gnostic, angelic, or arhat-like extremes of scorn or radical forgetfulness of the body, there seems to be common to traditional monastic mentality, a certain neglect of the body and of corporeal

values (the health, the beauty and the very materiality of our being, for instance). The body is considered at best a collaboration and more generally a mere servant whom it is necessary to treat well in order that it might serve us well; but at bottom it is a dead weight. And if some traditions like the christian speak of the resurrection of the flesh it must never be forgotten that it is not yet resurrected and that in the meantime the flesh is treacherous, or at least ambiguous. It is interesting to observe that while the hindu monk goes as scantly clad as possible and the jain digambara completely naked, the christian is weighed down with robes. With exactly the opposite signs all of them want to show that they have overcome the body, that they have no bodies because they really do not want to be their bodies.

The contemporary monk wants to be able to say that he is also his body, that the body is not an enemy, nor even a friend or servant, but rather is he himself; that health is an element as much physical as psychic, and that the soul depends as much on the mind as the mind on the soul, if one were to use such dualistic language. A Man is not just a body; but he is his body and without the body there is no Man. Yoga is a word whose meaning has expanded significantly. It no longer means the ascetic "yoke" which keeps the body docile to the rule of the spirit, but the integration of the two in a harmonious union. The monachos is one not through his soul or spirit but because he aspires to succeed in realizing the union that exists between the diverse elements of his very being. The present day monk understands what etymology merely suggests, the meditation has to do with medicine (medere), salvation, with health (salus) and freedom (soteria), and the two together with sarram, the totality, being whole. And if it is true that the monastic ideal tries to go beyond humanism, this is not so in order to take refuge in some non-human angelicism or in some disincarnate and thus inhuman 'spirituality', but rather in order to achieve a human fullness from which no truly human value be missing. Asceticism is no longer so much the mortification of the flesh as the vivification of the body so that it too might participate in the destiny of the person.

There is no doubt that the monastic viveka, sobrietas, and discretio prevented many abuses, but the ascetic exploits of monks east and west are well documented.

The practical question today is how to integrate corporality into the monastic ideal. It is much more than body awareness and care of the material needs. This existed already in the old monkhood.

The Canon of the Disciple cannot give now a set of rules, but only express a felt need and direct our attention. If it is true that we *are* - also-our bodies and not only *have* them the consequences are revolutionary.

b) *Sexuality:*

With no need to emphasize those noxious and all too prevalent extremes that have appeared throughout the history of humanity, traditional monastic mentality has always defended that "entre santa y santo, pared de cal y canto" (between a holy male and a holy female, a strong firm wall), that is to say, that human perfection has to sublimate in a single individual the androgynous nature of the human being. In most cases monastic spirituality is simpler and does not worry about the androgynous character of the person. It tells us that this life is provisional and fleeting and thus that perfection as it is experienced on this plane is not the perfection to which we are finally called. So it does not matter much if the human being does not reach fulfilment in this field. In the other true world there is neither male nor female, nor any kind of giving or taking in marriage. Celibacy, *brahmacarya,* and the renunciation of family were all seen as essential to traditional monasticism, in spite of a few notable exceptions such as the tibetan *nygma-pa*. Eschatological perfection has no sex; the monastic form treats Man as an asexual being. If sexuality does make itself felt, then one must simply overcome it by ignoring it. And if this exacts a price, we are told that it is a fruitful sacrifice, one which places us on a higher plane than the merely biological. This is even the standard by which one can measure the authenticity of a particular monastic calling.

Contemporary monastic spirituality tries with various degrees of success to recover the sacred sense of sex and the positive function of human sexuality. This function reveals itself when we find ourselves confronted with our own limitations and realize that we need an exogenous complement and not simply an endogenous supplement. We seem to need somebody else and not just something else. We feel the need for intimacy, interchange, friendship and love, not as distractions from the one needful thing, but first as a spur and inducement and finally as a culmination. The word which in this context has transcended the bounderies of a single religion and culture to enrich others is *tantra,* that form of spirituality that could be translated as sacramentarian and which suggests that the path to perfection passes not only through the correct practice of all creature, but also through the mutual compenetration of human beings. The issues here are burning and once raised cannot be ignored. To be sure, sex here should not be reduced to the merely genital, nor even solely to the exclusively physical. Sex is the very

sign of differentiation of the human being just as in biology it is the cause of the differentiation between individuals and even species.

The human person is, to varying degrees, the harmonious conjugation of all the personal pronouns. The strong monastic emphasis on the 'we' made the relation with the 'thou' less urgent; and the filial-paternal relation with the guru or abbot, diminished the importance of any other intimacy between two people. Moreover, being heedless of the body could permit a certain personal intimacy between two brothers or sisters without sexuality apparently becoming an issue -- the well-known warnings against "particular friendships" and the ingenuity shown in averting pairs in the mahts, vihāras, and monasteries, not withstanding. But the problem becomes acute when the divine 'thou', the bridegroom Jesus, the Kṛṣṇa of the gopis, etc., is demythicized and deanthropomorphized. What F. Ebner has called the Dulosigkeit, the deprivation of the 'thou' necessary for the realization of an 'I', is being felt more and more dramatically. Modern forms of spirituality which do not want to break with tradition thus emphasize the 'you' : the apostolate, the mission to accomplish, service to others, external activity, in short. This work, called 'mission', 'apostolate' and the like becomes then the surrogate for a living thou. We hear often the exclamation: "I am not married because I have no time (for it)". But experience shows that the 'work' with the complexity of the modern world very rapidly bureaucratizes and is converted into an it.

All of the pronouns must be declined for personal fulfillment, but the contemporary monk suffers from the debilitating lack of the 'thou'. The 'thou' is the friend, the beloved. The 'thou' is that one who best enhances the dimension of intimacy, caring, delicacy, attention and finally, love in human life. The nygma-pa sect of tibetan buddhism, the most ancient as its very name indicates, recognizes and has married monks without even requiring that the spouse also belongs to the monastery. But the lama with his red cap was perhaps more married to the plot of ground he worked and the community with whom he lived than to his wife. Perhaps marriage is not the real issue but rather frienship. The tantra must be internalized, it is not concupiscence that we are dealing with here; but the śakti cannot be onself.

The problem is paramount. The perfection of the human being is at stake. The Canon of the Disciple cannot go further; but it can still add a methodological proviso and insert an excursus.

The methodological question is the following: We need a new anthropology to deal with this question. Now, on the one hand, we cannot stick to the old customs just because they were good and yielded good

results (if this is the case); we have to find convincing reasons to fit our understanding of the human being. Man is not made for the Sabbath. On the other hand, we cannot defend a new anthropology, based on recent discoveries, and throw overboard centuries and millennia of human praxis. Human problems are not just mathematical puzzles which can be solved theoretically. They need the marriage between theory and praxis and this may be one of the tasks incumbent on the present-day monks.

The excursus will be just a footnote regarding the problem of celibacy, which is not the same as what we have been speaking about, though that is very often the way in which the issue is put. The problem of celibacy does not directly have to do with the question of the sexual.

To justify celibacy a priori implies that we have a convincing anthropology which tells us that virginity is a higher human status, or family life a burden for human fulfilmente or a spouse a bondage, or individual androgyny a valid human option, etc. We can also adduce historical reasons as the shortness of time, before eschatology, or cosmological arguments like celibacy being at the very end of a karmatic line so that there will be no longer children of that person to perpetuate karma, or theological ones as divine marriage and the like. I may even venture an astrological reason which shows that for the hero of the just begun Aquarian period the biological family has no place. We could multiply this list, but all is reduced to accepting one particular view as powerful enough to justify the praxis of celibate life.

The Disciple's stand here, in our times of crisis, may be closer to having convincing power, because it is at least humbler. It is not an explanation, but a justification a posteriori.

It is a fact that celibacy is a wide-spread human institution, mostly linked to monkhood. It is equally another fact that there are today --and here -- many celibates who voluntarily choose celibacy even if today many of the reasons are open to be contested. The argument a posteriori would then say: "and so what? You did it in good faith and it is not a bad thing in itself, even if it may not appear as the ideal. It may be worst to break it now and you may not know how to do it without causing real harm to yourself and those around you. Celibacy does not need to be a superior form of spiritual life, nor to have any theoretical justification. There is no reason to dispair if I am bold. We may even find the many advantages of celibacy, positively accepted, like a not very fine-looking young girl has to countereffect with sympathy and intelligence the long nose that she has. Thanks to it she has developed many other more important virtues.

This is not an invitation to sheer passivity or a neglect of mystical reasons. It is a call to real prudence and respect for the praxis.

c) Political Awareness:

If in traditional monastic spirituality the human person is realized through contact with the Absolute and isolation from the world of Man, this separation signified in the enclosure seems to have acquired a negative character in contemporary consciousness. If we are political animals then the contemporary monk seems unable to believe that he can attain his human fullness without cultivating the political dimension. Obviously we are not referring to mere party 'politics' with its partisan squabbles or to arguments over the technical methods for achieving some preconceived ends; but rather to the wellbeing of the polis as the symbol of human community, and to a participation in the problems of our fellow beings allowing us to realize the importance of the very structures of human conviviality.

Undoubtedly the monastic praxis has not always been consistent with its theory. History shows us monks, East and West, ancient and modern, involved in the affairs of the local communities and often detecting political power. But either it was simply accepted and tolerated although not in accordance with the acknowledged monastic spirit, or it was justified as belonging to a supra-political realm, be the 'Kingdom of God', be the 'salvation of the people'.

At any rate the modern monk still wants to be solitary but he will not tolerate being isolated. And as he has perceived all too well the functioning of second causes, he cannot be contented with a union with the first cause that prevents him from contributing directly to the life of the community of which he feels himself to be an integral part. "God has left the world to the quarrels of Men" and the monk realizes that true prayer is not an excuse for inaction in the world but is an intervention in the dispute itself.

When cultures and religions live without conflict within a single myth there are values that are respected without argument and attitudes that are accepted without debate. In such cases where monasticism enjoys such recognition the monk can remain outside and above political and temporal quarrels because he is granted by the whole community a superior sphere. The recognition and acceptance of his renunciation by the community confers on him the power and influence that he himself has renounced. The monk is not a marginal being, although he might have gone to the fringes of society. But in the contemporary world, if the monk renounces the world, the world also has renounced him and can ge along quite well without him. And it seems certain that this attitude begins to prevai

in parts of Africa and Asia as well where the renouncing ascetic is beginning to feel alienated due to the passive ostracism of society. He can no longer threaten to hold back the rain if the people do not believe in him -- or if they have a reservoir close at hand.

In the modern political situation there is no neutral ground and taking refuge in the so-called supernatural plane represents a decision of a political nature, generally in favor of the status quo. The buddhist monks in Vietnam, the Christian monks in Latin America could be adduced here as examples. This awareness throws the modern monk into the strife of everyday life -- perhaps to witness to non-violent means, or perhaps to the relativity of our ends and goals themselves, perhaps simply to elevate the level of the dispute, but without being able to claim a sphere of privilege or a recognized superiority that would permit him to act as the final recourse. And if he were to consciously attempt to reserve this function for himself he would commit the greatest of hypocrisies. The monk does not offer his services if others do not ask for them. The monk does not enter into the game of a competitive society. Moreover, the human situation is so complex that we cannot even hope to find among those very men and women consecrated to a monastic life unanimity concerning the question of politics. The person is forged in the crucible of those very contentions between human beings. The world is left in the hands of the strongest and to the same destiny as human strife itself. Or as the arabic refrain says: "the world is God, is, but the Merciful One has rented it to the most corageous". We cannot aspire to the Kingdom of God without seeking first his Justice, but this is no longer mere supernatural righteousness, it is also a political problem that cannot be side stepped. Put another way, the great religious problems of humanity today all have a political face: Hunger, Peace, Freedom, Justice, Happiness.

Summation:

The ultimate reason for this triple change is simple. We will see it more clearly in Canon VII, but we can, perhaps, anticipate ourselves somewhat here. The classic monastic attitude comes to us saying that true human perfection is transcendent and is situated in the beyond, in such a way that all desire to obtain it here below is a childish illusion that cannot distinguish between the temporal and the eternal. We should not dream of realizing happiness and perfection in this 'valley of tears'., in this realm of duhkha, of suffering and pain. Monks should not worry about being apollonian models of beauty, socratic examples of wisdom, renaissance paradigms of global knowledge, or olympic athletes of physical prowess. They

have renounced all that because their perfection is in heaven, in the nirvāṇa or in a transcendent mokṣa.

The monk is available for any service because he does not look for his perfection in this earth. "What does it matter if you ruin your health, or fail to study sociology, or live a few years less if in so doing you gain the kingdom of heaven, attain enlightenment?

The contemporary mentality rebels against this attitude. The contemporary monk does not want to palliate his thirst for the infinite, but he resists believing that the path to human and even divine perfection must pass through the immolation and deprecation of human values or even simply that it lies above them. He does not renounce the transcendent but he does not want to be separated from the immanent.

This does not discard all the virtues implied in Canon I: penthos, tyāga, compunctio, penitence and especially the purification of the heart. But the new monk would like to go beyond what he often considers only the first step towards sanctity: the stripping off, the negation. He would like to go beyond the mentality of the novice and the fervor of the junior in order to reach a more balanced and mature second level -- all the dangers of lukwarmness notwithstanding.

The problems remains distressingly unresolved since there does not yet exist an adequate formulation, let alone an experience which would encourage and ground such optimism. The non-dualistic solution that timidly emerges from these pages is very far from possessing the patina of a multi-secular experience or the seal of a sufficiently generalized acceptance. The Canon of the Disciple is not a substitute for the Rule of the Master, but tries only to raise a voice for a fruitful dialogue

8.- The Primacy of the Holy.

GLOSS:

Reality is complex and so is human existence. The unification toward which the monk strives is effected under the aegis of the holy. The monk is not like the priest, the dispensor of the sacred mysteries; nor like the prophet, the conscience of the community; nor like the sage, the receptacle of liberating knowledge. Neither is he like the scientist, the expert, who understands how things function; nor like the artist who shapes the invisible realities into sensible forms; nor like

the worker who carries out all the labor necessary for the accomplishment of all these things. The monk endeavors to attain unqualified holiness. He strives for holiness. He is in quest for God if God is the holy, he strives for the Absolute. The monk does not need God, but he needs Holiness. The buddhist and jain monks do not have God as a supreme Being, a Creator, and their search for absolute truth is in no way less intense than in the theistic cases.

Many people besides the monk will try to become holy; but they will do it in and through something else: marriage, art, work, good actions and what not. Monkhood stands for the quest of ab-solute holiness, i.e. of holiness in itself, unrelated to anything else (ab-solute) in as far as it is possible. The holy is neither the sacred nor the profane. The profane is everything that is celebrated outside the temple. The sacred is the realm of the temple. It is the domain of the priest and not of the monk. The saṁnyāsin does not perform any rite at all. Many christian monks went into solitude without priest and sacraments. The hermit does not leave his cave to go to the festivity in the temple. "Quid facis in turba qui solus es?" says Jerome (What do you do among the crowd you who are a solitary?).

The sacred stands in relation to the profane; the holy is the center of everything and every activity; the center that can remain immobile while everything else turns about it, the center which remains equidistant from everything that circles round it, which is precisely what constitutes it as center. The center is equidistant and thus the equanimity, sobriety and indifference of the monk. But the center is also separated, segregated, apart from everything else. This is one of the meanings of the word sanctity and historians of religions link it with the meaning and function of tabu. The monk is set apart, he severes his links with society. Monkhood is a dimension of human life but does not exhaust it. The monk wants to realize the integration of his person by choosing the "better part" but in no way does he claim to have a monopoly on human perfection. Reality is not the center alone. The sphere could not be without its center, but the two should not be identified or confused. Monkhood is only a part, and it is only the whole of humanity which can reach that plenitude to which all human beings aspire. The plenitude is communal, and ultimately the anthropocosmic.

COMMENTARY: While for the classic monkhood the center of holiness is found in the transcendent, the eternal, the other world, the religious spirituality of our days seems to have effected a mutation of considerable import. It may perhaps be the most fundamental human change since the last millenia of our historical existence: the holiness of the secular. The secular too belongs to the vary center

of reality, although it is not the only factor which constitutes it. Expressed from the inverse perspective: the holy is also the center of the secular and acts at times as a catalyst which activates a process without in the end intermixing in it.

From the preceding canons we can clearly infer that monkhood tends towards the secular, without thereby diminishing its pursuit of holiness. It cannot renounce the world because it does not believe it to be evil; it cannot renounce a certain activity in the world because it believes it to be indispensable. The monk does not renounce his total personal perfection being satisfied in saving only a human misfit. He does not believe in an ill-structured world that has to be cancelled in order to reach the goal of Man. He will abandon neither time nor space because these are his dwelling place, and his dwelling, like his body, forms part of his life, and he cannot believe that perfection consists in alienation from the structures of the real or in an exile from this earth. And nonetheless he claims still to move within the compass of the holy. Is this feasible? Is it not a compromise? Is this not a naive optimism, explicable perhaps only as a reaction of an earlier pessimism?

The mutation alluded to earlier suddenly places the monk in the center of our times. Awareness of the secular has been growing in tension and all too often in conflict with the holy.

Traditional religions found themselves, and still greatly find themselves, in opposition to the secular. Today, however, we glimpse that the movement of secularity is not necessarily directed against the holy. Secularization, certainly, has been the fight against a special regimen of the sacred which had accrued to itself privileges little less than unbearable to those outside of it. But secularization was only a process. The crucial feature of secularity lies somewhere else. It lies in surmounting this dichotomy between the temporal and eternal worlds and in recognizing the ultimate and indispensable character of temporality. This saeculum is not in itself, passing, provisional, unreal, a shadow or whatever we would like to call it in order to mollify the factor of an unjust and violent status quo. Secularity represents the affirmation that the body, the material and all temporal values in general are definitive and insuperable although not exclusive or complete. They are found along side of other values which also make up the warp and woof of the real and the human.

The monk's entrance into the secular realm represents a mutation of considerable religious magnitude. That the world is not evil, that it is legitimate to become involved in temporal affairs, that time has a positive value, and that the religious person must occupy himself with reforming the very

socio-politico-historical structures of reality, do not today afford much difficulty. And in fact, most of the religious movements and orders, East and West since the sixteen century are operating on those lines. But it seems as if traditional religions had reserved for themselves the definitive reality of another superior sphere called the other life. And if the priest stood straddling these two worlds, the monk, surely represented the one whose acosmic vocation placed him already on the other shore and made of him the eschatological witness of the definitive human state.

Either the monk remains outside the secular sphere or, if he enters into it without ceasing to be a monk, then this must signify that the secular is also somehow definitive, ultimate and equally important as the so-called other life. This means that the two lives cannot be separated, that the one does not exist without the other, that the true life does not belong to another world. It means the incarnation of the divine in the human and its impregnation of all the structures of the material world; the descent of the real into appearances; the eruption of the noumenon into the phenomema; the transformation of the divine avatar into the human. Either the monk ceases to be a monk or the secular ceases to be profane and is integrated into the holy.

This change is of no little import because it tells us in short that the separation between the holy and the secular is no longer sustainable, or at the very least that temporality with all its consequences is as holy as that which traditionally was maintained apart from the "noise of the world" and the servile chores of temporal affairs. But if this represents a mutation in the conception of the holy, it equally signifies a parallel revolution in the experience of the secular.

The secular is no longer that which is fleeting provisional, perishable, contingent, but is rather the very clothing of the permanent, eternal and immutable, to continue using for a moment categories that must be superseded. The secular should not be abandoned in order to achieve the real way a snake sheds his skin in order to continue living. Or to put it in christian terms: the resurrection of the body is not to an everlasting life with another body and another kind of flesh than that which we now have, feel and are, but is rather this very flesh that now constitutes us, as more than one Conciliar text will tell us.

In many periods of human history, in times of emergency, monks moved by compassion and sense of duty have descended from their 'high places' into the political arena. But once the order restored or the duty fulfilled, the monk withdraws and regains his secluded place. It may well be that

the situation of the world is so desperate that this has awakened monastic conscience to this new step, but the fact remains that when the buddhist, christian, hindu or jaina monks today enter into the struggle for a more just world they do not do it as something alien to them. It entirely behooves them to enter into the territory of the secular world. They will no longer accept being shut off from full participation in the true human reality. [There is no 'other' life, even though the existence lead by the majority of humans does not often reach the minimum standard of what could be called truly living the only life that exists. And this is precisely hell. It is with the redemption of this life and not any other that we are dealing, as the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh will tell christians or as the vedāntic intuition will show hindus, and the teachings of Gautama, buddhists. But this life must be won, and as the majority of religions emphasize, this true life is hidden in our present everyday existence. It is necessary to 'believe' in it, or 'to know how to' or 'be able' to penetrate it, discover it, realize it. Salvation is within the reach of the hand; it is near by and even within us, but we are in need of a revelation, a word, a redeemer, a gift of grace, a personal effort, a spontaneous decision, a teaching, a guru or of the very best that is in us in order to attain it.]

The monk bears witness to the primacy of the holy discovering its hidden nucleus in the very material structures of reality and in the very yearnings and strivings of humankind. The classic buddhist conception of the momentariness of existence or the equally traditional christian one of the continuing creation, on a par with the hindu concept of the simultaneous work of the trimurti could all perhaps serve to express the human experience of the unity of each and every moment of existence, the incommensurable importance of all that is, the irreducibility of every being. Things and events are not mere means for some other thing. It is precisely this which comprises the alienation of human beings: the race toward an end which does not exist, the temporal anxiety for a future which will never arrive. And if the danger of former times consisted in having bound oneself to being exalted in a vertical future, the modern temptation lies in wanting to throw oneself headlong into a horizontal future. Neither future will arrive. The activity of building a better world is not a mere technique, but the very art of the present. Authentic work is not a means for an end, but a basic form of human creativity. [Anything else is slavery and when the machines imposes its conditions on human productivity, it dehumanizes and condemns it. Modern technological society cries out to be redeemed from the enslavement into which it

has fallen. The contemporary monk withdraws from that society, not to abandon it to its slavery, but to incarnate the authentically human which ends up being the most divine.]

The secular function of the monk in the modern world could perhaps be described in the following manner:

There are four sociological groups of great importance in society: 1) Church or religious groups; 2) Academia or teaching and research institutions; 3) Government and military; 4) Industry and commerce. These are as valid in an agricultural civilization as in the emerging techniculture (word which would signify the positive and civilizing aspect of a technified world). Strictly speaking, the monk belongs to none of these four groups. He is neither priest, nor intellectual, nor public officer, nor producer. A great number of traditional societies admit a fifth state: 5) that of the person who has abandoned the world, the monk, the sannyāsin, the renouncer, the one who has renounced all the rules of the game of human intercourse, has leapt over the wall and yet remaining as a symbol for the rest of mortals of the provisionality of all human enterprises. In his own eyes, the monk is one separated, set apart, but in people's consciousness he is holy and thus by no means a marginal or peripheral being. The monk rests in the very center of society and when they are faced with what appear to be technically insoluble problems the people approach their saints, monks, hermits and ascetics.

Since time immemorial there seems to exist more or less underground a sixth group as well, 6) that of the guerrilla, or of the so-called counter culture, or of the dissident or revolutionary, those who are not content with reforming the structures of society or simply rotating the seats of power, by just turning the tables, but who strive to radically change the whole system. Now these voluntary marginal 'citizens' are, however, to a large extent dependents of the anti-system, that is, in the final analysis, dependents of the very system they claim to combat. In opposing the system dialectically one has no choice but to accept the rules of the game that the system defines, even though it may be with the aim of overthrowing it. The contemporary monk may well belong to this group, but with one fundamental difference: he has as far as possible eliminated the negative factor of simple opposition to the system in order first to take a positive stance of the greatest possible independence in regard to the system and then to actualize in his life and experience a radical alternative to that system. The esoteric movements belong also mostly to this group. Now many of the already existing groups of men and women who strive today to realize this new style of life or who dedicate themselves to studying and formulating its basis, are authentic

successors to traditional monasticism -- imperfect and provisional as these first essays may be.

There is still a seventh group: 7) the true marginals, those without a voice, without means of subsistence, those exploited by all the others. The monk establishes also a singular relation with the wretched of the earth, but in this case as well, there is a basic difference: while the genuinely destitute have a vague consciousness of their own marginal status, the monk preserves the traditional belief of seeing himself to be at the very center of reality.

Authentic non-violence is something more than a mere means for obtaining what is sought; it is an end in itself, because it is a form of life that believes ultimately in the harmonious structure of reality. Without this faith in the radical goodness of existence, non-violence is not only impossible but ceases to be non-violent and contradicts itself. If evil is found on the same ontological level as good then it is not enough to oppose it non-violently; it is not sufficient simply to not collaborate in it with the confidence that it will thus burn itself out and the basic harmony of the universe be re-established. No, in this case, it must be eradicated, pulled out by the roots without any sentimental consideration concerning the uprooting of good grain growing together with it in the same soil. Non-violence has meaning only in a non-dualistic conception of reality. The monk's entrance into the secular world, his witness concerning both the means and ends of our human struggle continue to be an expression of his vocation to an unqualified holiness. (You may well read unilateral disarmament).

9.- The Ontological Memory of the Ultimate and the Psychological Presence of its Gate:

GLOSS: This combination of a psychological factor and an ontological reality belongs most especially to the archetype of the monk. It is not an ontological presence. It is simply a given fact. To ponder over the Ultimate may be the mark of the philosopher, but the monk as such is not a philosopher, and is even rather suspicious of a certain predominance of mind and thought in Man's life. This sūtra speaks of an ontological fact brought constantly to one's memory, i.e. a psychological calling to mind of the ontological fact of the reality of the Ultimate.

Nor is it a psychological remembrance of the Gate unto the Ultimate. This remembrance is the lot of almost any human being, at one time or another. It is rather the ontologization of this psychological fact,

i.e. the remembrance is to some extent considered an ontological given. In so many words, ontology is psychologized and psychology ontologized. Ontology is brought to mind, and Psychology is given an ontological weight. The ontological fact of (the existence of) the Ultimate is converted into the psychological center of the monk's life; and the psychological fact of the convenience and usefulness of such a remembrance becomes the ontological pivot of the monastic way of life. Let me explain this a little more clearly.

The Ultimate has many names... the Absolute, God, Brahman, Nirvāṇa, Nothingness, Absolute Future, Justice, etc. The Gate has also had many expressions, the most important of them all being Death, but it can equally be called Justification, Innocence, Initiation, Love, etc.

The monk is fascinated by the Ultimate. His or her life is geared toward it, and it is the only thing that really counts. But this Ultimate has a Gate, and this Entrance into the Ultimate is what concentrates all of our efforts and energies. To have the four noble truths ever before our eyes, to constantly recall the caducity of all things, to meditate on death day in and day out, to see every event in our lives under the perspective of death, not to be affected by anything that passes away or has no immediate bearing on the ultimate goal of life or nothing to do with the Gate conducive to the goal, to conserve equanimity and serenity in the face of world calamities and social upheavels because they do not belong to that ultimate level, to be free and prepared to face ultimate reality, and similar injunctions are well-known features of monkhood.

As a matter of fact, the psychological motivation of most of the monastic vocations comes from the experience of the seriousness of this fact, be it called death, the transient nature of visible things, or by whatever name. As Brother David tells us, "it is in confrontation with death" that the monk situates his encounter with the Ultimate Reality. This "is the basic experience which makes a man become a monk". At any rate, the monk is carefree, serene, non-attached, uninvolved vis-à-vis all the ripples agitating the common human affairs of the majority of mortals because he has already squarely faced death. The monk is something of an aristocrat. He belongs to a minority fully dedicated to that final goal, and he may also be living such a life vicariously for everyone. He is not selfish, but somehow an exception. Yet he relies on the existence of the others. The whole world would collapse if all were monks, and the monk himself would not be able to survive were it not for the fact that there are non-monks around (and devotees).

Death and Ultimate Reality are facts of human consciousness, but the monk has a psychological relation with the Ultimate and ontologizes the Gate. The Ultimate is there not only as the goal of existence, but also in the mind and heart of the monk all the time. Death is not only recognized and accepted, it is given a status of its own and allowed to dominate and condition all other human activities. It is precisely because of this that monkhood has a tendency to be institutionalized. The presence of the Ultimate and the reality of Death are too serious an affair to leave to freewheeling human nature or to the will of the individual. Monasticism, as it were, institutionalizes the presence of Death and the reality of the Absolute. The monastery is the institution where Death is present and the Ultimate constantly remembered. It becomes a witness to and a sign of the reality of the Absolute.

Nowhere, perhaps, is the principle of Blessed Simplicity more evident than in this last sūtra. It is the experience of the Ultimate, the reality of God, the Other Shore or whatever that magnetizes the monk and allows him to simplify his life. This would not be possible if the Gate to this Ultimate were not a New Life, which can be put forward and symbolized in many ways (initiation, profession, diksa, etc.), but which culminates in the mystery of Death. Death is the Gate. But death kills everything. So the monk is not much concerned with anything mortal. Death simplifies everything.

COMMENTARY:

The Modern monk is equally the 'God-intoxicated', as some people still say today, but he would not like that this intoxication be a merely cutaneous eruption. He fears sometimes that the constant thought of death may paralyse the human efforts for mortal values which are nevertheless worth our effort and attention. The modern monk is fascinated by the intuition that nirvāna is saṁsāra and saṁsāra nirvāna, that the talents have to yield fruit here on Earth as well and that the hundredfold is also for this life, but he can equally be torn apart because his elders tell him, and his own experience confirms, that this ideal synthesis may be unreacheable and any mere compromise lethal.

In the face of the easygoing contemporary efforts at harmonizing these two extremes, the monk feels inclined to underscore the traditional line, harking back to one and only thing that Lord Buddha taught to his disciples and which the Christian Gospel equally emphasizes. He shuns instant spiritualities and superficial gratifications. But he equally senses that a certain preoccupation with death

and the centrality of the eschatological may not only dehumanize him and alienate him from his fellow beings, but also make it all too easy. He fears spiritual selfishness, in a word. He is uneasy chanting psalms while his brethren suffer or struggle for economic or political liberation; he feels uncomfortable looking after his own perfection while many of the urgent tasks to be done for the world require a certain renunciation of his own good manners and virtues. He knows well the ambivalence of all these thoughts, and also the excruciating pain of disentangling himself from the common affairs of the world out of love and interest and hope for them.

Certainly, naked we came into this world and naked we are going to return to Mother Earth, in spite of all Egyption and cryogenic mummifications. Certainly, the monk submits to being stripped of all inauthentic adherences and is ready to concentrate on essentials; but is not the Ultimate linked with the pen-ultimate and from there on to the least grain of sand? Is the Ultimate so foreign and transcendent, so wholly other that it has no relation to the strivings of Man? Undoubtedly, Death sets all our perspectives aright, but there is a double reaction to Death. She may be seen as the End or as the Beginning. She may be considered the final stage of all human endeavors, even if 'afterwards' there is something else. Or she may be considered as the real birthday of authentic life. This is the monastic attitude, and for this reason this act of dying is advanced in the monastic profession. The monk takes in the most radical way the second birth implied in most initiatory rites. After the monastic profession, ordination, consecration... there is no more 'life as usual.'

But the modern monk feels that this Death is not only his death or human death, but the fate of everything. He is ultimately concerned with helping everything that exists to perform this most momentous act. This leads to the paradox that the more ephemeral a thing is, the more interest and attention it should suscitate in us --so as to 'save' that little thing. The philosopher will say that a more adequate idea of the Absolute and a better grasping of the mystery of Death will correct all those exagerations and defects. But the monk is not so much up to experimenting with ideas as with life, and his life seems to be caught in the Dilemma of the Absolute and the Relative, even if he agrees that theoretically it is a false dilemma. Always we have known that to love God is to love one's neighbor, that to seek nirvāna is really to aid saṃsāra, that sublimation of a value represents a higher fruition of the 'renounced' value, that abandoning the world contributes to its salvation, etc., but the monk has only one life and often wonders how all this can be possible.

The old masters knew well that one has to integrate Death into Life, that you should look to the lilies of the field even if their existence is fleeting, and they also knew that the monk is not life-denying -- but what is this life? The life which does not die, or the mortal life? The sociological pattern of monasticism was turned toward everlasting life. The winds of secularity seem to be blowing in favor of mortal life. Can a monk be so secular and still be a monk?

It is this last sūtra, especially, which will prompt us to examine this underlying tension in a more philosophical light.

EPILOGUE:

The Canon of the Disciple does not intend to replace the Rule of the Master. The "Kanon" is only a 'kanna', a cane, a walking stick, a measure, something used for comparison to be able to have some kind of standard. The Canon does not offer a model nor even provide answers. These have to be elaborated through praxis and discovered personally in a unique and existential way. The majority of the problems brought up do not have theoretical solutions; and if they did, they would only be valid within a very restricted field. The solution is not the individual, but it is personal. And it is here that there lies room for prophecy and leadership, for initiative and creativity -- and I feel, for a truly monastic vocation.

DISCUSSION:

Fr. DAVID TURNER: (St. Procopius Abbey):

I would like you to comment, Father, on the concept of the fuga mundi, or the "flight from the world" which is supposed to be part of the monastic life in the Western tradition. I would like you to comment on that specifically within the framework of the way you have discussed the world this morning, and the monk in relationship to that world.

PANIKKAR:

I may offer two very brief comments. The first is that I do not feel that contemporary monastic spirituality needs to subscribe to all the statements and propositions and even ideas that traditional spirituality has had. The first part of my answer is that even if we would drop many aspects of the fuga mundi altogether, that would not cost much damage to the continuation of monastic spirituality.

I spoke of mutation, and any mutation implies a certain type of transformation. Mutation implies both change and continuity. It implies something new that is not just an unfolding of the old. Monkhood as archetype is undergoing such change. But mutation implies also an underlying identity. It is not rupture. It is a particular form of growth coming from both an internal dynamism and an external grafting. In the fuga mundi we may have an example of it.

And this is the second part of my answer. In point of fact in the traditional fuga mundi I see a very positive aspect, though I shall not dwell now on what mundus meant to those generations. In my description of the modern monk, I have stressed enough the elements of swimming against the current, of participating and yet having another attitude, of sharing with the fifth and sixth group and yet not admitting the "rules of the game". It is the non-violent, holistic and all-embracing attitude that makes of the monk someone who precisely does not accept the trends of the times, the "mundus" as it goes, the "system". So the fuga mundi would not be an anti-system, which a dialectical opposition to it, but the monk's non-acceptance of the ways in which the problems are put. If instead of mundus, you put today what we use to call "the system", then you have a positive interpretation of this fuga mundi of the monastic vocation. The monk is the person who simply does not play that game. This is very traditional as you see. At least in as much as the monk does not abide by the rules of the world. The change may be expressed perhaps in the second part of what I said: not abiding by the rules, and nevertheless playing the game. Here is the difference. You do not escape from the world, although you withdraw from it and struggle against it striving towards a better alternative.

You may retort that the rules are the game so that if I do not follow the rules I cannot play the game. I disagree. This would be the case if our relation with the world were a dialectical one. But this is what I contest and the mādhyama-mārga, the middle path of the Buddha and the 'in but not of the world' of Jesus are in this line. You are 'in the world' playing the game which is not 'of the world'. But, further, the game is in the playing and by doing this being able to put another set of rules different from those imposed by the people in power. Without rules there can be no game, but the imposed or accepted rules are not the only ones. And here is where you have again the difference. Some will say: let us disturb the game by a violent revolution, grasp power and impose our set of rules. The monk, I submit, playfully plays the game and in playing changes the

rules, at the risk of his life obviously. For changing the rules he will eventually change the game, and this will not be tolerated. Civil resistence, for instance, is an example of playing the game, accepting the framework of that society, not just shooting it down or substituting it with another scheme; but not abiding by the rules, reciting the rules felt to be unjust or inhuman and being ready to become victims, martyrs, put aside.

ED BEDNAR:

I keep hearing echoes of the Old Testament in some of the things that you say. There is a notion of tragedy, of loss, of sorrow, of grief, that is connected to barrenness, to no children, to a body which does not bear fruit. And it always struck me as sad and ironic, when I was living in the monastery, to chant the Psalm that says "Your wife, like a fruitful vine at the heart of your house", and be surrounded by men whom I know would be very good fathers, men that were kind and gentle, and whom I could see having beautiful children -- yourself, also, you know.

So, that is one side of it. There seems to be something tragic about barrenness, something sad and painful about barrenness. And, on the other side, I have spent all of my life thinking about God and trying to realize God. And I have been free to do so because I do no have to worry about feeding my children and clothing my children and taking care of all of these other things. And this gives me a freedom that I appreciate. So that is another side.

And there is a third side, too. I notice that some of the most materialistic people that I went to school with now have many children; they are working for the stock market or in business or law or construction, some type of work where they have a lot of food in the house, and money in the bank, and children. And somehow, I wonder, what is happening to the gene pool? I mean that by "natural selection" at least, people who are interested in religious life, are not reproducing themselves. Centuries and centuries this happens, over and over again -- if you are attracted to the religious life, then no children. And the ones that are attracted to the world and to family and household, there are more and more of them.

So there are three parts to my question about barrenness and fruitfulness.

PANIKKAR:

I thought for a minute you were going to say that God is a married man.

ED BEDNAR:

He is not a married man; and that is my question.

PANIKKAR:

That remains to be seen. As to your first question, it is important to realize that the celibate monastic tradition is not universal. It is mainly found in those traditions that link up a notion of individual salvation with a very peculiar mode of temporal consciousness, so that individual destiny is emphasized, though in many different ways. Traditions which stress celibacy seem to stress the salvation or destiny of the individual human being. Buddhism would not use such terms, but it comes to the same. "Work out your salvation with diligence" said the Enlightened One. By contrast, Judaism and many of the African religions seem to think of salvation collectively, as a people. I say this to situate the question of celibacy, which has very little to do with sexuality, and a great deal to do with non-attachment. If, as it is for the Jewish people, and for most of the African peoples, salvation and the entire human pilgrimage is a collective affair, a people marching toward an end... from this point of view, that barrenness of the celibate life would appear as a kind of cosmic pessimism, and could not be accepted. So, celibacy in this instance proves not to be a universal category, but a particular way of seeing, a way of realizing the perfection of the "individual", given certain conditions. The conditions are, first, this emphasis on the individual (and the word individual is a little misleading here), and secondly this peculiar non-historical sense of time. The spiral conception of reality -- the karmic, kalpic, and the Christian -- vouches for this view that nothing is lost if you have no children. For the Hindus, not to have children, especially male children, was a calamity. The Hindus have insisted that, as far as possible, you have your children before you embark on your sannyasa. In other instances, when the group, the tribe, the "chosen people", the race, etc. are the most important category, that would be totally out of place. So, I think we should shift the reflection on celibacy from the basis on which it is generally put nowadays, to that other, more cross-cultural -- and, in my opinion, deeper -- series of reflection.

Now, I fully understand your feelings of sadness, chanting Psalms of the Jewish tradition in a congregation of unmarried males. I think I have practically one answer to your three questions. You see, if you ask me about the genetic manipulation of Mankind, I would not admit that kind

of premise. One of my resistances is that methodologically -- ontologically, as well as epistemologically -- it is wrong to treat human beings like so many peanuts. I do not think that even if the genetic laws are indeed laws (they apply here) Certainly, one can manipulate genetics, but I do not feel that we can reduce everything to genetic laws. So, genetics is neither an argument for nor an argument against monastic celibacy. I could be sarcastic, if you want, and say that it is a blessing that 'over-religious' people do not reproduce themselves. Their offspring would likely be bigotted either in favor or against religion... But this is just to continue in your jovial mood...

EUGENE PASCAL (Analytical Psychologist, New York):

In the quest for wholeness in monasticism, and not perfection, the trend seems throughout the centuries to have been Apollonian. I would like your comments on integrating the Dionysian aspects of wholeness. And also, as a second part of the question, how does the male monk, in your view, integrate the feminine; and how does the nun integrate the masculine? -- again, to achieve this wholeness.

PANIKKAR:

To the first question, I would say that the Dionysiac, by definition, has no blueprint or pre-programmed plan; or else it would be Apollonian. It has to be holy (or unholy) spontaneity, an orgy or whatever it is, but something is really Dionysiac because it surprises you as much as everyone else taking part in it. The only thing one could say would be: Do not stifle the spirit, even for the development of the Dionysiac aspect of life. And I would say to monks just that: let us not stifle the spirit.

To your second question -- how the monk integrates the feminine, and the nun the masculine -- let me say first that I think this integration is a totally healthy and necessary one. If you delve into the Christian tradition a little, you discover an extraordinary number of friendships between males and females -- and these are paradigmatic examples, many well-known and many others less well-known -- these are extraordinarily intimate relationships, which must certainly be considered sexual relationships. Not that they had gone to bed together, that was considered beyond the pale... perhaps because the whole beauty and dance and play of communication and mutual excitement and mutual inspiration would fade away the moment one part of the sexual imposed itself on the whole interplay. The sexual implies the body, the spirit, the eyes, the hands, the gestures

-- everything, any connection, any friendship, any relationship. The fact that you and another living being is already something which puts not only mind but everything into play. You see, we seem sometimes to think in black and white; here is the male and there is the female... But the whole thing is a gamut, and precisely the normal cases are those which are an interplay in between, in myself and with every living other. And when I speak with another person, I am all the more sexually conditioned the less I think that other person is a man or a woman. It is this discovery that the less conscious you are that your partner in dialogue and discourse is male or female, the more genuinely at play your sexuality is -- understanding by sexuality this polarity, this yin/yang of the human being. In the Vedic ritual of marriage -- just before the step when the two go to discover the pole star as the center round which everything turns -- there is a moment when the male says, "I am He", and the female says, "I am She". I am "the" He; I am "the" She. I incarnate and represent one pole of the polarity, and not just this individuation of a nice girls or a young bridegroom. How? First, by conquering internal and external freedom. I call this the new innocence, which takes in your spirit as much as your thoughts, as much as your intentions, and everything else. The moment I want to possess... concupiscence is a sin; in marriage, out of marriage this is parigraha, (grasping). The real free and spontaneous action is not conscious that it is free and spontaneous, like the real meditation which is thoughtless and not worried by the thought of thoughtlessness. These relations which we have had throughout the ages in the Christian tradition between couples or pairs of holy men and holy women are extremely revealing; these people were not living a life of sexual starvation. And yet they had neither children nor that sort of make-believe of which modern films invite us to suppose sexuality consists. I do think we are in one of those moments when things open up, and may take new avenues. And if this is truly creative, well, creation is out of nothing... and I would say out of no pre-planned thoughts and preconditioned ideas.

Now, in the pointed way you put it: "how does the male monk integrate the feminine and how does the nun integrate the masculine?' I am not proposing a greater frienship between monks and nuns. Almost the opposite. I am proposing a greater openness of the nun towards the animus and of the monk towards the anima if you accept these Jungian notions. The important thing is to have no fear, or in traditional language, the purity of the heart.

Fr. CHARLES MURPHY (Atonement Friar, Graymore, New York):

I would like to speak, or would like to hear you respond, Father, a little bit more on the role of

the monk in the political order, if we are going to look upon the monk as the integrated individual, the Self who has achieved personal self-individuation and fullness of self.

I personally feel that what has happened in Western society, and especially in the United States, in the political order is that our political servants, our politicians, have become so dishonest that we hear them and immediately it registers in our mind that they are not telling the truth, they are not honest. I have even been in the presence of people who --as soon as even a President of a nation as big as ours begins to speak, people will laugh and mock. I feel myself that the dishonesty of the Western politicians is due fundamentally to the "dis-integrated-ness" of the Western politician. And for that reason, I feel that the role of the individuated monk in the political order is not just okay, or permissible; I think it is necessary, because the individuated monk has a very, very strong witness -- by his very integration -- to give to a disintegrated political order.

PANIKKAR:

I would be very much distressed if what I have been saying is not exactly what you say. I was just trying to say -- perhaps in more general terms than those of one particular nation in one particular situation -- that this is a must. I fully agree with you.

Let me make a general statement: Thinking leads to intellection. And that is one approach: you think something, and then finally you may understand. Contrariwise, contempation leads to action. If I think that so many people are dying of hunger, or whatever, I may finally find the causes and the whys and wherefores, and I may be able to explain how this whole thing has happened. But if I contemplate the very same case, I cannot leave it at that. I will have to do something. I will have to dirty my hands or plunge into action. The real criterion of true contemplation is that it leads to action, even if that action consists only in transforming one's own life and immediate environment. So if this is the case, the monk has the strictest moral obligation -- to denounce, to cry out, to speak and to act. Now this action may not be just a re-action -- like throwing a bomb, or writing a letter to the editor -- but something more effective. Contemplation is a dangerous activity. Now, contemplation is not the exclusive prerogative of the monk. And this leads me to warn of an over-compartmentalization. I spoke of monkhood as an archetype; the person

who is a canonical monk may also be many other things.

Yet, I think the monk today is plunged by his very vocation into action, with all the dangers this implies. If we do nothing, then we are in the same boat as the French bishops blessing cannons and the German blessing planes to fight each other. If we do nothing, we bless and condone the status quo, which is already a political decision. So, I could not more fully agree with you.

GURU JOHN SINGH KHALSA (From Sikd Dharma):

I would just like to take a brief second and add a footnote to something you said. The spiritual aspirant, whether he be a household or a monk, is basically on the same plane. They have the same duties. In fact, as a householder myself with three growing little daughters, I find that you must be even more contemplative than the most contemplative renunciate. You must be more meditative than the most meditative yogin, because the values of spirituality have to be given to the children -- and that begins at intercourse, through gestation, at birth, and through the early years. It is a mammoth job, that has to be done.

Now, the spiritual aspirant has the opportunity to exercise his option: to be single and to go to God that way, or to bring others into a life of spirituality. And what we find is that those children blessed with a spiritual beginning are shining lights of spirituality, even at five or six years old. And they are the future. And those little ones, if they can be encouraged into honesty and truth and love of God from an early age, are the future saviors of mankind.

And with regard to Ed's question about his friends, the stockbrokers with all the children and lots of money and cars, those children are free spirits and they also will have a chance to seek God, in some way, shape or form at some time. A little bit later, maybe, but they will have that opportunity.

So basically, the householder has to practice non-attachment just as strongly as the celibate spiritual aspirant. We are not the owners, we do not possess the children. The children belong to God, they are God's creation. It is our job as parents to pay rent, to see that they get the spiritual foundations that are necessary to give them the consciousness of brotherhood and love.

PANIKKAR:

This is a very valuable comment, exactly in the sense that I have tried to say that the monk is not superior to the lay people or to the householder. In the same vein, I would say that the householder is also not superior to the others.

And regarding what you said about children, I think it is very beautiful and very true. The only thing I would say is that I have all my life not liked and refuse to be called "Father". And perhaps it is a sign of senility that I begin to understand that I also have many children, almost in the same sense in which you have spoken of them.

Fr. CHARLES MURPHY:

Raimundo, in all of what you are saying -- not just anything in particular this morning or any one of these days, but in your whole approach -- what guideline do you use for distinguishing between synthesis and syncretism?

PANIKKAR:

Syncretism, as you call it here, is external juxtaposition; synthesis is a living assimilation. Syncretism is amassment; synthesis is a living organism. The symbol of the synthesis is the Eucharist. You eat and you assimilate, and it is not that you are converted into Christ but that Christ is converted into you. It is not that you become the consecrated bread, but that the consecrated bread becomes part of your proteins. And that is synthesis.

Synthesis is the way by which we assimilate; it is the metabolic aspect of the entire reality. And you grow, and religions themselves grow, by this positive metabolism -- and not by mere juxtaposition. Syncretism, on the other hand, is a kind of indigestion we have to beware of today when we suppose too optimistically that we can just eat everything that comes in front of us. And when we meet, and religions East and West meet, I would certainly want to forewarn you of the possibility of indigestions which would not lead to a synthesis. Abbot Tholens gave us a beautiful example yesterday of a meeting which is not an indigestion, nor a superficial juxtaposition, but what I would call a mutual fecundation.

The secret is to keep the balance. Some people would just like to eat everything they are presented with, and other people use all

kinds of spiritual and intellectual preservatives which may stifle the openness of the spirit. At the present moment, I think we are at a crossroads where viveka, discrimination, discernment and patience is needed to discover the rhythms of the times. The challenge of modern monasticism is that it finds itself at the crossroads, and on the deepest level of very many traditions. It is not just by imitating a few externals that I become a Hindu, or whatever, but by assimilating something which I consider essential to my life.

The gist of my presentation is not so much a solution, or an answer, but rather to evoke in all of us this sense of uneasiness -- which is perhaps one of the best translations of the Buddhist duhkha -- which is the human condition itself. It is creative, in that it makes us aware of the enormous responsability we have. It makes us conscious that to trust in God -- which is a very normal thing to do -- today implies the tremendous challenge of trusting in ourselves -- personally, and also collectively. A small group of people can do enormous things. I think the monk should overcome the sort of inferiority complex regarding the political situation that says we can do nothing because we do not have the means. I think that the most effective way of destroying the power of the powerful is not to be impressed by their power, and to render them powerless because you just do not notice that they are so powerful.

And so I just walk on, in spite of the cannon pointing at me. I just go by them all, and as in the example that Michael brought us yesterday: you just make a five-minute meditation and walk on... and people obey. That is a common experience, and I think many of you have done precisely that. This is easier said than done. We know it. Perhaps we should not even say these things, but just do them. And we do them when we have integrated our doing and our being.

RP/mct

III. Synthesis

'Synthesis' is the title given to this extra talk by the organizers. A synthesis is neither a systematic overview, nor a summary. I will try to put together three different groups of problems, followed by a fourth more general reflection.

The first group of problems would come under the cross-cultural pattern guiding our over-all symposium. The second would frame the sociological challenge, the third would be to sketch some anthropological problems, and the fourth will try to bring to a provisional close the dilemma of the two 'spiritualities'.

1) Cross-Cultural Pattern

I have presented nine sūtras. They are a challenge. They invite a further understanding, or perhaps herald a new mutation in the monastic life, or else they demand rejection altogether, so that monastic spirituality is kept uncontaminated from Modernity. I should note that we have during these days also lived together four liturgies, which indicates to me at once the way in and the way out. If the solution is not in some sense liturgical, I do not think it will endure. But liturgy, as you know, means 'the work of the people', leit-ourgia... so we still have much work to do.

I imagine that to speak of a synthesis requires a certain explanation of the ground on which one builds the intellectual construction of what has been said.

We all know that monotheism is not essential to the archetype of monkhood. Christian monks are generally theistic, buddhists and jains are certainly non-theistic, and hindus by and large neither/nor.

I cannot now elaborate a proper background for a synthesis of the monastic archetype. I shall only sketch my trinitarian hypothesis over against the backdrop of a scientific model and a judaeo-christian paradigm.

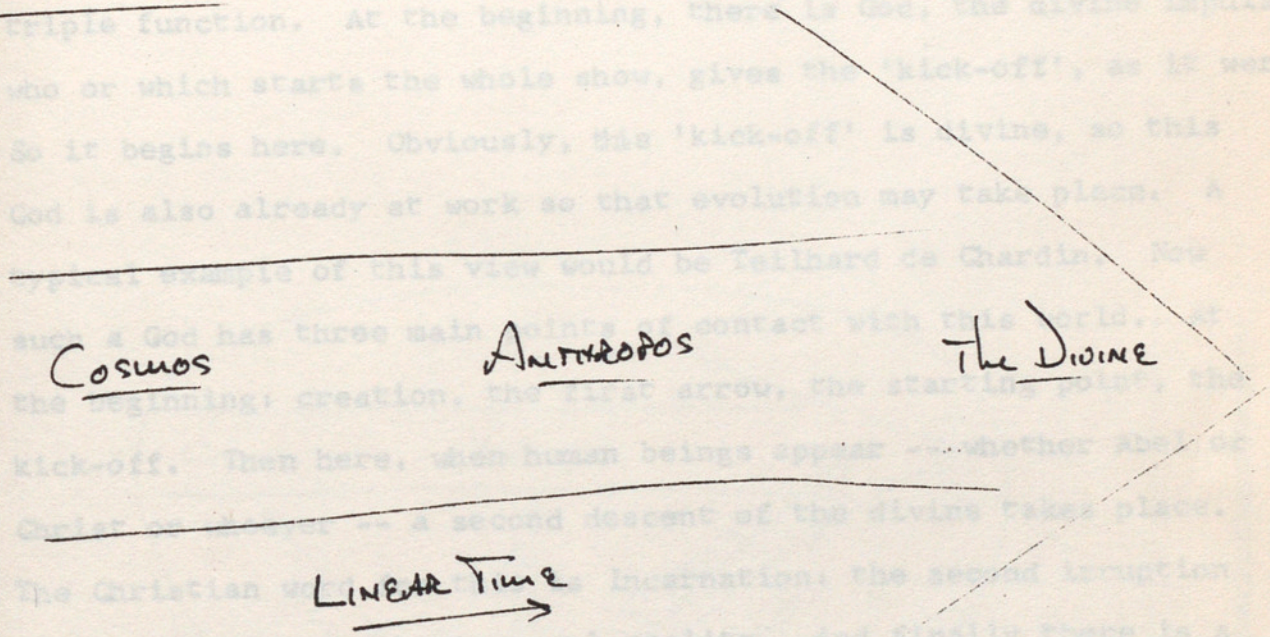
In Paolo Soleri's presentation the other night, we had a well-condensed assessment of the scientific option. The scientific option says that there is a starting point here -- which is matter, which is the cosmos -- and that there is a temporal and linear evolution which passes through vegetative and animal life, then through human life, and ultimately gets to the divine, and continues. The scientific view says that this is, in a certain sense, the entire reality. From primal matter, a cosmic reality, through four billion years of evolution, up to Men and then the Divine. This is the mystery of the cosmos. One may refine this vew, or say that it is one of the many possible scientific paradigms, but at any rate it can serve as a model for the scientific worldview.

We could draw it like this:

(FIGURE 1)

It is clear that the word Divine used by Soleri will be contested by other scientists. We can call it the Superhuman, the Future, the Unknown. This is not relevant for our purpose. The monk collaborates here in the unfolding of the

FIGURE 1



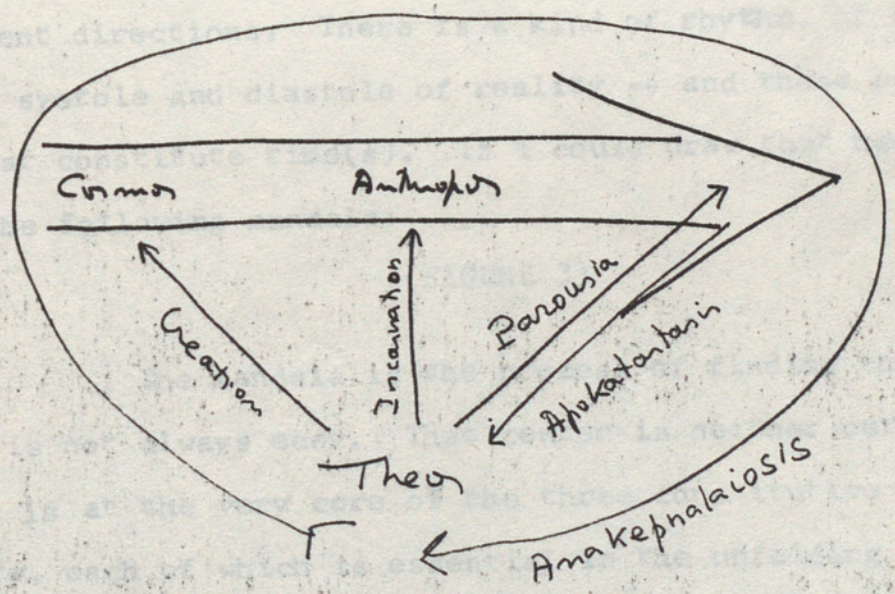
Universe toward the Divine by being rooted in the Past and open to the Future.

Another option is a traditionally Christian view -- and I only say Christian to make it a little simpler -- which admits this line of evolution, but emphasizes that the divine point is also a *theos* outside the whole concatenation. This *theos* has a triple function. At the beginning, there is God, the divine impulse, who or which starts the whole show, gives the 'kick-off', as it were. So it begins here. Obviously, this 'kick-off' is divine, so this God is also already at work so that evolution may take place. A typical example of this view would be Teilhard de Chardin. Now such a God has three main points of contact with this world. At the beginning: creation, the first arrow, the starting point, the kick-off. Then here, when human beings appear -- whether Abel or Christ or whoever -- a second descent of the divine takes place. The Christian word for this is Incarnation: the second irruption of the divine into the temporal reality. And finally there is a third line, distinguished from these two (though I won't now enter into all the subtleties of the theologians), and this is the notion of a two-way traffic. On the one hand, it is called parousia, the second coming. On the other hand, Peter calls it *apokatastasis panton* (the restoration of all things), and Paul calls it *anakephalaiosis* (recapitualation) of all things in Christ. This last contact reabsorbs the whole of creation in the way it began. And that's the end of the story. God and Man live happily ever after.

We could combine the two schemes like this:

(FIGURE 2)

FIGURE - 2


Cosmos
Anthropos
Creation
Incarnation
Parousia
Apokatastasis
Theos
Anakephalaiosis

RP.

If scientific time is linear, monotheistic temporality does not need to be it. The monk here is rooted in the mystery of the First Coming of Christ and an Eschatological sign of the Second Coming, a witness that only one thing is needful.

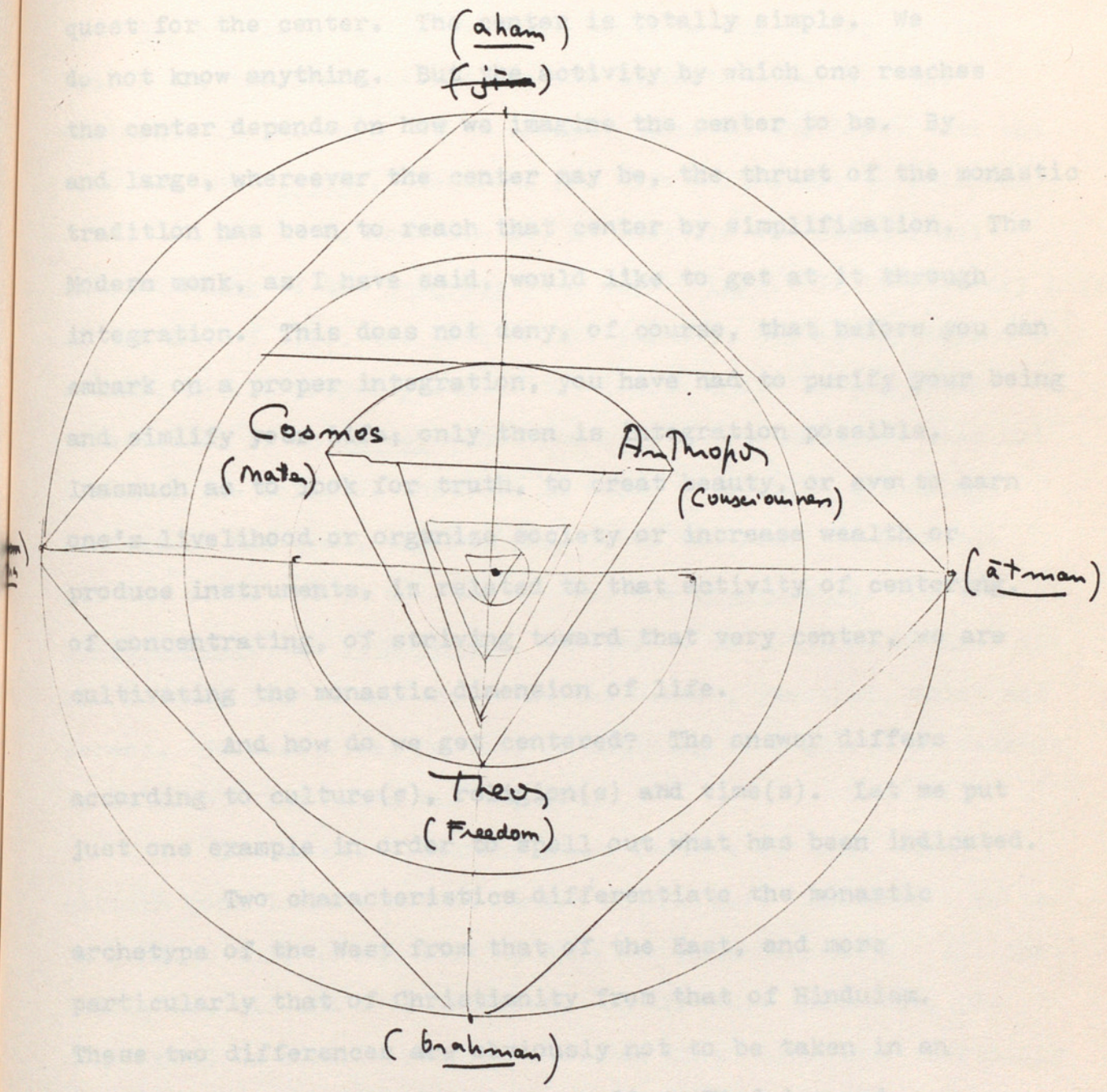
I would like to present a third alternative, which offers a cross-cultural pattern. We have at the very beginning a dimensionless triangle, a still point, in which the material element, the factor of consciousness, and the unfathomable freedom we are so bold as to call divine -- all three are already there. And then that evolves: a spherical wave unfolding globally in different directions. There is a kind of rhythm, or breathing -- the systole and diastole of reality -- and these pulsations are what constitute time(s). If I could draw that here, we would have the following mandala:

(FIGURE 3)

The mandala is the process of finding that center, which is not always easy. That center is neither outside nor inside, but it is at the very core of the three constitutive elements of reality, each of which is essential in the unfolding of everything that is real: the Cosmos (or matter and energy); Man (or consciousness and will); and the Theos (or freedom and absolute indeterminacy and -- if you will allow me this much abused word -- I would also say love belongs here).

I shall not develop now what I call the quaternitas represented by the four Sanskrit words (soul, I, self, ground). The con-centration of these four would amount to realization.

FIGURE 3


(aham)
(jīva)
Cosmos
(nāta)
Anthropos
(Consciousness)
(ātman)
Theos
(Freedom)
(brahman)

→ 82

Monkhood would would be represented here as the quest for the center. The center is totally simple. We do not know anything. But the activity by which one reaches the center depends on how we imagine the center to be. By and large, whereever the center may be, the thrust of the monastic tradition has been to reach that center by simplification. The Modern monk, as I have said, would like to get at it through integration. This does not deny, of course, that before you can embark on a proper integration, you have had to purify your being and simlify your life; only then is integration possible. Inasmuch as to look for truth, to creat beauty, or even to earn one's livelihood or organize society or increase wealth or produce instruments, is related to that activity of centering, of concentrating, of striving toward that very center, we are cultivating the monastic dimension of life.

And how do we get centered? The answer differs according to culture(s), religion(s) and time(s). Let me put just one example in order to spell out what has been indicated.

Two characteristics differentiate the monastic archetype of the West from that of the East, and more particularly that of Christianity from that of Hinduism. These two differences are obviously not to be taken in an absolute way. East and West, as well as Hinduism and Christianity, are not rigid and incommunicable categories. Nor are the two differences meaningful without their respective counterparts. It all depends on emphasis and centrality.

The first difference is this: The christian monasticism is a Way of life. It is the commitment to the uncompromising Search for the Absolute and the readiness to break all the obstacles on the way. It is the path towards the Center and the vows are the viatica, the means for this pilgrimage towards God.

The hindu monasticism, at least in the traditional understanding of the saṁnyāsa is a way of Life. It is the very Life of the end of life, the goal of the journey, the aśrama beyond all aśrama, only imporperly called the fourth one. If christian monasticism is an answer (that you give). The saṁnyāsa does not renounce the world or whatever in order to achieve something. Because he has seen, experienced, lived the real, he discards all the rest. He is not the novice, the brahmacarya, but the comprehensor, the jīvan-mukta. He has to do nothing, because all has already been done. He is at the Center, peaceful, quiet and serene. No sacrifice, no vow, no anything is required or remains to be done. The texts are explicit.

The second differentiating feature is this. The eastern monk looks for that Center in the pure immanence. He has to realize that he has lost nothing nor gained nothing. All that really is, was and ever shall be. In the pure immanence, you don't need to somehow recover what was sheer illusion. Certainly as long as you are not 'there', you have to transcend yourself.

The western monk looks for that Center in the pure transcendence. He has to transform, to transcend himself in order to reach that Center which encompasses everything, the new Heaven and the new Earth. Certainly it may be that this

transcendence is hidden in the very interior of his own being, but it is not his being.

The scientific model is part of the western approach in which the transcendent seems less transcendent and more futuristic. It is the futuristic center; here transcendence is not outside time, but in the future. Perhaps the greatest tribute to this modern scientific archetype is that no less a theologian than Karl Rahner will speak of God as die absolut Zukunft, the Absolute Future. In the scientific model, that futuristic center is attained by means of measurable knowledge. There is also another path within the Western system, the Marxist one. It is equally futuristic, but oriented toward the perfect classless society. A main difference is that the means is not measurable knowledge but politico-economic action. Still, these are all means to attain the Center.

The monk, then, can exist in different cultures, ideologies and worldviews. In all these lifestyles, however, the monk seems to have a kind of anticipation of that very center which spurs him or her on in the quest. In sum, this quest for the center depends on the different conditions and assumed beliefs about where that center is, or what constitutes it.

2) The Sociological Challenge

And now we leave behind those grand scenarios of cosmology and metaphysics in order to enter into modern Western society in a way which is also applicable, with qualifications, to societies on the way to Modernization. In spite of other theoretical possi-

bilities, today de facto Modernization and Westernization are almost synonyms. The dream of modernizing without westernizing is just that -- a pious and beautiful dream, but one which is not incarnated in reality. But this is a different topic.

What, then, is the sociological challenge? It is that in this Modern Western society, the System is breaking down. I use this word simply as a codeword: the System, i.e. the social, political, economic and religious order, seems to be collapsing. For many the System seems imperfect, unsatisfying. But I daresay that it is injust and even inhuman. It has shifted the center from God, Man or Cosmos into one particular corner of reality with pretensions of universality. I suggest that this System falls apart because it has tried to resolve the global human predicament by and with the means and insights of one particular culture and/or religion. And here lies the seriousness of cross-cultural studies, which imply a good deal more than patchwork or cosmetics to beautify or whitewash the existing system. I repeat that, ultimately, the reason for the collapse seems to be not that the System as such is so bad, but that in today's context it represents an abortive attempt to solve global human problems by means of the structures and strictures of a single culture. Thus the System is 'de-centrated', off-kilter, distorted; it has lost (or not found) its center.

To be sure, there has never been a spotless and ideal human system. But all the systems of the past were partial empires. The empires of China, Rome, Christendom, Spain and Britain did collapse, but there were always other heirs and other victors to learn the lessons or to repeat the mistakes. The Modern technologico-economic System is not the American or Russian empire, for

instance; it permeates in a protean way the face of the earth; it is multinational and even multi-ideological. It is one thing to want to impose the Roman vision of the world, or the British rule. It may be good for Rome or for Britain, it may even be beneficial for the people thereby 'civilized', i.e. subjugated peoples; but it cannot claim to be universal in the sense of the present-day anonymous System, which offers neither heirs nor alternatives on the same level of the System. When this System crumbles, it is the End of History!

The task of the monk is to concentrate on and in this quest for the center. But today many no longer see this center in another world, in time above or ahead. When the center was believed to be God (you recall St. Benedict, "Si revera Deum quaerit" ("if one truly seeks God"), Regula 58.7), and in this search for God one looks for God and God alone, then that would center you and the entire universe. Secularity may be telling us that the center itself is not only in a transcendent, atemporal God disconnected from the world -- so that we can reach the center only once history is over and the world finished, in the parousia, at the very end, the Last Judgment, when God will be all in all and the arrow of evolution will have reached its target, but that this center is equally material and human, i.e. cosmotheandric. This is the ultimate challenge of Secularity to the monastic dimension of Man: the looking for God and God alone in a disincarnated and utterly transcendent way may not help us in finding the very center of reality and thus centering ourselves and the universe on the ultimate truth.

To be sure we should not make a caricature of the

symbol God, but we cannot deny either that the whole problem today requires a deeper and enlarged experience.

The task, then, is the quest for this center, along with a search for the factors which have 'de-centered' the universe of our experience. I may use a single traditional word here, but we shall have to translate it in an existential way. The traditional word would be ἁmartia, sin, avidyā, ignorance, but the translation will have to explicitate the results of this severance, or hatred, or whatever: hunger, injustice, wars of every imaginable variety, inequities and iniquities of all sorts, and so on. I submit that today's most urgent monastic task involves a search for God in the direction of politics, society, economics, science and culture; and not in perpetuating a supra-societal, non-political institution sublimely unconcerned with economic affairs, sovereignly above scientific quarrels and exquisitely supra-cultural. Such a God would be an abstraction, not a living God and not, certainly (to take an example from the judaeo-christian-islamic tradition) the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Three very concrete concerns appear to me to issue from the sociological challenge. a) First, a need for formation. But the first step towards it it genuine in-formation. The monastic traditions are not sufficiently aware of the state of the world. By this I do not mean just mass media information or newspapers, the latest idea or instant replay of what happened somewhere in the world, which may indeed only distort the real vision and genuine perspective which belongs to that adventure

of the entire reality on the way to its center, toward a destiny, however we may interpret it. But there is a tremendous lack of information, nonetheless. That sovereign nonchalance, or unconcern, disinterest in worldly affairs in fact appears today as the most un-monastic of virtues, since it fosters the cruelty of indifference, callousness and guilty ignorance. Many anchorites of ancient times became cenobites for the sake of 'edification' of the brethren. Perhaps the new monasteries should again be centers where the real 'building up' of the world is studied and cultivated.

b) Second, a contemplative study or approach to the same problems, so that they are not viewed as merely technical problems of data and information science and logistics. Today's global human dilemmas are not even subject to immediate or technical solutions, so that here all we have been saying about contemplation should have a direct bearing on the very way we tackle the urgent human problems of everyday life: society, politics, economics, science, culture, etc. A sui generis methodology must emerge which integrates the activity of contemplation and the life of contemplative action.

c) Third, a call to action. For monasticism, a call to action does not mean activism or mere 'politicking'. We could perhaps re-interpret the words Father Armand quoted on the first day: Conversatio nostra in caelis est. Our políteuma is in Heaven, says Paul. It is on Earth, says the modern monk, because Heaven is not only merited here on Earth, but is also incarnated here below. Our polity, our conversatio, our activity, our field of action, our lifestyle, our commonwealth, our state, our concern is on Earth. Heavenly citizens, if we want, but here on Earth. We must dirty our hands, says the modern monk. Our políteuma is in the polis of this world, and this has become a monastic imperative

-- action, a call to action for the new polity, the new political incarnation -- not, I repeat, in the minimized sense of the word politics in common language.

Traditional monasticism converted the monasteries into a politeuma, a model commonwealth in symbiosis with the environing world. But what was a symbiosis once upon a time can become a parasite if communication, and even communion, is not re-established. It may be retorted that this is a very lofty and idealistic view of the monk. I was encouraged to read in the Supplement of the New Catholic Encyclopedia (1979) that "the monastic instinct is prophetic". Without wanting to identify the two charismas, it cannot be denied that the new monk cannot be satisfied with a fuga mundi and has to accept a consecratio mundi in a very special way.

And here I would make a very concrete proposal in the light of all I have been saying. I would urge you to bring about a commission, or a group, or a symposium on monastic formation in our contemporary world.

3) Anthropological Problems

The third way in which I would synthesize all that we have been saying could come under the heading of anthropological problems. I say 'problems' because we are not prepared to face the fact that our underlying anthropology does not have the answers. And this amounts to a scandal. That science changes is not a scandal under the assumptions of the prevalent worldview in the West today; it belongs to the very nature both of science and of the human mind. Pure natural science can have the freedom and the beauty of changing every five minutes, like

the weather in Vermont, because science does not claim to offer an anchor for human life, but just an explanation of how things happen. But that we try to found our lives and direct our own existence on the basis of something that is 'A' today and 'B' tomorrow, and changes to '-A' the day after tomorrow: that is a scandal. That something can be a sin one day and a virtue the next represents an anthropological unwariness and instability, the fruit of very many cultural factors.

In other words, the scandal of a scientific view of Man is that this view claims to be rational and, because the human being is assumed to be a rational animal, Man is supposed to follow the findings of that science. And yet this very science changes constantly, not to mention the many different opinions represented by acknowledged scientists. It is the same scandal that was felt so acutely by Descartes, but this time in another, almost a contrary, direction. Descartes was taken aback by the many divergent and disparate theological opinions of his time, which obviously could not pretend to direct human life. He made a tabula rasa of all of them and wanted to found an indubitable -- and thus rational -- method. Now, there are very rational systems which have proliferated and thus defeating their purpose of directing human life.

I am not proposing to go back to unexamined theological beliefs, or to fall into irrationality, or democratic intellectualism. I am endeavoring to rediscover the place and function of myth in human life, and to situate rationality in the total human -- and cosmotheandric -- context. But I cannot pursue here this line of argument, which has been one of the main concerns of my academic life.

Yet it does not help to say we have no anthropology equal to the challenges of our day. At least we may be coming to grips with the problematic. And to be aware that the problematic is unresolved

is already the beginning of something. That something may be, to begin with, precisely that we cannot rely on scientific paradigms, as also we cannot rely utterly and blindly on any of our own conceptions of the human being. This, if you understand me, is a daring proposition: that we cannot rely completely on the logos, that we cannot rely fully on orthodoxy, that we need either wings to fly with the wind, or a deeper ground which does not depend on our ideas, conceptions or ideologies. It would mean the end of the platonic period of civilization; the eidos would cease to be the final criterion. This is what I mean by the new innocence, which is not a 'second' innocence. It would be impossible to regain or pretend to have regained lost innocence. The new innocence is so new that we do not even know if it is first, or second, or whatever.

I hear already the objection that I am contradicting myself by establishing as a doctrine that we cannot rely on doctrines. This is not so, on at least two counts. First, because if you want to rely on any doctrine you are perfectly free to do so. It may be yourself at a later stage, and certainly the others around you, who will contest your doctrine. You can then say that this doctrine is good for you; period. You don't extrapolate. Or you may say that the others are wrong and don't see the issue. Neither case presents major difficulties.

But secondly, I am not contradicting myself because I am not contending that the rational aspect of Man should not be rational, but that rationality and even the logos are not the only aspects of the human being which constitute its essence. Man is also spirit, but it is not subordinated to the logos; Man is also myth, and the myth is irreducible to the logos. I am further affirming that these two elements cannot exist one without the other, so that I am not propounding the preponderance

of the myth over the logos or vice-versa. Theologically speaking, I am reminding us that already the early Christian Church had condemned "Subordinationism" as a heresy. Pneuma and Logos are knit together by the abyss or silence or Non-being of the Fons et origo totius divinitatis, to speak with the words of the Councils. But we should revert to our Synthesis.

We have situated some of these problems during the past few days. I would like to spell out this kind of problematic in very concrete terms now. Regarding the definition of the monastic dimension, we have probably spoken of three types of monk. Monk #1: the archetype, that central dimension which exists in the human being. As I have said time and again, if we hold up this monk #1 as a model for the humanum, then the trouble begins. It is only one dimension. Then, monk #2: people and groups who strive to cultivate the dimension of monk #1. And monk #3: institutionalized or traditional forms of monasticism.

I would submit that the most concrete problem we face today is the double relation of monk #2 to monk #3; that is, how the emerging and proliferating contemplative groups (monk #2) can relate constructively to the institutionalized forms of monastic life (monk #3). With this we touch on problems of temporary monasticism; problems of monastic spirituality in concreto; problems of active life; problems of mixed communities of men and women, of transcultural lifestyles, of plurireligious monasteries, and so on. All need to be fostered by monk #3 in the traditional monasteries, and developed further by monk #2, the new groups, so that a healthy pluralism might be attained, or at least sought. Monk #2 may not at present be willing to look to monk #3 as a source of inspiration, and yet this needs to happen, for without it the link with tradition may easily be broken. And if monk #3, in the traditional monasteries, does

not open up, or descend a little, monk #2 will not be able to climb up. The meeting place may very well be in between, but precisely in the land of Man, not in no-man's-land.

And how is the traditional, classical monasticism to open itself up? How is monk #2 going to climb up and purify the many tentative and experiemental paths into a new pattern of monasticism? These are primary issues with which we can only begin to deal effectively if a healthy dialogue is fostered between monks #2 and #3. All over the world there begin to be some essays of such a dialogue, and it continues to need encouragement from both sides.

Finally, I would like briefly to go into four types of problems with regard to monastic lifestyles: a) poverty, b) marriage, c) involvement in the world, and d) sexuality.

a) Poverty needs fundamental reconsideration. Interestingly enough, in non-economic societies, poverty was not as an economic value. To be a beggar could be a decent way of life. This is what the word ohikshu means, incidentally. Poverty later became an economic value, and monks began defending economic poverty. And now we find ourselves confused because in a paneconomic world economic poverty cannot be defended at all; it would amount to sponsoring starvation and injustice. And yet perhaps the name still conveys more than just an economic value: "Blessed are (you) the poor in spirit..."

b) A problem which I would not like to see closed off a priori is that of married monks. The question of married monks must be considered not only from the monk's point of view, but also with respect to the change it would imply in the very conception of marriage. Married monks will change our perceptions of marriage at least as much as they will change our notions of monasticism.

There are practical problems in the present setting of monks #3, indeed. But I am addressing myself to a more fundamental question of whether celibacy belongs to the essence of monasticism. If my distinctions are valid, we will agree that monk #1 as the archetype of monkhood is perfectly compatible with marriage; that the contemporary experiences of monks #2 have not as yet sufficiently crystallized to offer us a pattern; and that the immense majority of monks #3 are vowed to celibacy.

No need for me to stress again that I find great value in and valid justification of celibacy, although always a posteriori. The point here is different. It is double:

α) Whether it is of the essence of monasticism to be unmarried. Given the examples of the married monks of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism, I shall have to answer in the negative.

The reason why the greatest proportion of monastic institutions have opted for celibacy may be due to three main concerns. The one is the sociological context where monasticism has grown. It would have been practically impossible to institutionalize monasticism of married people. The second reason is the prevalent conception of marriage and of married life practically until our times -- whether as a consequence of the praxis or the fruit of a theory does not make much difference for our case. Not only women, but married life on the whole was considered practically secondary to the primary concern of human perfection. If the monk was seen as the paradigm of perfection, it seemed but natural that married life was not fitting for a monk. Females can also have a monastic vocation, but we all know from the jain sādhvīs onward the subordinate role of female monasticism throughout the ages. I also have a suspicion about the traditional married monks. I say this

as the fruit of observation, and also with reference to what we know about the subordinate position of married women in most of those societies. This suspicion is enhanced when considering the role of the greek παρεδρα and the hindu śakti. Everything is geared to the perfection of the male, or at least male-centered. This model certainly may not serve our present-day sensitivity.

The third reason is the underlying model of monasticism as vita angelica, life on the paramarthika, with no fostering of saṁsāra and the like. The monastic ideal claims to be 'super-natural'; not laukika, worldly; on a higher plane.

I am not implying, for my argument, that males and females are equal or that celibacy is superior. I am only saying that the moment that monasticism is not seen as the perfect life, even if these two hypotheses were correct, the impossibility of married monks does not follow.

β) The second point is the practicability and feasibility today within the major monastic institutions of most religions. And I leave it at that.

c) The question of personal involvement in the world. That a Salesian or a Sister of Charity does something out of his or her personal charisma, forgetting that there is a collective charisma of that particular religious congregation, is understandable insofar as each person has a special vocation, but we may say that such a person acts only in obliquo as a member of that association. I would not say the same thing for a monk. Christian monks during the last few centuries have been more or less influenced by this kind of collective ideal, instead of discovering the heart of their personal calling -- of which Father Armand of Mistassini spoke so eloquently. Perhaps the

Jesuits here could be said to represent the adaptation of the monastic ideal to the new mentality of their times.

My point is the following. The monk's involvement in the world is not an activity institutionalized on a collective basis, like schools, hospitals or the like, but the personal concern of the monk with that part of the world that is near to him or to her. And here another set of problems opens up: personal idiosyncracy vis-à-vis hierarchical authority, and so forth. Along this line, I may say that the cenobitic and eremitic styles of life need reshuffling. And I would subscribe to what has been presented here as networks of the heart. If such networks of the heart could be established, that may indeed have the very practical consequence of creating this new state of affairs and further degree of consciousness.

d) Sexuality. Traditional monasticism has considered the monk an asexual being: the sexual needs are needs for the sake of the species, says Christian scholasticism, not for the fulfillment of the individual person. So the monk has simply to overcome and at best sublimate the sexual urges, and the more he or she ignores sexuality the better. Today's Western sensibility is certainly different, and this can be neither bypassed nor ignored. There are four areas here which should be considered, and I shall simply enunciate them.

i) The body, which I need not develop.

ii) Sex, in the sense of sexuality and not just the 'sex needs' of mammals. Human beings have sexuality, which implies the whole interplay of human relationships. In this sense I would say that the play, the pleasure of the polarity of human beings, can be a highly contemplative activity. Friendship is a chapter in itself.

iii) Genital sexuality should be distinguished from the constitutive sexuality of human intercourse in the more general sense I have elucidated. The genital aspect has very often been exaggerated -- out of a sense of repression, perhaps? -- but it is a problem which has to be considered.

iv) Celibacy is again an important aspect which should be considered.

So this would be my synthesis, which in no way claims to be the final word. And so, with a sense of imperfection and inadequacy, I close my 'synthesis'.

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DISCUSSION

(Following is R. Panikkar's response to a series of questions by Sr. Myriam Dardenne, F. Basil Pennington, Paolo Soleri, Michael Von Bruch, Ewert Cousins, Abbot Tholens and Armand Veilleux. --Editor: You may formulate them as they are in the transcript.)

ED BEDNAR: You once said that the only interesting question is the impossible question. You have just been given seven impossible questions. What do you do with them?

PANIKKAR: I spoke in the singular, not in the plural. But let me try, very briefly, to present these impossible answers.

1) I fully agree with Myriam. You have also noticed that I have put the question of marriage independently from the problem of sexuality.

2) I also agree with Fr. Basil's comment, that particular groups of people will always want to take refuge in tradition, and that everybody first needs the depth of being founded in a particular tradition. I could not agree more, and I take that as a most important and positive contribution, in the very sense in which I have spoken here, without having been able to stress all the aspects. So I am thankful for that comment.

Yet, one observation and a warning. The observation is that I have not been talking to your young people here, but to all of you mature monks advanced in the ways of spirituality. And a warning, which I would put by means of an example: the peculiar example of Catholic Christianity in Japan. Every year, a goodly number of Japanese are converted to Christianity because they find in the Christian presentation that inner logic, sense of belonging and attraction of a well-structured tradition for which they are apparently

longing for. But the fact is that these conversions last only three or four years, sometimes less. And when they retrieve from Christianity, the results are less than happy. They become more and more uprooted.

3) To Paolo, I must say that I am very happy to have at least provided a vocabulary for his arsenal of guerilla warfare. And I am not only happy, but I would say... well, I am a fellow-traveler.

PAOLO SOLERI: A fellow guerilla!

PANIKKAR: Indeed.

4) I could not agree more with Michael's first point, that the primary synthesis is in ourselves -- and I would add that only through ourselves may we reach the higher synthesis. So in ourselves first and, at the same time perhaps, through ourselves.

He has put, secondly, a very delicate question: What is the relationship between simplification and integration? And he has warned me that he didn't want theoretical answers. So let me give first a theoretical answer -- in a single word -- and then a practical example of how this integration could be achieved. The theoretical answer is that I understand integration as assimilation... toward health, if you will, or toward transparency. This integration then is a simplification, not through juxtaposition and enrichment, but through assimilation -- of which, I repeat once more, the Eucharist may be a symbol.

The practical example I would like to propose arises from my own despair during seven years of struggle with the rather complicated problems of chemistry. Chemistry is perhaps one of the most complex fields, to the point of driving one mad. In analytic chemistry, in organic chemistry, you realize that you cannot memorize everything; even when the tables and the abstracts and everything are open before

you, you are still absolutely lost. I had the great joy of studying in Bonn with von Antropoff, the direct disciple of Mendeleyev, from whom the whole of modern chemistry comes. He was a White Russian, he would arrive at 7:00 a.m., and so forth. He understood my plight. I didn't have a bad memory at the time, but that wasn't enough. Yet there comes a moment in which you develop a sort of sixth sense, or third eye, or something... and then you come up with what is called 'the chemical criterion'. You smell the compound, and you say: "Well, try cobalt first, and then put in some of that other thing, and you will probably find something sulphuric in there which is blurring the radical of the organic thing, because I feel sure that this is an [illegible]xylate of an organic complex of something." And where did I come by all these insights? Just by smelling and seeing? My friend could not explain it, but he said: "Well, you have a con-naturality with things."

And with the things of the spirit, you have something similar. In the blink of an eye, it comes to you and you say: "Well, this has to change", and you get it point blank. So there is a kind of simplicity, or an intuition, some sixth sense you acquire. And there comes a moment when you are suddenly familiar, and you know what kinds of ingredients you have to add, and how the thing is going to reveal itself... because you are friends, and the things tell you what you need to know, and you understand their language. It's a very peculiar language, because you can't translate it. But you know, and you are not afraid, and you act. So that's the practical part of the answer.

Now, how do we acquire such practice? And the only silly answer that comes to me is: By practicing! St. Benedict knew something of it when he called the monastery a school where the practice of the way of the Lord is simply practiced -- much more than just (theoretically) taught.

Third, 'we are not universal'. Indeed, and thank God, there is no lingua universalis. We have to be humble and concrete. And here I would only rejoin Fr. Basil's comments about being concrete, and living it. I make a distinction between being provincial and particular (which is over against general and abstract), and being concrete and alive, which is not in opposition to being universal.

There is no lingua universalis. We have to be absolutely convinced, first of all, that we have constitutive limitations -- thanks to which, we exist. But what we also have to have today is an open eye and an attentive ear, to see and to hear and to understand that there are other tunes, and other dances, and other languages, and other rhythms... which are real, even if we do not understand them. Perhaps the only thing I would call universal is a kind of loving madness, but that's another question. That has to do with the ānanda of Śiva.

5) Now Ewert Cousins puts me to the task of discovering my own archetype. What I am saying and dancing tells you where this archetype dwells. Nobody knows his own deep archetype. I am in great sympathy with what I call the Christophany. To me every being is a Christophany, a revelation of that Christic mystery. The locus is... well, here I have emphasized the cosmic aspect, perhaps, but elsewhere I emphasize the more sacred and transcendent aspects. It depends, like a chemical reaction, on the milieu in which one finds oneself.

Now my difference with Teilhard is, I would say, a double one. On the one hand, I would call him pan-Christic, which is not my bent. I would not like to defend a pan-Christic ideology in the way that Teilhard -- legitimately, given his own presuppositions -- defends it. And secondly, in all that I am trying to say I am--consciously, at least and, I surmise, coherently--pluralistic; which is something for which there seems to be little place in Teilhard's system. To maintain

a pluralistic vision, I have had to pay a big price. I have mentioned it several times when I have spoken about joy, or even about the myth, about the crypto-heresy of supposing that the logos is everything, about cosmic confidence, or new innocence -- about all these things, in short, on which you can put neither your finger nor anything else, and which you simply have to let be.

6) To Fr. Tholens -- I can only kiss him, and embrace him, and say that I am as happy as he is in stressing the sat, cit and ānanda, exactly in the same way -- giving 'equal time', as you say in America -- although the blissful simplicity can sometimes be forgetful simplicity, which I would not like it to be. But certainly the very criterion that some type of genuine synthesis has been arrived at is that you can bubble with joy, even in a concentration camp. But my warning of the other day still stands: I should not be bubbling with joy just because I am oblivious and feel that everything is rosy. There is more to it.

7) Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, I must respond to something I was half-expecting to emerge here. Fr. Armand has perhaps the most concrete and even the deepest intuition from within one tradition -- with all the openness of our era, etcetera -- and yet he feels uncomfortable with some of my presentations, as I feel the internal contradiction in his.

The internal contradiction I sense is that on the one hand he tells us: "Monasticism is not objectifiable. Why do you objectify?" And here I would say: "Certainly, I fully agree, it is not objectifiable." And if I have used the word archetype, an archetype is by definition precisely that which is not objectifiable, because an archetype is always a function of the consciousness you have of it. The archetype is not an object sitting quietly somewhere, but is something in which your whole

relationship, the more or less amorphous fund of collective humanness, is precisely what constitutes the very nature of that archetype.

And then on the other hand he tells us: "Well, no... my way of life is objective, clear cut, and you should not introduce confusion. If you call married people also monks, you are stretching the words beyond permissible bounds. This is because I feel that the way of life of the monk is already somewhat objectified and clear cut, and you should not confuse the issue." I may agree or disagree, but that is the second question. Perhaps he means this internal contradiction as a paradox. Monasticism is a way of life which as a way of life, Armand tells us, has to stand as it is. And we should not mix the issues. I would respond that we have a semantic problem: What is monasticism? Is it the particular and objective way of life as it has been for the most part understood, or is it one particular and culture-bound expression of a more universal archetype that I have called monkhood? And yet I should accept his more important warning: I should well beware, even with the best of intentions, of introducing confusion. This is the purpose of the dialogue, to help clarify the issues. But perhaps today the way of life of this concrete and historical phenomenon is beginning to change.

Now if you say that you became a celibate because you chose such an option -- here I would join Michael's pertinent comment -- such language is unintelligible for three-quarters of those, even the monks, outside the First World. If I say I chose celibacy because it is my option... Who is deciding? Who puts the option? A much more traditional answer would be: "I just found myself a celibate, due to my family, my tradition, everything..." that's the best way; but neither I, nor any choice, nor any option nor anything decided. And I am very

happy in this kind of celibacy, so please don't ask me why I happen to be celibate, and don't put me in crisis by demanding a reason for it. That to me is the best reason: that I cannot justify why I am a celibate, and yet I am quite happy in it. If you ask me for a justification, I really can't find one. And this, again, is part and parcel of the blessed simplicity, the new innocence. And if you ask me to speak as a theologian... well, I think we are in an awkward position if we try to justify or rationalize celibacy in our modern times. All I need to say is let it be, let it go. By their fruits you shall know them. And I think there are very many fruits which vouch for this path." Of course this is not a modern way of putting it, but if we admit this change perhaps we should also be open to the corresponding changes. We should not stretch the meaning of words into meaninglessness, certainly, but is it not also true that certain types of cultural patterns have very often monopolized the meanings of words? Is a nygma-pa not a monk?

There is something most revealing in the life of the words themselves. And yet we should also be attentive to Fr. Armand's proviso, his warning. Yet, I would like to say that the life of words cannot be put into a computer, and my example here is the rainbow (as well as the example of the masculine/feminine). Certainly I know what green is, and what violet is, but there are very many things in between which produce perhaps the most beautiful colors... and then I don't know if it is green or violet or blue-green or both at the same time.

So, having stretched the words, I shall not stretch the time unduly.

* * *

Footnote on Thinking and Speaking

Ed tells me I have three and a half minutes for a footnote on Teilhard, in connection with Ewert's question.

First, allow me a couple of overstatements. The last 26 centuries of Western self-understanding, culturally speaking, are based on that dogma -- assumed and accepted dogma from Parmenides to Husserl, the only exception and suspicion being Heidegger (hence our friendship) -- that paradigm first formulated by Parmenides, that the two ultimate pillars on which we have to rely in order to be human beings, i.e. to have a human orientation in the world, are thinking and being, nous and on. The whole history of Western thinking is founded on this assumption that the nous, the mind, is the guardian shepherd of the on, of being, and that being can only be expressed as what the mind tells us that being is. We have, of course, all the possible variations: they are two, they are one, they are related, etcetera. The whole of modern science implies that it is precisely the nous, the thinking attitude, the mathematics, the calculation, that will tell us how being is, how being will behave. By utilizing Riemannian geometry and minus-1 and negative squares and all the rest, we think, and with our thinking we construct the framework, the bridge, the Arcosanti... and it really stands.

In short, thinking discovers but also conditions being. Now such thinking exacts a great price. Thinking which leads to intelligibility cannot violate the principle of non-contradiction. If I think being, if I think this, then this has to be the case as long as my thinking activity lasts. Otherwise, if the this does not remain the same, I don't know what I am thinking about. If you think "two tulips and two roses are four flowers", then after five minutes, two tulips and two

roses must still be tulips and roses in order to be four flowers. Thinking -- to say it briefly -- freezes being. The tulips, about which I may think anything at all, must remain tulips. Thinking assumes being to be what it thinks it is. And all the 'oughts' and 'shoulds' follow, precisely because thinking tells me what being is, and what truth is. Being is really molded and in a certain sense fixed by thinking. If being is not the prisoner of thinking, because it may be 'thought' to be prior to being, it yet has to abide by the rules of thinking, which become the rules of being. The rules of being are postulated by the rules of thinking. And most of the philosophies, East and West, proceed from this assumption.

But this paradigm is not universal. It is not assumed or taken for granted in India, for instance. In India, the ultimate polarity, the yin/yang so to speak of the Indian effort at human orientation in reality, is not thinking and being, but being and wording. Or rather, being and speaking; being and letting being be; being and letting being escape. It is being and letting being express itself, without the reflexion of self-consciousness, without the going back to the being from which you have departed. It is a kind of total spontaneity. Being explodes itself into being, into word, into the expression of that being, into something which goes its own way, like an expanding universe which nothing and nobody -- and certainly no being, no thinking, no lack of contradiction, no logic or logistics, no anything -- can control and guide Blissful spontaneity, yes, because what is most important is the process, the dance, the whole thing expanding... Who could control it? And who would control the controller? Who would think the thinker? Who could know the knower? You cannot know the knower. There is no way to control the flow of reality.

Thinking is not the ultimate parameter. Being is just... explosion! And this would explain the monastic concentration on purifying the heart, the source of our being, and allowing the Spirit, which is Freedom, to direct, to in-spire us --.

* * *

RP/se

4) The Challenge of Secularity

Life does not need to be logical, but it destroys itself if it is anti-logical. The two paradigms of Simplicity and Harmony that we have encountered seem (to be,) in the long run, mutually incompatible. Meanwhile, i.e. in between, while life lasts, they create a healthy polarity, if maintained within limits. Furthermore, blessed simplicity will not allow real fragments of reality, of human life to be stripped away on the pretext of helping somebody to reach perfection. The remedy would be worse than the malady. Complexity as such is not necessarily positive either. It has to be a harmonious complexity, which takes into account the cum of the folded (plexus) things in order to reach a true embrace (cumplexus).

Can there be a marriage between Simplicity and Complexity? Is the archetype of the monk lost if simplicity is given up? Here we have not really dedicated equal time to the archetype of secularity. This was not our direct topic. But a few observations may be pertinent at this juncture. First, a sociological observation; second, an anthropological remark; and third, a metaphysical one.

a) Sociologically speaking, in a world menaced by increasing technological complications, to have people stressing simplicity is more than an outlet for freedom, health and humanness. Even if we are condemned to complexity, not everybody can adapt themselves to it. We need respites, exceptions. There is also the fact that the beginning of every new technological 'progress' creates innumerable victims due, as previously mentioned, to the fact that there are different human rhythms and varying degrees of adaptability, but also because the first technological essays in any given field are imperfect and often demand a high

price of human substance. There is something very appealing in seeing monasteries as high places of human relaxation and temples of simplicity.

Moreover, besides complexity there is complication. People tend to complicate their lives. Industrialization may well mean consumerism, and many today are becoming aware of the dangers and anti-natural effects of the technological world. A call for blessed simplicity is urgent and needed. If the old monks give up, new monks will emerge and perform this vital function of reminding the world by their example that only a very few things are necessary for a full and happy human life, much less to reach 'eternal life' -- which does not, of course, need to be postponed into the future.

But simplification of a complicated life and life-style is one thing, and utter simplicity taken to its final consequences quite another. Total simplicity, i.e. a specialization in simplicity, may lead to inhuman practicies or fall into the most traditional 'monastic' temptation of 'acosmism' or 'vita angelica' (angelic life).

This means that blessed simplicity cannot be the only principle governing human life, and if it does, it destroys that very life. If this is the case, either Blessed Simplicity cannot any longer be the monastic principle, or Monkhood cannot be the total paradigm for human life, but only a dimension of it which must be combined with the principle of Harmonious Complexity. Here is the ultimate locus for my statement about the impossibility of institutionalizing monkhood. It tends to absolutize that which is only one single dimension of human life.

This leads to a delicate sociological remark. We witness today a certain questionable relationship between monastic institutions all over the world and the larger religious bodies to which they are attached. I am referring to the tendency, be it organized as in the Roman Catholic Canonical Laws, be it in the minds of the people and directives of the authorities concerned, of keeping the old monastic institutions as museum-pieces and preventing their evolution -- which by the same token is considered a betrayal of their ancient and authentic calling. I am referring to the desire, mainly on the part of outsiders, to see the monks preserve the badly needed old values. You have to live in Rome, Bangkok, Rishikesh or the Kangra Valley to realize this trend of 'authorities' wanting to preserve the old institutions in their pristine 'purity', uncontaminated by the air of modernity. There is a valid point to this, but it becomes problematic and ultimately defeats its own purpose if it is done from the exterior, as a result of more or less subtle pressures. "People expect you to be like this. You are supposed to behave this way and to say these things" are sentences we hear all too often. And this brings us immediately to the second observation.

b) Anthropologically speaking, the question is how to integrate those two principles in our lives. Specifically for our purposes, how can the Modern Monk handle the tradition al pull toward simplicity and his or her own (not just societal) push toward a harmonious integration of one's being? The "quid hoc ad aeternitatem?" (what use is this for eternity?) can have devastating effects if eternity is seen as just the salvation of the pure soul in an after-life. The obsession with the sarva dukha (all is suffering), can equally lead to a real castration of the human personality.

We are not discussing here which anthropology is the more

valid, i.e. that which sees human perfection in an eschatological life on a higher nirvānic or paramārthic plane, or that which believes that the harmony of the human personality requires one to integrate all the possible human values in one single being. We are not forgetting a warning that to want to achieve a too higher or inappropriate ideal, leads to total deception and fiasco. Nor am I pleading for sheer humanism. I am simply stating the fact of the personal belief of a concerned person and how this person sees his ~~or her~~ perfection and the meaning of his ~~or her~~ life. I am concerned with the anthropological image that Man has of himself.

It probably comes to this: Has the humanum only one dimension, or is it pluridimensional? To avoid this question would cheapen traditional monastic spirituality. The monk does not want to be everything. He has renounced many things, ——— eventually everything. But one ideal or aim he sticks to: the Absolute, nirvāna, mokṣa, sotēria, salvation. He stakes everything on that, and not necessarily in an exclusively individualistic way. On the contrary, the ideal of the boddhisattva is a monastic one, the ideal of being a living victim for the salvation of the whole world and the vocation of the vicarious representation of the entire humankind is central to monasticism. The question is how this goal is reached -- by attaining that simple core of everything, by simplicity at the end of a thorough process of utter simplification, or by attempting the harmonious complexity and integration of all the possible values in the ——— crucible of the particular person?

To overlook this double underlying anthropology would do an injustice not only to the theoretical problem of the New Monk, but much more so to that particular person who is now, as it were, under two fires, which we may call Simplicity and Complexity. The monk

here suffers in this particular form the more general tension between Tradition and Modernity. If the second paradigm is found more valid than the first one of Simplicity, the structural changes in traditional monasticism will have to be radical. And there is no point in blurring the dichotomy, although the conduct of practical affairs may demand prudence, patience and great discernment of spirit. But the individual monk may be caught in the dilemma and have to face the practical problem of whether he will better serve the cause of 'monkhood' by transforming the old structures or beginning new ones. Do we really have here the case of the new wine and the old wineskins? I cannot push the question much further right now. We may briefly consider the last dilemma.

c) Metaphysically speaking, we detect immediately two radically different conceptions of reality. The problematic has already emerged from time to time as we have been speaking.

The ideal of simplicity assumes that the entire reality in its ultimate symbol is simple. Now neither space nor time, nor history, nor the body are simple, nor even simplifiable past certain limits. Only the 'soul', consciousness, jñāna, cit, is reducible to a point without dimensions. It follows from all this (quite spontaneously) that the monk at least neglects the former and concentrates his interest on the latter. For the purpose of these considerations, I would also like to bring the different cosmological assumptions under this same heading of meta-physics.

The ideal of Complexity, on the other hand, assumes that reality is ultimately pluralistic, not reducible to any single principle, and thus that realization is not a jump into the Absolute, but rather a process by which the complexity of our being is brought harmoniously to completion.

No monk needs to be a metaphysician, but the ultimate metaphysical paradigm is ever present in any of the moves he will make. Ultimately, the hypothesis of an Absolute is at stake here. We might even have said: monotheism versus polytheism. But we should not linger much longer over this chasm that seems to be obvious, despite the fact that words do not convey the whole issue, and much less so as we try to articulate the problem in a cross-cultural context.

I may now attempt to formulate a Synthesis from a trinitarian perspective, first, and in an advaitic language immediately thereafter. It is all related to what I have called the cosmotheandric intuition and sacred secularity.

In the final analysis, Simplicity and Complexity are not dialectically opposed, because the ultimate structure of the universe does not need to be conceived as dialectical. Their relation is dialogical. They have meaning not in opposing and contradicting each other so as to allow for a higher synthesis, but as a mutually constitutive relation, so that the one does not make sense without the other and both mutually support each other. Simplicity is more than the absence of complexity. It is merely 'monoplexity', I would say, if the word were allowed. The folds have merely been unfolded, but not obliterated or destroyed -- although, qua folds, they no longer exist. A certain transformation, as we have seen, is certainly required. Complexity is not just the accumulation of folds, of layers of reality one upon the other, but the display of the many folds in one coherent, i.e. joined, pattern -- which is one in its manifoldness. Now this oneness is not plurality, but is certainly pluralistic, i.e. it forms a plural pattern that is beyond the reach of the word and of thought and which thus remains only a matter of 'belief', or 'hope',

or 'hypothesis' or of 'realization', if we give due credit to the mystical tradition of humankind.

The oneness, we said, is pluralistic, because there is only the oneness of the manifold which nobody can encompass, as nobody can be outside reality. If the color green could see it, it would see all the other colors as green or as the result of their composition with green. It could not speak of a plurality of colors, but only of a pluralism which could be expressed by the generic name 'color' without precise content -- for green.

The Trinitarian language would go like this: The Trinity, to begin with, is neither a monopoly of Christianity nor, for our purposes, of the Divinity. Every bit of reality has this trinitarian imprint. And thus human perfection does not consist in becoming one with the Son, or with the Father or the Spirit, but in entering into the life of that very Trinity without eliminating any of its constituents.

The Trinity is neither one nor three, i.e. neither simplicity nor complexity. Seen from the interior, as it were, it looks like simplicity: each 'person' voids itself totally in order that the other 'be'. Personhood is pure relationship. There is nothing outside the relationships. If there were a kind of substantial 'knot' independent from the 'net' we would have tritheism or, in the universe, plurality. The law of the Cross, i.e. of Sacrifice as pure immolation, I would say, reigns also in the Trinity. This voiding of each person is complete. Seen from the interior each person is totally void, empty. If we were to look at that person we would not see 'it', as the person has already totally given herself up to the other. In point of fact, person is neither singular nor plural. The Father 'gives' everything he is and

has to the Son; he begets a Son identical to him. The Son is equally exhausted in his Gift (the Spirit) to the Father -- which precisely the Father has 'inspired' through the Son. The Spirit in 'itself' is nothing, no-thing (the 'thing', res, word is the Son, the Logos); it is pure gift, which is only such in the actual giving. Now from the exterior, as it were, in and by the very act of speaking about all this and trying to unfold it for our minds, it is complexity. It is even the maximum of complexity, since all the riches of reality are encompassed in the trinitarian dynamism. This is the meaning of the Incarnation: that the world shares in the ultimate trinitarian adventure, although it unfolds in the strictures of space and time. Seen from the outside, the whole process is the com-plexity of the entire reality: Father, Christ and Spirit in Christian nomenclature.

We can speak about the ineffable, because the very un-speakable is an attribute of the speakable; as everybody realizes in and through the experience that no word of ours says all that it 'wants', 'desires' or 'purports' to say. We speak then about the ineffable by opening up, pointing out, letting ourselves be somehow aware of the silent component of the word, of the unspeakable side of the spoken. Without words, there would be no silence -- just as there is no real word without silence.

In advaitic parlance I could say that reality is neither one nor two, and so neither we nor the world can be brought under ~~the sway~~ one or the two. God and the World are equally so (it goes against common sense) nor two (two what? -- it would contradicts the very conception of God). Now advaita is not monism. It would be monism if the God had so absorbed the world (since they cannot be two) as to rob it of its ultimate reality. It is not dualism either. The world is not another reality facing the God or the One or Brahman. There are not two

'aspects' of one and the same reality, because they are not 'aspects', i.e. perspectives, epistemological devices or facets of a monolithic reality. Reality is not to be encompassed by the mind: cit, buddhi, jnāna. Reality is also sat and ānanda, being and bliss. And if we can speak of it it is not because they are reducible to vāc, to the word, to intelligibility, but because they are inseparable and yet not the 'same'. There is ultimately nothing that is the same, because the mind for which the 'sameness' is 'same' is not outside of it. This non-dualistic conception demands also ~~for~~ the maximum complexity. If there would be only one thing, there would be no complexity at all; monism would be quite sufficient and advaita not required at all. But if simplicity were not also a dimension of the real, dualism would in its turn be a plausible enough hypothesis. Complexity and Simplicity embrace in advaita, as well as in the Trinity.

Where is the monk in all this? I may venture now, perhaps, my hypothesis -- and epekstasis in the sense of hope. I shall expose it in its bare essentials.

Let us call the humanum the symbol for human perfection over and above the distinctions between the natural and the supernatural. The belief that this humanum is utterly simple would constitute the archetype of monkhood. The humanum has thus a center, simple without dimensions, a core that in an eminent and for us rather incomprehensible way encompasses all of what really is. This humanum is not only invisible, it is also not realized here on Earth. It needs a transcendent existence, be it in time (the future), in space (paradise) or altogether beyond (nirvāna). The realization of the humanum is an eschatological task. You have to discover it, either in hope or with an intuition (anubhava) that transcends space and time, by realizing that you are 'already there'. This is the way of Simplicity, and traditional monks have followed this path.

The belief that this humanum is complex and that it can be realized only if the different elements are integrated could still be accepted by some monks. Where the divergence arises is when this integration is considered not reducible to one single 'thing', when the ultimate 'stuff' of the real is in itself manifold, complex. This archetype I would call secularity. The humanum has no single center. It has two or more centers. Space and time are definitive and not to be whisked away as something alien to the humanum. Even if they are ephemeral, it is this very provisionality that gives them reality for Man in his or her ultimate concern. Realization is a personal task that cannot be postponed, and cannot be gained by eliminating elements of reality as if they were not there, or were not real.

Is there any way of bringing these two archetypes together? The very manner of putting the question is obviously biased. Simplicity cannot tolerate a second at its side. Is there but the possibility of a Oneness without a Second which still does not fall into a simplistic monism? Or, from the other perspective, is it possible to give all due credit to all the ingredients of reality without falling into an indiscriminate atomistic anarchy?

Perhaps it may be said that this is ultimately what not only the best monks, but also the most profound secularists, have always been seeking. This could be the case -- and then it would only confirm my hypothesis. But perhaps one was not sufficiently aware of the radical and ultimate divergences in the conception of reality. The prize here would not be that we have lost the key to open the puzzle of the universe, but there is no key, neither epistemological or ontological, because the logos is not all that there is and being is 'only' all that there 'is'.

Will the new monk integrate these two dimensions of human life? I may end by saying that intellectuals experiment with ideas, but monks experiment with their lives. It is an experience of life and death.

###

East-West Monastic Symposium

BLESSED SIMPLICITY OR HARMONIOUS COMPLEXITY ?

IS THE MONK A UNIVERSAL ARCHETYPE?

Towards a Contemporary Spirituality

R. Panikkar

RP/mct
1981.-Aug. 15

East-West Monastic Symposium

BLESSED SIMPLICITY.
IS THE MONK A UNIVERSAL ARCHETYPE ?

R. Panikkar

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EAST-WEST MONASTIC SYMPOSIUM

Preface: by the editor or the chairman

Introduction:

R. PANIKKAR

The spoken language is not the written one. The spoken language is unrepeatable, it speaks to an immediate audience, it responds to the expectations of the listeners and reacts to their 'vibrations'. In a sense it is a liturgy and each liturgy is unique and for its own sake.

I had ~~already~~ warned the editors and conveners that the tape-recorder does not record the spirit, and that in a symposium you eat and drink words and not just read sentences. We do not like to regurgitate.

F. Tisso's assistants faithfully transcribed the sounds of the recorder and S. Eastham painfully edited the entire material. He made the best he could with it. João V. Coutinho made me aware of the inconsistencies that a reader who has not been a participant is bound to find. Adityānanda has been kind enough to read the ~~entire~~ corrected typescript and dispel some of ~~strengthen me in~~ my doubts. Thanks are due to them. Besides, I could not recognize myself nor the event when attempting to make sense of the edited talks. re-enact I felt it would be a lie on my part and an insult to the participants to allow the letter of the proceedings to be published on the assumption that the spirit would be there. The value and merit of the symposium was in the celebrating of it. The commemoration should be another re-enactment and belongs to another genre, perhaps to the proper literary genre. But a symposium is for ~~analphabeths~~ illiterate. To those who prefer to read one cannot offer a cold meal. The joy and meaning of a symposium is the concelebration. Nothing is lost of what was enjoyed there, even if it cannot be found in this re-elaboration. The participants may perhaps remember and re-enact the experience for themselves. This volume now stands on its own.

The only solution, at least for me, was to rework --now-- my presentation from the notes that I had and the edited transcripts that I read, and insert in the text the questions and answers as they came. I have tried to incorporate in the text

all that was said in the Symposium.

~~Yet~~, This written text is ~~more concise,~~ perhaps more academic and 'dry', but probably more appropriate for a wider audience. And yet it is not a lifeless, 'scientific' study. The home-work has been done by the intellect and by the heart -- but it remains at home: In corde magis quam in codice, Discretio is a monastic ~~or at least benedictine,~~ virtue. This

"more in the heart than in the book" as the christian medieval monks used to say.

My personal gratitude to all drops into silence; it tries to show itself in the fight against the 'linear' time I have had to wage in order to present this new text -- all shortcomings notwithstanding. (1).

R.P.

Santa Bárbara

15 - August - 1981

"Assumpta es Maria in coelum":
gaudent monachi, ~~seniores iuvenesque~~.
~~qui de coelis descendunt deambulant super terram.~~

veteri novique.

prevents me to express an intense personal experience other than in more or less philosophical, though understandable language.

---

(1) Many words like modernity, symbol, tempiternity, myth, archetype, etc. have not been sufficiently ~~delineated~~ explained. The author refers to his other publications for clarifications. ~~Yet~~, he assumes, however, that the context already provides a minimum horizon for the understanding of all such expressions.

RP/mct

Prologue:

The ~~Contemporary~~ Monastic Vocation

ὃς πορεύεται ἁπλῶς,
πορεύεται πεποιθώς

Prov. X, 9

Qui ambulat simpliciter
ambulat confidenter.

Vg.

He that walks simply,
walks confidently. (1)

The topic entrusted to me is 'the monk as a universal archetype'. The phrase is ambiguous, as ~~it~~ will become clear in a moment. But its ambiguity is revealing. Here I ~~naturally~~ hesitate: I feel I am breaking rather than constructing something. It is ~~acutely~~ painful to break into pieces what one sees whole; and yet to speak, to explain, to unfold, to spread out in time and space is to break things apart. Like the body of Prajāpati dismembered in the act of creation, it seems that this simple and ineffable vision which for me is the symbol of the monk can only be communicated in fragments. I must begin by taking a hammer and destroying the "universal archetype of the monk", not unlike a child pulling apart its beloved little toy to see what is within... And within we may discover emptiness...

My presentation will have one Prologue and three unequal Parts. The Prologue is a confession on method. The first Part will deal with the central understanding of monkhood as a human archetype. The second Part will try to spell out the Contemporary Monastic Vocation in ~~seven~~ nine chapters which unfold a fundamental principle. The third Part will be what we called Synthesis at the Symposion in the form of general reflections on this unending topic.

---

(1) Cf. Prov. III, 23; XXVIII, 18; Ps. XXIII, 4; Is. XXXIII, 15-16. The text is commented by M. ECKHART, Sermo XV, 2 (n.162).
It is ~~astonishing~~ significant to read the modern translations of this ἁπλῶς which was so central in the Patristic and monastic spirituality and echoed so strongly in the New Testament. (Cf. Matth. VI, 22-23; Luc., 34-35; etc.). Cf. also the leitmotiv of homo viator, of man The itinerant being. → 3,1

The Hebrew word has other connotations.

3

(footnote)
②

cf. just some examples:

"A blameless life makes for security"
(NEB)

"He walks secure whose ways are honourable" (JB)

"He walks secure, who walks pure"
(Knox)

"Chi va con rettitudine, va sicuro"
(Istituto Biblico)

"~~Quien~~
Chi si conduce con integrità,
cammina sicuro" (Nardoni)

"Qui va franchement va
sûrement" BJ.

"El que anda en rectitud
va seguro" (Nacar-Colunga)

~~Epilogue~~

Since my early youth I have seen myself as a monk, but without a monastery, or at least without other walls than those of the entire planet and even those, it seemed to me, had to be transcended -- probably by ~~my~~ immanence --, without a habit, or at least without other ~~habits~~ vestments than those worn by the human family and even those, it seemed to me, had to be discarded because all cultural clothes are only partial revelations of what they conceal: the pure nakedness of total transparency only visible to the Simple Eye of the pure in heart.

~~You will understand that~~ I feel not only incompetent and unprepared to speak about the topic, but also perplexed about the way to proceed. Probably the best method would have been to take some seminal figures like Buddha, Anthony, Milarepa, Shankara, possibly also more modern ones like Bruno, Ramana Maharshi, Dōgen, etc. and ~~have~~ derived from these the monastic archetype. It would have been relatively easier, probably more fruitful and certainly more interesting, especially for those who may be little familiar with these giants of monastic spirituality. We would have then witnessed a quality of life and a human maturity which could serve us as lighthouses for our shaken human pilgrimage. From their examples we could have arrived at the monastic archetype.

Two reasons have induced me to take a ~~totally~~ different method. First, that the monks already know many of these materials and second, that it would not contribute enough to the incoming mutation just to present traditional monachism at its best. It would have made all of us proud of such ancestors, but perhaps veiled before our eyes what I consider the challenge of our times. It would have put us on the line of 'try harder' mentality ~~in order~~ to imitate their exploits but distracted us from considering whether our present-day predicament does not require from us a new metanoia, a new conversio instead of a renewed imitatio, a modernized imitation.

another radical change of mind - conversion

To a non monastic audience I would say that this presentation speaks to the monk in everyone of us and it does not want to supplant or correct the rich literature on monasticism. It would like to inspire the reader to delve into the sources of this rich human tradition.

The ~~second~~ two reasons are connected ~~with the first~~. I am not so much directed to speak about the history of the past or even to venture into the historical future, as I am concerned to probe the transhistorical present -- for us here and now.

monastic archetype' of which the monk is the example or of which the monk is the manifestation.

In other words, because I am existentially concerned with our daily lives and present situation, making use of the ambiguity of the phrase 'monastic archetype', I shall address myself not to describe the monk as archetype, but to explore the archetype of the monk, i.e. monkhood as a possible human archetype.

i.e. The monk as a paradigm of human life,

may be taken to mean

The distinction is important. The monk as archetype assumes that there is such a thing as the ideal monk and that the monks have incarnated it in different degrees. Besides the perhaps excessive Platonic flavour of this way of presenting the issue, this might be the best way for a renovatio, a renewal of the pristine purity of the monk. It is a legitimate and urgent concern, but, in a certain sense, it freezes human creativity in as much as it ties us with the past. It allows only for explicitations and clarifications. The only thing left to us is that of being good or even better monks. The archetype of the monk, on the other hand, assumes that there is a human archetype which the monk works out with more or less success. Traditional monks may have re-enacted in their own way 'something' that we may be called upon to realize in a different manner which expresses the growth and newness of the humanum. In a certain sense it gives us a free hand to launch an exploration into the future taking into account the many factors that shape human life. →5,2

an almost Platonic essence and immutable idea of the ideal monk.

Archetype here means a model, a prototypal form (morphé).

5,2 → But the distinction is also subtle, because it does not allow for any separation. We may have no other entrance into the archetype of the monk if we do not study or come to know the monk as archetype. We cannot create out of nothing, nor can we concoct an archetype according to our fancies. It is the crystallized experience of the elders in tradition and the re-enactment of that very tradition that will give us real wings to fly on a human journey and not to desintegrate in mid-air because our feathers were artificial. We shall have still the opportunity to clarify the distinction. →5,3

archetype here means a product of the several forces and factors, conscious and unconscious, individual and collective which shape a particular human configuration.

5,3 → Yet, the topic is so enormous and the literature so vast that I can do only a minimal justice to it even if I limit myself to the quintessence of monkhood. from an anthropological perspective. This implies not only a limitation -- otherwise almost anything can be said about monks and archetypes -- but also a particular direction: (the option to look not for sociological common features, doctrinal resemblances, or religious common denominators, but for what we have called the archetype of the monk. Certainly not, I repeat, with independance of the monks, but also not just explicitating things of the past. →5,1

And I shall attempt to do it only

a method which looks

We shall do this

disregarding the traditional monastic ideal,

not

5,1 → The method for this enterprise is rather special. It requires the phenomenological, socio-morphological and historical method regarding the manifestations of monasticism, but it has to proceed a step further. And for this we need a recourse to a kind of philosophical approach and personal introspection. I assume the first step sufficiently known and shall concentrate on the second step.

Those aspects of the human being which are more rooted in its nature.

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i.e. a universal model for human life?

5

To be then quite specific: Is the monk a universal archetype ~~(model)~~? No. The monk is only one way ~~an answer~~ ~~trying to~~ of realizing ~~an~~ universal archetype. ~~And~~ Yet, it is in and through this (monastic) way ~~answer~~ that we may have an access ~~to~~ to the universal archetype — of which the monk is ~~it~~ a manifestation. This allows us to speak of the universal archetype of the monk, provided we do not freeze the inner dynamism of monkhood and be also allowed to speak of the new monk.

→ 5

5 →

~~may be taken to mean~~

The meaning of archetype here is not that of a model, but rather the product of human life itself and thus is changing and dynamic.

→ 5

5 →

An ~~a~~ noteworthy corollary of this distinction without separation is ~~that it~~ this. ~~Whereas~~ to consider the monk as archetype, viz as model, helps us to delve into the sources and to investigate the beginnings of monasticism. We have to connect with Tradition. (To study) The archetype of the monk, on the other hand, viz. ~~sedimentation~~ the accumulation of human experiences which still ~~go~~ goes on ~~in our time~~ ~~but~~ ~~Throws us in~~ brings us to the observation of the signs of our times and directs us to the future. We have to decipher the riddle of Modernity. I say riddle because we shall have to discriminate between the ~~pass~~ fleeting and superficial fashions and the real contribution that enriches and continues the value of Tradition.

~~[illegible]~~

This means that in spite of our stressing the ~~polarity~~ difference between Tradition & Modernity as we shall do for heuristic reasons, we should not overlook the continuity. [~~[illegible]~~]. In point of fact (are the new monks) those who ~~which~~ contribute to the crystallization of the archetype which I shall endeavour to describe.

→ 5

We shall have to take into account not only the past, as we know it, but also the present, as we understand it, and ourselves as we experience our lives.

One simple reflection may give us the required mood. Whatever monkhood may be, and there are scores of definitions and descriptions, it seems to have exhibited a symptomatic polarity. On the one hand it is something special, difficult, even sometimes queer with tinges of social and cultural disconformity; on the other hand it is something ~~so common,~~ so human, that it is ultimately claimed to be the ~~lot~~ of every~~one~~, what everybody should or is called upon to be -- in some way sooner or later. The awareness of this polarity, I submit, will put us on the right track ~~to explicitate what this archetype may look like.~~ on our quest.

I - The Archetype of Monk~~hood~~

By monk, monachos, I understand that person who aspires to reach the ultimate goal of life with all her being by ~~means of stripping off~~ renouncing all that is not strictly necessary for it, i.e. by being concentrated on this one single and unique ~~task~~ goal (1). The monk is at least in the state of mumksutva or desire to be liberated and for this is so concentrated on it that he renounces the fruits of his actions (ihāmutra-phala-bhoga-virāga) having discriminated between the real ~~and~~ from the unreal (nityānitya-vastuviveka or ātmānātma-vastuviveka) and ready for this to undertake the necessary praxis (sādhana) (2). → 6,1

---

(1) This ~~singlemindedness (ekāgratā)~~ distinguishes the monk from other spiritual endeavours towards perfection or salvation.

(2) I am very much worried about having to say monk/nun, he/she and his/her all the time. I could replace monk/nun all the time by monkhood but this abstraction goes against the genius of the English language. Besides, ~~that~~ I would prefer to reserve the word monkhood for the archetype. I could say "she" instead of "he" but what we really need is a third article, not the masculine or the feminine or the neuter (which is Solomon's judgement, 'neither the one nor the other' -- for then, you kill the child). Not the neuter but the utrumque, ~~utrumque~~, the "either gender" which includes both male and female. For the moment, I shall use Man as Mensch, purusha, anthropos and not give males the monopoly on Man or split the human persons into men and wif-men and males and fe-males (other etymologies notwithstanding). This split does not cover the entire human being either. Where are the children? Where are those who are not comfortable with a he or a she either? Curiously enough, gender only appears when we speak in the third person and objectify ~~one~~ another.

When I say "You", or "I", this invokes the fullness of the androgynous human being. In dialogue, we address each other as persons, whole and complete, with no need to make distinctions like adult or child or black or white or male or female... Only when we start talking about 'third persons' do we have to say "He", "She", ~~"Mother Earth", "Father Sky"~~ and the like: because they are not encountered directly and in person. When God is a Thou, or as I would rather suggest, the I and 'me', the Thou, the gender does not enter either. It is interesting to know that in some African languages the only difference betwee 'he' and 'you' is a distinction in tone. Every word should be a prayer, and should be directed to a person. Hence, my uneasiness at talking into microphones...

(also

6

If, in a certain sense, everybody is supposed to strive for the ultimate goal in life the monk is radical and exclusive in this quest. All what is not ladder is ignored; all that is not way falls apart. →

This archetype needs and at the same time shuns institutionalization.

The thesis I ~~have been~~ am defending ~~all my life~~ is that the monk is the expression of an archetype ~~of the monk, although it may find its expression through an institution, is~~ which is ~~rather~~ a constitutive dimension of human life. ~~When it is institutionalized it begins to lose part of its most genuine characteristic, that of being~~ a unique quality of each person. This archetype is

This conception, I submit, has been an underlying belief of tradition. ~~Something has~~ have always been worried the great monks ~~all over the world~~ when the monk becomes a well accepted figure in the world and monasticism receives the blessing of society. It is with this belief in mind that tradition has considered the hermit --the idiorhythmic -- to be the perfect monk: the saṃnyāsin, mōnachos, muni, bhiksu, rāhib (in spite of the doubts of the Qu'rān), etc.

the monk is highly personal.

We shall have to ask ourselves a difficult and only partially answerable question: not what the monks think of themselves or what society thinks about them, but what has ultimately compelled them to embrace monkhood, not what socio-psychological motives they had, but what deep anthropological urge was there ~~behind~~ behind the languages of the different religious traditions, in so far as this is possible.

The monk ultimately becomes monk not by a process of thinking (about death, the caducity of all things, nityatva, ...), nor merely of desiring (God, human perfection, heaven, nirvāna, ...) but as an urge, fruit of an experience which ~~generally~~ eventually leads him to change and in the last instance break something in his life (conversio, metanoia ~~mumukshutva~~, ihāmutra-phalabhoga, ~~initiation~~ dikṣa, ...) for the sake of that 'thing' which encompasses or transcends everything (the pearl, shama, brahman, peace, moksa, God, liberation, satori, enlightenment, ...). One does not become monk in order to do something or even to acquire anything, but to be -- that being which is (everything, yourself, the supreme being, nothing, ...). → 7.1

result of

an ontological explanation in the human being

7.1 → It is the existence of such ~~a fact~~ that leads me to speak about monkhood as ~~a human archetype, as~~ a constitutive dimension of human life.

Now, this understanding of monkhood as a human dimension has been obscured by ~~the~~ juxtaposition of ~~many~~ other elements, which have led to the traditional common belief that the monk represents the highest type in the human scale; and from here to ~~the next step of~~ being the perfect Man, from the ultimate or religious point of view. Most traditions, in point of fact, will tell us that only the muni attains moksa, only the bhikṣu reaches nirvāna; ~~so~~ this every one is called to be a saṃnyāsin, in this or another life, as only the sādhu burns away all karma and is not born again; the Christian monachos is the only worthy successor of the martys or martus and thus the perfect Christian; and ~~from here~~ thus, of course, the perfect Man.

What is this human perfection? Let me explain by means of an example.

According to Greek and Latin scholastic theology, each angel is a species. The angel, by the very fact of being an angel, ~~once the period of~~

7

The monk ~~is~~ becomes a monk not just because of a desire. He will be told time and again to eliminate all desires. ~~He~~ I ~~have spoken~~ speak of an aspiration and an urge. It is not because one wills that one becomes a monk. The monk is compelled, as it were, by an experience that can only articulate itself in the praxis of one's life. It is an experience of the presence of the goal of life, on the one hand, and of its absence (not having reached it), on the other. Monastic spirituality has developed this topic of initiation into monastic life with preference to almost any other theme. In a certain sense the monk is both, the aspirant and the perfect.

~~of the presence~~ & of his absence

There is a tension between the experience of the fulness of the goal, on the one hand, and of the being still on the way, on the other.

The monk has heard and believed the <u>tat</u> <u>tvam</u> <u>asi</u>: that you are [a thou] but his ~~thou~~ being is not yet the thou of the I.

7

~~trial has passed,~~ has reached the full "angelicity" of ~~his~~ its particular order. Each angel is as fully "angel" as it can be; that is, every angel exhausts ~~(its)~~ own nature and completely realizes ~~(its)~~ own specific potentialities. There are not more than one angel in each angelic order. Once created, an angel fulfils completely that nature. It has reached its natural perfection. [Supernature] In both cases in the same thing - Existence

Not so with human beings. A human being~~s~~ ~~are~~ unlike an angel~~s~~, ~~because a human being~~ its whole is not humanity nor can it become it. If one human being could exhaust the perfection of humanity it would not leave place for anybody else. A human being is not the Adam, not the purusha, not the human nature. The perfection of the human individual is not the fullness of human nature; it is not nature, but personhood; it is not the essence of humanity, but the incommunicable and unique existence of the person. An indefinite number of persons can realize, each time in a unique way, ~~the~~ its own perfection of ~~humanity~~. Humanity is manifold. Its name is legion. In this sense the perfect human nature does not exist. It should embrace the whole of humanity, actual and possible, and this is not feasible for any individual person. Yet there are people who actualize their dormant potentialities and other people who don't, people who reach a high degree of humannes, as it were, and other who don't. 8,1

From here it follows that the search for human perfection cannot have a single model. The word 'perfection' has to stand for a meaningful, joyful or simply full human life whatever and wherever this 'fullness', 'meaning', 'joy' may ~~be~~ we believe to be. Each person will have her proper way of realizing in her own way the perfection of 'humanity'. I shall call the humanum this core of humanity or humanness that can be realized ~~in~~ in as many manners as there are humans. Humanity is one, the humanum is that ~~specific~~ particular form of every individual person when realizing ~~humanity~~ the fulness of her being. Even if this fulness is considered to be a merging with brahman or a total annihilation this could still be called the humanum from the viewpoint of the human person.

Each human being has to conquer the humanum in a personal and unique manner. ~~This is~~ The endeavor of every religion is this: to give a ~~specific~~ concrete possibility for the human being (individually or collectively) to ~~reach~~ achieve the humanum. In this endeavor to acquire full humanness or the humanum, there ~~have been~~ are ~~very~~ many ways. A ~~common~~ traditional name for all these ways is religion. Religion is a path to salvation, liberation or with whatever ~~conception we may have of~~ this humanum. be it called generic name.

Now, this humanum does not only have many interpretations, it has also many aspects and presents the whole richness and complexity of human nature. The poet, the intellectual, the craftsman, the Man of action, etc. are all ~~striving for~~ expressing different facets of it. Each of these facets represents the cultivation of one aspect of the humanum and by and large the human person tries to find an harmonious conjugation between several of those human qualities, like a person of good taste combines the several colors of the different pieces of ~~his or~~ her costume.

One ideal has ~~now and then~~ very often crept into this human striving for perfection. We could call it the Supernatural or the higher level. Realizing that

8

We should ~~under~~ emphasize this point because a certain monolithic conception of the hierarchy of values — again of Platonic influence — has given the impression that there can be the perfect human nature: say, first christian, then male, afterwards adult, then, white, english speaking and so on. In point of fact, a perfect human nature is a contradiction in terms. It should have contradictory attributes: quick and slow in reactions, white and black or brown in colour, masculine and feminine in gender, spanish and chinese (etc.) in language, introvert and extrovert in character, young and old in age and so forth & so on.

→ 8

many religious traditions save the humanum by raising it up to

many human virtues can become rather obstacles for higher goals, experiencing the mutual incompatibility of many human qualities, ~~and believing in a~~ The 'superhuman' destiny of the ~~human being. The ideal of the~~ Supernatural or paramārthika. ~~has appeared time and again in the history of humankind~~. You reach perfection by jumping over ~~just~~ the 'natural' ~~and~~ or laukika perfections, and by short-circuit, as it were, you reach into another sphere the fullness of your life. This supernatural 'saint' can here on earth be a rather quaint figure; later in heaven he will be radiant with light and suffused with all perfection. And in fact there seems to be something in the humanum, as we have defined it, something that transcends mere humanity and points to another degree of reality not to be found on the mere 'natural' level --assuming simply that nature is whatever, spiritual, intellectual or material. ~~element~~ is born (naturatum, natum) on Earth, be it

Most traditional religions have this somewhat transcendent conception of the humanum. The search for this is what characterizes the homo religiosus, but we have not yet reached the monk. The monk is neither the homo on his way to the humanum nor the homo religiosus in his search for the ~~full humanum~~ understood ~~that appears~~ as ~~transcendent,~~ super-humanum or supernatural ~~from the 'natural' perspective~~. → 9,1

~~is not one way of reaching the humanum~~

~~My hypothesis is that monkhood (or super-humanum), but~~ one dimension of this humanum, so that every human being has potentially the ~~monastic vocation~~ to realize that dimension. Monkhood ~~It~~ is a dimension which has to be integrated with other dimensions of human life in order to fulfill ~~reach~~ the humanum. Not of bread alone lives Man. ~~When this dimension is somewhat isolated and especially cultivated, it can~~ could be called an archetype ~~that forms part~~ of being human.

~~neither to be equated with the humanum,~~

possibility

And it is such an archetype that we find under different names in most human traditions. It is understandable that precisely those religions which have most cultivated this dimension have tried to institutionalize it. And ~~it is~~ the paradox that once monkhood ~~the monastic dimension~~ becomes institutionalized, it begins to ~~fade away as constitutive human dimension~~. Monkhood is a constituent part, a dimension of the human being, one archetype; but the monastery is a totum, a total organization of human life. ~~At its best it claims to be a pars pro toto while remaining a pars~~. The monk within the institutionalized framework often suffers from the fact that his vital impulses towards full humanness are short-circuited because they are merely absorbed in the total institution. Experience shows that ~~he tries to~~ looks outside the monastery for that human perfection towards which he aspires. I shall defend later the monastery as a living organism and not primarily as an organization. → 9,3

~~I recall again~~

9,2

9,2

- and sometimes sacrificed for the benefit of that institution.

all too often the monk

9,3

I surmise that one of the crisis of the present day monasticism is precisely this kind of quid pro quo, that something which belongs to human nature as one of its constitutive dimensions loses part of its force and its universality once it becomes a particular form of organized life. Thus, monkhood ~~something~~ which, properly understood, ~~would inform~~ is intertwined with ~~all~~ other dimensions of being human, and ~~would or~~ could be an essential element in reaching

(+) ≠ institution ≠ institutionalization there is institution & institution. there is no organism without organization

9,1

9 ↗

My hypothesis is that monkhood, i.e.
the archetype of which the monk is an expression,
~~is one way of reaching the~~ corresponds to

→ 9

(9,2

it has the danger of becoming exclusive.

become a specialization ~~and then exactly other~~

~~people~~. Not everybody has to enter a

monastery, but everybody has a monastic

dimension which should be cultivated

→ 9

9 →

clearer

9 →

~~We all need~~ ~~of~~ Institutions are necessary and the more human a need all the more necessary ~~important~~ is the institution. Marriage could be an example, and monasticism another point in case. But the moment that the institution monopolizes the very values it represents the danger of 'institutionalization' appears. I shall not speak about love outside marriage, but we ~~th~~ are concerned about holiness, and the quest for the Absolute outside the monastic institution — of all sorts.

→ 9

not clear

Institutionalization of means. When means are [illegible] to ends

The institution is the ritualization of the means, but when the means become ends the institution becomes totalitarian.

becomes a totalitarian ideal
human fullness, ~~is frustrated~~ and loses sight of its own power. I am ~~here still~~ echoing tradition wh~~en~~ich ~~it~~ sees the monk as a solitary (not an isolated) being, perhaps living in a (spiritual) family, but not as a member of a ~~congregation.~~ closed world in itself. Monastic vocation is essentially personal.

Something similar happens when other dimensions of human life, like sexuality, sociability, playfullness or even art, etc. become institutionalized in an institution that purports to encompass the entirety of human life. The humanum is multidimensional, and one single dimension cannot encompass the complexity of human life. ~~But~~ We shall come back to this.

But I have not yet said in what this dimension of the humanum consists. It is this. In the search for 'perfection' Man has often looked for oneness, the hen, the monos, the ekam, the unum necessarium (of the Vulgate). I may use a very traditional metaphor here from East and West, in spite of the different emphases: the center. If we look for oneness in the periphery we cannot reach that equanimity, that shama, ~~and~~ peace peculiar to the monk; we cannot have that holy indifference towards everything because we are not equidistant from everything. Monkhood ~~is~~ represents the search for the center.

Inasmuch as we try to unify our life around the center, all of us have something of the monk in us. This center, by virtue of being a center, is immanent to the human being, but at the same time, by virtue of being as yet unattained, it is transcendent. We should bear in mind that we are not speaking of any specific monastic institution in any specific religion, but rather of an anthropological dimension. Monasticism is not a specifically christian, jain, buddhist or sectarian phenomenon; rather it is a basically human and primordially religious one.

To speak of a buddhist monk or a hindu monk or a jain monk or a christian monk, does no violence to the words. The christian, the buddhist, the jain ... is only a qualification of that center, of that ~~substantive~~ core which ~~is~~ monkhood is looking for in the search. There ~~is something~~ que monastic vocation as such ~~which~~ precedes the fact of being christian or buddhist or secular (we will speak about that too) or hindu or even atheist.

In short, we must recover the monastic dimension of Man as a constitutive human dimension. If this is indeed the case, ~~then to be a 'monk'~~ monkhood is not a monopoly of the few, but a human wellspring which is either being channelled in different degrees of purity and awareness by different people or altogether thwarted. Every human being has a monastic dimension which ~~he or she~~ everyone must realize in different ways. Monasticism in its historical forms would then be not only an attempt to cultivate this primordium in a particular fashion, but to commit oneself publicly to developing, in an exemplary way and according to the cultural environment, the deepest core of our human ~~vocation.~~ ness.

I am saying that there is a primordial ~~religious~~ monastic dimension prior to the quality or qualification of being christian, buddhist and the like. And yet

this distinction is a transcendental ~~distinction~~. This means that while ~~none of us may be able to sever ourselves from ourselves~~, the distinction is nonetheless real and not just a distinction in our mind. My way of living the monastic tradition may be the jain, the christian, the atheistic, or the secular way. But the monastic dimension is prior to and different from the way in which I may live it. If we go so far as to identify the christian monastic way with the monastic vocation or with monasticism per se, then we commit a serious mistake which will have more than merely theoretical consequences. Fanaticism, misguided missionary zeal, inquisitions and' holy wars' have something to do with it, to say nothing of the self-destructive practices which are too often found in monastic institutions. Christian monasticism, for instance, should not be the unique point of reference for an article on monasticism — as the Dictionnaire de Spiritualité still does.

And this is, I repeat, in every human being, a transcendental distinction; which ultimately implies that the way I am to live my being a hindu monk is simply by living my monastic vocation in the hindu manner. We do not speak language; we speak each time one language.

Let us reflect for a moment on the metaphor of the center and on the different ways in which this center is experienced by describing in a very approximate manner two classical ways commonly called the eastern and the western.

Indeed, as we shall discover together, the major differences today exist not so much between 'east' and 'west' in traditional parlance, as on the interface between Tradition and Modernity. I should emphasize that these two centers, the 'eastern' and the 'western' are not geographical locations but anthropological categories. Each one of us has an 'east' and a 'west', an orient and an occident. 'East' and 'west' are ~~two~~ symbols which symbolize two main emphases ~~in human traditions~~ which have been ~~certainly~~, stressed in some traditions more than in others, but which can in no way be considered the exclusive possession of one or other religious family.

— in our epoch of multimedia and multitude of spiritual seekers experiencing other traditions.

First of all, the center is in the center of our being, it is in the middle, equidistant from every single factor of our existence. It is not only a geometrical center, as it were, but also a gravitational one. All stimuli, good and bad, joyful and sad, converge into that center, all arrows tend towards it. But also all impulses and all movements originate there --and in both cases, of course, in so far as we are again centered beings. In as much as we are con-centrated beings, blows may still pain and wound us but when we are thrown into the air, we will fall again on our feet, like the cat, who is a well centered being. And again all our actions, words and thoughts will have the power not only of the particular muscle we display in each case, but will have the weight of all our being, as the blow of a trained Zen master in the art of hitting with the hand.

The center, further, has no dimensions, ultimately it does not exist, it is void and in as much as it is so it will remain immobile while the whirling is on the surface. Another word for it, is to say that it is ab-solute, i.e. unbound, untied, free, and, for this reason, compatible with everything in as much as it remains unattached.

By the same token the center has no value in itself. It is in function of all the things for which it is a center. ~~You~~ Eliminate all the other things around and the center disappears, or rather the center reveals itself as what it 'is': no-thing. An entire monastic spirituality could be derived from the study of this metaphor. ~~Z~~Zen monk, gnostic, could tell us something about it.

As for a typology of the 'eastern' and 'western' centers, I shall say only this:

Even if every center has to be inside, the 'eastern' center is preeminently immanent. Every center is immanent, but the 'eastern' center is immanence itself. Immanence does not mean a kind of interior transcendence, as it is often interpreted, ~~but~~ It means that immanent 'thing' is really in the very core of ~~the being~~ That entity and identified with it. Many of the images suggest this: cave (guhā), point, emptiness, no-thought (śūnyatā), the womb, the clear mirror, (~~W~~wu) non-being, etc. The way is introspection, the inward journey.

Within the pattern of immanence the classical acosmism of the 'eastern' monk is understandable. The saṃnyāsin can be acosmic because in the center he 'has' everything. It is the way of immanence par excellence. He can totally ignore the world because the real is within and not outside. Thus he can be absolutely carefree regarding an illusory world.

The center of the 'western' monk, on the other hand, is certainly equally inside and interior, but it is transcendence. Again here we have to warn against the common misunderstanding of interpreting transcendence as exteriority, when what it means is difference (as immanence denotes identity). This transcendent center is 'semper maior', ever elusive, other, non-assimilable. It evokes images of the mountain, the infinite, the sphere, fullness, plēroma and even progress, or using the neologism of Gregory of Nyssa, epektasis, constantly going forward, reaching further, towards the beyond (the Father, the New Jerusalem).

Within the pattern of transcendence the classical involvement of the monk in the ultimate religious issues of the contemporary world becomes comprehensible. The monk can preach crusades and open 'schools of prayer' or simply schools, he can write books and judge the world as a 'guilty bystander'.

Let me be more specific, at the risk of overemphasizing my point, taking the example of christian and hindu monasticism: → 97

97 →

We have here two different patterns of understanding, two different ways of living and experiencing one and the same archetype. From the beatific vision to the symbol of the mountain, to the sphere of Parmenides, to the fullness of Christ taught by Paul of Tarsus, you have the same paradigm; which should be compared and contrasted with the paradigm of total emptiness, thought-less-ness, one-pointedness (until this point itself disappears), the cave of the heart... to which you in-gress, not progress. There are in this later model no schools of progression in spiritual life, but only the ingression to the depths of darkness; because in the center, the guhā, the cave, there is no light. Let us now be more specific. But before that we will have to give an opportunity for dialogue, clarification and discussion.

Discussion

ED BEDNAR:

The question I have is this: I have been hearing a lot of negative things said about institutional monasticism; that institutional monasticism is not good; that it is not good for the spirit of monastic life; that it causes a lot of trouble, and so forth. And I want to know why people are saying so many negative things about institutional monasticism

PANIKKAR:

I am glad to hear that question. It should help to clarify the issue. Let me reply in two quick stages.

First: I am not against institutions. Society cannot exist without institutions. But I would make a distinction between institutions and institutionalism, which is when institutionalization takes over the life of the institution. I think an institution should be not only an organization, but also an organism. And the tension between organism and organization is a very delicate one. The organization runs when there is money; the organism runs when there is life. And I think that is more than a metaphor. No amount of money (read arms), will protect the institutions of the First World (or of the Second for that matter) if its organism is sick. The organization needs a frame, the organism requires a body. The organization needs a boss, a leader, an impulse from the outside to let it function. The organism needs a soul, health, i.e. the harmonious interaction ~~for~~ between all the parts of the whole. An organization is dientropic, an organism is diectropic. An organization equals the sum of its parts and each part is replaceable by an equal one. An organism is more than the sum of its components and no component can be replaced in exactly the same way, because each is unique. If at all, the organism has to regenerate itself from within when it has been wounded. An organism dies when the soul departs, when the heart ceases to beat or the brain to vibrate An organization has a much longer resistance because its structure is stronger and can function by inertia provided some kind of elementary fuel is pumped in; it has a higher power of inertia.

Secondly, I would not like to say that no effort at a common monastic life should be made. My point is that if I am correct in saying that monkhood is a constitutive human dimension, then, this human dimension can never find its full expression in a closed institution which is bound to be the privilege of only a few. If the monastic dimension exists at least potentially in everybody the institution of monasticism should be equally open to everybody. We should then distinguish between monkhood and monasticism.

Of course, people who share a certain common ideal, can and should come together to discover meaningful ways to realize that ideal. This is more than legitimate.

But this is more the justification of other collective forms of religious life than of monasticism. A religious congregation, for instance, in the Canonical sense of the Roman Church, aims certainly at the sanctification of her members, but her raison d'être is the common purpose of the institution triggered by one particular goal: looking after the poor, teaching of the people, defending the holy places, catering for the spiritual needs of priests, healing or helping the sick, the pilgrims, extending the kingdom of Christ, etc. Monasticism as such has no purpose or ideal of this type, i.e. it does not want to fulfill something ad extra, in spite of the evolution of the idea of monkhood in Western-Christendom in these recent centuries. The monastery would then be not the establishment of the monks, but the schola Domini, the school where that human dimension is cultivated and transmitted.

ED BEDNAR:

Well, a further question: You spoke of the common purpose, but the moment that one tries to express that common purpose it is very easy to get into legalism, or to create a monopoly, or to create separation between one group and another. Is there a way of expressing the common purpose -- and manifesting the common purpose -- without getting into those problems?

PANIKKAR:

Indeed, but here is precisely where we need the aid of one another. Let me put it philosophically.

As long as the logos holds sway over the mythos, the impasse is almost impossible to overcome. We need then Constitutions, Laws and Constrictions. We have to regain a new innocence that will allow the myth, and the spirit of the whole enterprise, to take over our lives. The logos is strong. It relies on evidence. The myth is fragile. It relies on belief. Once the belief weakens it is like when the salt loses its 'saltness';it cannot be restored. We need then a new myth, which

in its turn, produce a new logos.

And here we hit upon the vast problem of over-organization, of pre-planning and pre-programming everything and anything -- and often forgetting the essential. In this country, It seems That the function of education is to impart ~~purposefullness~~ purposefullness in life, a certain notion of success, which I take not only as an assault against the very etymology of the word education (e-ducare, to bring out, to draw forth), but also as counterproductive of the very purpose of education which ought to be to free the subject from very many sorts of conditionings. That is because education has been made compulsory by the State. Indoctrination and socialization takes place in the early years of mandatory education. One of the aims of monastic or religious education is, or should be, to undo or correct that ~~early~~ kind of education. And yet, I think you would agree that despite the difficulties, one probably cannot do utterly without a certain type of institutionalized life. Once again, it is a question of balance

SISTER MIRIAM DARDENNE:

If the contemplative spirit has any meaning at all, it does not need any justification. You said that it is not a means to an end, but like the vocation of the artist or poet, it has its moments of fullness, completeness. And yet it also has its thread, which is playing there, so to speak, as an undergirding theme: It carries much incompleteness.

If I heard you well, you said that the monks are the one who relate themselves fully to that, and do not try to realize the whole humanum. My question is: What about that sense of incompleteness? It is easier to take it ad intra, because the sense of incompleteness then brings you to a further questioning of the who?, of the center, of... I will leave it at that. But what about the incompleteness ad extra? I take it often as a temptation, some dissatisfaction with the narrowness, let us say, of the temenos. Some dialogue between what you call nature (I live in the woods) and culture is always a tension. I do not know what I am saying...

PANIKKAR:

I think you are saying extraordinarily well what I was trying to reserve for the third day. But that is the beauty. As everything is implied in what I said, your question is perfectly legitimate.

The way by which ~~the incompleteness of the~~ monasticism has traditionally overcome (the incompleteness of the) radical simplicity of monkhood is either by going in or going beyond. The first way is by interiorization: you eat up the outside world, you internalize everything, and you feel that in this internalization you have overcome that incomple-

It is the way of mysticism.

teness. It is an overcoming by immanence, as it were. In the second instance, by going beyond, you go to the Father of all lights, the Source of all being, and there at the top, the limit, you get everything. It is an overcoming by eminence, as it were. It is the way of eschatology.

So, you may fill up that incompleteness by reaching the center, in the interior of your being, where all the radii converge and everything coales ces -- and then the world is there already. There is no dichotomy between me and the world. This is the first way. Or (second way), you go up, or out, or beyond -- even if you have to wait until the end of time -- where again you also attain everything. It is the panta en pasin (God "all in all") of Saint Paul.

Which represent the typical eastern and western paradigms.

So you seem to be dissatisfied with these two schemes. This is what led me to say that the tension between 'East' and 'West' is probably not enough. If we are to speak of monasticism today, we must take into account the impact, the bite, the revelation or the temptation of Secularity. It is probably Secularity that brought you to ~~make~~ state this beautiful témoignage. This is the challenge of Secularity: the double scheme, the paradigm of immanence and the paradigm of transcendence, in the best sense of the words, seems not to convince the present-day mentality. It is not enough to renounce the world, or to transcend it. Without now saying anything further, the problem is clearly put. We shall have to work at this together, ~~and~~ study, ~~and~~ investigate, and try to see if there may be another alternative.

ALAN HARRISON:

I am from Saint Gregory's Byzantine Seminary in the Boston area. I have a question along similar lines, exploring a third route or perhaps a third center. When you were discussing the two centers, the 'Eastern' center and the 'Western' center, I was wondering if Christianity is not in a way a combination of these two elements, because it seems that Christ himself was an Easterner. I wonder if western Christianity, European Christianity, is not really a grafting of Christianity onto a Western spirituality and whether in the Eastern Fathers, for example, you may have another route which is in some sense a combination of both the East and the West.

PANIKKAR:

from the inside of one tradition today

This is to me a very valid ~~an inner~~ reaction, because the modern Hindu would say a similar thing, and so would the modern Buddhist; and all be right. This is what I consider the serious impact of Secularity. Secularity lets you feel unsatisfied with either scheme. Certainly, the trap of Secularity would let us say, "let us create a new religion." But this is naive and insufficient. We are too burdened by both the weight and the riches of tradition to sweep it out. But the impact of Secularity might lead us to say, "Let us have a better understanding of tradition". And I, as a Buddhist, would then call for a

renewed
~~valid~~ meaning of the pratītyasamutpāda, which would bring me to a new understanding of the Buddhist message. Or I, as a Hindu, would also look for a new understanding of karma, and a new understanding of dharma, which would in turn lead me to a totally revised understanding of the modern saṁnyāsin. Or I, as a christian, will try to overcome

the scheme of immanence-transcendence and speak of incarnation.

So, this is the right use of Secularity. If we find something viable in what I am calling Secularity, we are going to graft it onto our own tradition. Yet to be viable, the graft must draw sustenance from the roots. All this does not, by the way deny that in the traditions themselves there have already been conspicuous examples of both the attitudes and the effort to overcome either. I share with you the conviction that the eastern orthodox image of Christ is much more balanced and richer than the christian image of the Reformation and Counter-reformation.

SPEAKER:

Just a brief question about Modernity. You said that it is important not to get caught in the trap of Modernity. What do you mean, "the trap of Modernity"?

PANIKKAR:

The trap of Modernity means uprootedness, déracinement. It is to think that the world began yesterday, or the day before yesterday, or that what I learn in school or know in a conscious way is all there is to the world. It is to suppose that the technological megamachine in which we live is the entire world. It is cutting ourselves from the roots of the real, roots which grip deep down into the entire Reality. That is what I call Modernity qua trap. But I would also warn of the stagnation of tradition, that is, when tradition is so thickly overgrown that it does not allow any new growth, or change, or mutation.

I may, perhaps, indicate here what I understand by Modernity without 'trap'. Then, I would use the word Secularity, i.e. that conviction that the saeculum, the temporal structure of the world is something definitive that we cannot dispense with, and thus that we have to take it into account also on the ultimate level.

SPEAKER -2:

I just want to try to carry forth the distinction you made between the two centers. When the contemplative finds the center, whether that center be in the guhā, the cave, or on the mountain, in the beyond, does not this person reach a point in the awareness of God where the categories of immanence and transcendence -- understood not as theological categories but as experiences -- converge? Is not there a point where these categories fall away, and there is just God?

PANIKKAR:

I have to say that your question clarifies our whole enterprise greatly. Certainly, yes. But you describe your own experience, i.e. you describe what you see from within. Here lies the challenge, the danger and the beauty, the temptation and the weakness, of cross-cultural studies. From within, once I have found the pearl, I have found everything. And for me there is no longer in or out, as the kingdom of God in the Gospel of Thomas. You cannot ask me if I am in or I am out, and if you do, I cannot tell you. You are absolutely right: all categories collapse.

And yet, because time is not finished, because we are in this cross-cultural situation, because we are the heirs to many vast traditions, because we stand at this particular crossroads where we find ourselves thrown together (sym bolon) because you (or I) are not the only one, having any such experience, for these reasons (and probably many others) we have not yet attained that total unconcern and simplicity and carefree attitude. Or else I just do my thing, and you do not ask me to come to conferences and explain it. It is when I hear other people's experiences that I break that unity, that blessed simplicity and, I find this typology of immanence and transcendence to be valid. But from the point of view of the experience, what you say seems to me correct.

This brings up another problem. It is the danger of passing sweeping statements of the kind: "Ah, you are wrong, you are primitive. You did not get it, because you only went into the guhā, ..." or "It is Yahweh who is responsible for so many crimes committed in his name." This attitude is wrong because we commit the sin of katachronism. Anachronism is what our grandmothers do. They judge the modern world with their old ideas. And we are all very prone to judge our elders to be anachronistic. But katachronism is just the opposite sort of perspectival error. It is when we use present-day categories to judge the past. This is not what the grandmothers do, but what teenagers do, or what we -- teenagers in this emerging world -- too often happen to do. It is naive, besides being false, to judge the past with our contemporary categories of understanding. We need categories which have being tested in the crucible of time past and can survive in time present.

So, your point is well taken, especially because it is most important to bear in mind that this kind of typology does not allow us to judge, let alone condemn, other such efforts that mark the history of humankind.

SPEAKER - 3:

One simple question. Could you simply say what content you put into the word "archetype"?

PANIKKAR: (the golden-cosmic-egg)

Hmm'. -Hiranyagarbha. I cannot say it in a few words.

I would say that an archetype is a paradigm which becomes for you the center of your myth. And myth is that in which you believe without believing that you believe in it. This is why we can only speak about other peoples' myths.

The word has a long history and was put again into circulation by (C.G.) Jung, and I would use it partly in his sense. I would not like to say model, which sounds too objective, on the outside and too conscious. Nor would I like to say conviction, belief, faith, or doctrine, which may appear to be too 'essential' and equally conscious or conceptual.

Archetype for me represents literally a fundamental type, i.e. a basic constituent or relatively permanent cast, in our case, of human life. It is used as the contrary of a fleeting appearence (phainomenon) and as representing a basis on which at least part of our life is built up. I take from Jung not so much that it is submerged in the collective human unconscious as that it is a dynamis that on the one hand directs and on the other hand attracts human ideals and praxis. I have also used the expression 'constitutive dimension' as the anthropological counterpart of what in the history of human consciousness crystallizes or ~~appears~~ appears as an archetype.

The word is polysemic as most of the living words are. It may mean a sort of Platonic idea, a prototype which is immutable and gives identity to its participations. It may also mean something that which is hidden in human nature because it is cause and effect of our basic behaviour and convictions. 'Our' here means humanity throughout ages and cultures.

II - The Canon of the Disciple

The reflections that follow do not intend to be a new "Rule of the Master", ~~but~~ Rather they hope to express "The Canon of the Disciple", that is, to formulate the ~~thirst~~ aspiration of contemporary Man in search of unification as he is confronted by the manifold character of ~~himself~~ his being and the surrounding reality.

Following a time-honored custom, as much oriental as western, I will formulate a single principle that will then be developed in one corollary and nine ~~seven~~ canons, each of which will be followed by a gloss and a commentary. The gloss will present the canon in its ~~most~~ ~~universally~~ traditionally valid form, while the commentary will interpret it according ~~the~~ to contemporary lights and distinguish it from traditional understanding. The gloss emphasizes continuity; the commentary, change. The two together will describe the contours of growth.

For the sake of presenting more strikingly the facets of the new monk, I shall sometimes overstress certain aspects of the traditional interpretation overlooking the fact that any living tradition is much richer than it may appear and that generally it already contains potentially the more contemporary aspect that I underline. I present this contrast more as a heuristic device than as a historical description. →20,1

20,1 →

The problem arises as to whether this contemporary spirituality I shall describe can still be called monastic. The answer may be semantic, but should not be nominalistic. Names are more than just arbitrary labels. Should we still speak of monastic values even though they have changed? Should we still speak of a modern 'monk' when he has abandoned so many things of the past? Is it altogether the same archetype? Before deciding the alternative, I would voice a double conviction: the first general, the second, specific.

First, in the crisis brought on by the encounter of religions and cultures, the words that express fundamental human experiences cannot be identified with a single conceptual interpretation within one culture, but rather they must be amplified until they embrace the homeomorphic or functional equivalents of other traditions. The word 'grace', for example, cannot be reduced to what the Tridentine christian tradition thinks of it but must embrace what the shaivasiddhānta thinks of it as well. Thus, in order to determine the meaning of a word a functional approach is imperative ~~essential~~. The modern monk might have changed in the understanding of many values, but if the thrust remains, he can still be called a monk.

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20 →

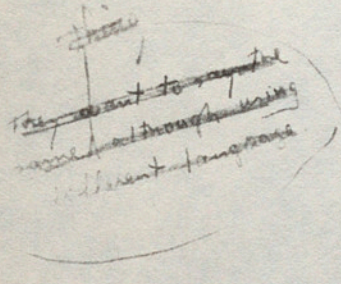
I know and foresee the reaction of among the best representatives of the traditional monastic spirit: "But this is exactly what we want and what we stand for! Why then all these caricatures?" I am in full sympathy with this reaction which only stresses the continuity of the monastic vocation. But we cannot be blind to the appearances either and to the ~~way~~ manner in which things are often seen. It may be that some do not ~~see~~ sense the conflict between the old and the new. But one side alone is not sufficient to pass the verdict that there is no conflict if the other side sees it. And in fact the uneasiness of the young generations and the proliferation of religious and schools of spirituality vouch for the fact that there is an apparent conflict between tradition and modernity.

→ 20

Second, this approach is strengthened in the particular case that concerns us now. In order to understand what a monk, a rāhib, a saṁnyāsin, a muni, a bhiksu, etc. is, we must know not only what each tradition says about him, but also what prompted the monk to take the stance he took.

It could be that in the last analysis we would prefer to do away with the word 'monk' altogether and find another less overburdened one, but this would not prove that what the contemporary monk intends, does not correspond to what the ancients were trying to do. It is still an open question, which probably has no theoretical answer. If the modern monks — I mean the new monks, not those contemporaries who legitimately repeat the tradition of the past — call themselves monks there seems no reason to oppose them. Here 'apostolic' continuity is probably more important than doctrinal uniformity. But we shall still have to see whether or not the archetype monkhood has been split into two; whether we have here a mutation or simply another species of religious life altogether. It all will depend on whether we can find one single principle both for traditional monasticism ~~in itself~~ and for the new one. The enterprise is not easy.

We may recall that the great scholar and benedictine Jean Leclercq has written that "monasticism is not a matter of speculation nor is it a problem; it is a mystery" and that the great monk Thomas Merton speaks of monasticism "as a problem and a scandal".



The problem is important not for the status and future of monasticism only, but for religious existence altogether. In our present times in which religious values suffer a rather thorough transformation, perhaps monkhood will become the central religious archetype so as to offer a continuity which may save modern Man from falling into a more than cultural schizophrenia, a split within himself because of a break with his own past.

Our hypothesis about monkhood as a human dimension will have to stand the analysis of the archetype of monkhood in its manifestations. History shows without exception that the monk in all traditions has been a sign of contradiction. Monkhood has been hailed as the divine life on earth, as the jīvan-mukta and enlightened being and equally looked down upon as the vulgus pecus, the novum inauditumque monstrum, the hypocrite and alienated fellow par excellence.

Here appears the consequence of our distinction between the monk as archetype, i.e. the monk as a paradigm of religious life, from the archetype of the monk, i.e. the human archetype which was lived by the monks, ~~(monkhood)~~, but which may be experienced and lived today in different ways.

→ 21,1

We all know not only the Rule of the Master, but the different Masters of the venerable monastic traditions, east and west; but who are the disciples? Who is the disciple author of these Canons? Who is the modern monk about whom we are going to speak?

The author of the Canon of the Disciple is as anonymous as the writer of the Rule of the Master. The new monk is represented by the young generations of men and women entering into traditional monastic institutions but bearing with them and sometimes in spite of them the spirit of ~~modernity~~ secularity. The new monk is further represented by all those who do not even dream of entering traditional institutions and who nevertheless are attracted by a life which could well be called monastic. They in fact have started new movements, new religions, new forms and sometimes revived old patterns. In sum, and especially, the new monk is an anonymous being which voices the aspirations of many, of older colleagues also: the new monk is an ideal, an aspiration that lives in the minds and hearts of our contemporary generation. I have found this new monk among the poor and among the rich, ~~among~~ in the east and in the west, ~~between~~ among

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so-called believers and unbelievers alike. I have found an equal number of men ~~then~~ and of women and they are active in secular institutions as well as religious organizations. The new monk has not yet acquired self-consciousness and the Disciple sometimes does not know that he/she is following the Master. You'll find this new monasticism in the slums, in the market places, in the streets, and also in the mountains and valleys, not excluding the corridors, classrooms and lobbies of modern society. His name is legion and his surname dissatisfaction with the status quo; but his pedigree is as mysterious as the source of the waters: they emerge from every ~~color~~ slope — because it has rained — and heavily over the earth, and the clouds are still there ---

the new monk lives also in old monasteries.

my own experience

→ 22

We shall try now to analyze the main traits of monkhood and to formulate that unifying principle we were refering to.

a) The Monastic Tradition

1.- The Fundamental Monastic Principle is Blessed Simplicity

GLOSS:

At first sight, human life is complex: Our body has many organs and divergent urges, our spirit has a plurality of faculties and manifold functions. We are attracted by many things and our very being is the result of very many factors and in itself is a complex being. We become aware of reality when we begin to distinguish and we begin to know when we discriminate. The human person herself is not a single entity but a set of relations. All in us and around us seems to be manifold. We live under the sign of multiplicity, and human civilization tends to further multiply knowledges, distinctions, methods. And life itself: there seems to be a natural dynamism towards complexity. Furthermore, the very many parts of the universe and of our own being seem to be in strife with one another: the mind against the heart, the parts of the body in conflict with themselves and with the spirit, dissension among families and nations, the law of the jungle among animals, cataclysms in nature...

Nor is this all. Everything seems to be fleeting, inconsistent, passing away; temporality is unsatisfactory; we feel the uneasiness of proliferation. Sarvam duhkham: Plurality is a fact. The world is complicated and so often we are worried and perplexed because we appear to be incapable of handling the many things that interest and yet trouble us.

Monkhood is a radical reaction against such a state of affairs. If Man has been defined as the only animal that knows how to say No, monkhood could similarly be described as the radical articulation of this No to the excruciating multiplicity of what appears to be. The monk is the non-conformist. The monk of all times has been seen as he who sails against the current of the stream of all things in search of the simplicity of the source. The monk is the one who tries to move upstream to its origin which one supposes to be simple. God is simple. Brahman is utter simplicity. The monk believes that the Absolute is simple and that the goal of his life is to attain that very simplicity. The way may be hard, and at the end there is even no way, but it is all simple. No thing, nothing can quench his thirst, trishna. He will not be satisfied until that very tanha has disappeared, not so much because he has found an object

capable of appeasing his desires (he would soon look for another object), but because the very cause of that urge has disappeared.

The simplicity that monkhood stands for is not a onefoldness without discrimination. It requires an essential qualification. It has to be a blessed simplicity, i.e. a simplicity conquered with blood (blessed) and then made holy, sanctified, set apart in the singlemindedness that has reduced everything to its quintessence and reached the ultimate transparency of truth. In other words, the monk does not seek simplicity by doing violence to the real, by chopping off real values, by abusing some of its ~~fields~~ realms and exploiting others, but rather he aspires to simplicity respecting the rhythms and nature of things, ultimately because he is convinced that the truth of the truth, the core of being, the satyasya satyam, is simple.

There [illegible], of course, do not speak of the novice, but of the fully realized monk. The aspiration here is already fulfilment.

As an example of this traditional mentality, I may adduce without commentary three fundamental texts chosen at random. I translate the first and the last and give Abhishiktananda's version of the second.

a) The first is a famous hymn to the monk in the ~~The~~ tenth mandala of the Rg Veda, ~~X, 136~~

At Home in Both Seas, East and West

1. Within him is fire, within him is drink,
within him both Earth and Heaven.
He is the Sun which views the whole world,
he is indeed Light itself --
the long-haired ascetic.
2. Girded with the wind, they have donned ochre mud
for a garment. So soon as the Gods
have entered within them, they follow the wings
of the wind, these silent ascetics.
3. Intoxicated, they say, by our austerities,
we have taken the winds for our steeds.
You ordinary mortals here below
see nothing except our bodies.
4. He flies through mid-air, the silent ascetic,
beholding the forms of all things.
To every God he has made himself
a friend and collaborator.
5. Ridden by the wind, companion of its blowing,
pushed along by the Gods,
he is at home in both seas, the east
and the west -- this silent ascetic.

6. He follows the track of all spirits,
of nymphs and the deer of the forest.
Understanding their thoughts, bubbling with ecstasies,
their appealing friend is he --
the long-haired ascetic.

7. The wind has prepared and mixed him a drink;
it is pressed by Kunamnamā.
Together with Rudra he has drunk from the cup
of poison -- the long-haired ascetic.

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(1) (Notes to numbered verses of Rg Veda X, 136)

1. Long-haired ascetic: keśin, the wearer of loose long hair.
Drink: viṣa, poison, poisonous drink or, as here, intoxicating liquor which burns inside like a fire (as confirmed in v.7).

He "carries" Earth and Heaven, like Prajāpati, to whom he approximates by divinization.

2. Silent ascetics: munis.

3. This stanza is put into the mouths of the munis themselves.

4. Beholding the forms of all things: here there is a double meaning; a spatial one, due to the association with the sun (seeing all things from above), and a more spiritual one (from a higher perspective).

5. The wind: Vāta. Companion of its blowing: Vāyu, the divinity of the wind.

6. The spirits, nymphs: Gandharvas and Apsaras.

7. Wind: Vāyu. Kunamnamā: possibly a female spirit, connected with Vāyu.
Cup of poison: viṣasya pātra. Cf. the later myth of Śiva drinking the poison

b) The second text is a free rendering from the Brhadāranyaka and other Upanisads. ~~At the moment, I cannot vouch for its exactness.~~

In this world,
out of this world,
seer of what is beyond sight,
he goes secretly and hidden, unknown;
mad with the madness of those who know,
free with the freedom of the spirit,
filled with essential bliss,
established in the mystery
of the non-dual.
Free from all sense of otherness,
his heart filled with the unique experience of the Self:
fully, and forever, awake.

c) The following verses of St. John of the Cross declare the way to ascend the Mount of Perfection and warn against following twisted paths—

The Way to come to the All.

To come to what you do not know
you must go through where you do not know.

To come to what you do not enjoy
you must go through where you do not enjoy.

To come to what you do not possess
you must go through where you do not possess.

To come to what you are not
you must go through where you are not.

The Way to hold the All.

If you wish to know all
wish to know nothing of anything.

If you wish to enjoy all
wish to possess nothing of anything.

If you wish to be all
wish to be nothing in anything.

The Way not to hinder the All.

When you stop at anything
you lose your thrust toward the all.

For to come altogether to the all
you must altogether leave all.

And when you come to hold it all
you must hold it desiring nothing.

For if you desire to have something in all
you have not your pure treasure in God.

Sign that one has All.

In that nakedness the mind finds quietude and rest
because, as it covets nothing, nothing
pushes it upward, nothing forces it downward,
for it rests in the center of its humility.
For when it covets anything, in that it is fatigued.

Nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing.
And on the Mount, nothing.
Here there are no paths -- for there is no law for the just.

× × ×

In sum, this blessed simplicity appears to be the monastic principle as such, as so many witnesses from different traditions confirm. It could be said that the Quest for the Absolute is also another name for it. But this Ab-solute is 'un-bound' precisely because it is both free from multiplicity and frees us from every constriction. The Absolute means not only the liberation from multiple concerns, but also from multiple beings, from multiplicity, in a word.

I ~~We~~ call it principle because it is at the very root of the monastic ~~urge~~ aspiration and it characterizes monkhood, serving as criterion to discriminate the monastic dimension from any other one. This is all the more important as we are going to underline facets of the new 'monk' which are conspicuously different from the traditional ones and this principle will serve as the criterion of continuity with tradition.

COMMENTARY:

While traditional monasticism tends towards simplicity through simplification, with the accompanying danger of reductionism, contemporary 'monasticism' seeks simplicity (aplotēs) through integration, with the consequent danger of an eclectic juxtaposition. If the temptation of the first is pessimism, that of the second is optimism. Nothing is said about whether this new attempt will succeed.

Fuga mundi, contemptus saeculi, kāyotsarga, tyāga, nityānityavāstuviveka, or in other words, scorn for material values, contempt for the temporal, abandonment of the body, indifference in regard to the political, sense of superiority before cultural values, neglect when not condemnation of the profane, renunciation of the world and of the immense majority of values cherished by Men, etc., constituted basic points of the traditional monastic spirituality, whether jain, hindu, buddhist, christian or whatever. The monk's only concern, at least theoretical, was the supernatural, the pāramārthika, how to acquire nirvāna, the only one thing: to eliminate duhkha. In order not to do unwarranted violence to the real this simplification must justify itself by a doctrine that relativizes all those other values and lets them appear as secondary in comparison with the quest of the Absolute. If you truly simplify, you should not eliminate any real thing. It would then be reductionism. You must get rid simply of appearences, 'privations', burdens, and complications. Ultimately you are bound to say that nothing is lost when you suppress the superfluous, because in truth "you are already there". "There is nothing to lose. You only do not know it yet." Or, as the Tirukkural says: "Whatever Thing a Man has renounced, by that Thing he cannot suffer pain."

Here we have the existential role of doctrines like original sin, karma, the intrinsic evil of matter, the provisionality of time, the caducity of the world, etc. What is certain is that in the search for the one needful thing, the unum necessarium, traditional spirituality forgot, to a certain extent, that this unum has parts and that although Mary's portion may be the better one, Martha's is equally a part of the ἕν toward which the monachos or monotropos, as he was also called in greco-christian literature, strove. It tended to forget that if you are overconcerned with looking for the real always beyond everything you may leave reality behind. Or as Abhinavagupta says: "the essence of reality is to appear".

In sum, what is abandoned is deemed superfluous, when not bad or negative. The monk renounces the flesh and the world, either because they are bad, or not ultimately real, or at least not definitive. The authentic monks (as Dom Colombàs puts it)(1), never cared to give witness, they would have considered it presumptuous and proud and even hypocritical. They were humbly satisfied with not giving scandal.

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(1) Cf. Colombàs I, 35b)

The present-day conviction is different: the mysticism of transcendence or immanence has been supplanted by the mysticism of integration, which attempts to include all possible values because of the confidence that the synthesis is possible. It is not necessary to be an eunuch, or lame or maimed to enter the kingdom -- perhaps because this kingdom is no longer situated in a transcendent heaven. One is reminded of that cry of Augustine: "Those who have maimed themselves for the sake of the kingdom of the heavens are no longer males. Oh peculiar foolishness'. " (1). How is it possible to consecrate to God a human life if we renounce living it? This was a catchy phrase of some christian monasteries some years ago.

Theologians and exegetes will undertake to adapt the texts to their understanding, but this is not our concern now. We hear it said that Buddha was the first marxist; and that the hindu saṁskāras were the first rules of hygiene, that fasting purifies the body as much as the soul; and that unquestioned obedience strengthens the will, etc.

The modern monk does not want to renounce, except ~~the bare minimum~~ what is sinful or negative; rather he wishes to transform all things. Will he succeed? He does not want to destroy but to build; he is not interested in stripping himself of everything but in assimilating it all. The christian Cross itself is ~~not~~ seen so much a sign of suffering and death as of the intersection of the four directions of the real in one harmonious point equidistant from the four extremes. He strives to arrive at the center converting it, not into a point without dimensions, but into a perfect sphere that embraces everything.

New winds are moving in millenial monastic institutions, be they christian, jain, buddhist or hindu, and new forms of monastic life are springing up in many places. We have to ask ourselves whether this is a betrayal of the monastic calling, or a new mutation in the same direction or finally another form of spirituality which experiences the pangs of a new birth within the womb of the old institutions, but which must go its own way once it has reached a certain maturity. We are asking ~~ourselves~~ whether we have here a break or a continuity. (as many texts would confirm)

We could have put the essence of monkhood in the effort to unify one's life and to reach a unification with the rest of reality. We could have given a true but too general (and flattering) definition of the monk as the monachos, i.e. that person who aspires before all else to be wholly one; not just solitary, 'alone', but

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~~(1) Cf. St. Augustine, De opere monachorum XXXI, 40 (Colombae I, 345)~~

'all-one', unified. The monk would then be the person seeking first unity with herself, ~~first~~ and culminating in unity with the entire universe. This would then apply to any serious person in search of one's own humanness, and so extend the meaning of the word to other human efforts at integration which have never been related to monkhood.

The whole challenge of modern monkhood, it seems to me, consists, at first sight, in the impossible attempt, to acquire by simplicity, the fullness of human life. This is the method of what I have called simplicity through integration. In order to realize the importance and the challenge of such a move we may now consider ~~the~~ this possible ~~previous non-monastic~~ attempt at reaching the humanum.

It is the archetype of Complexity.

2.- The Alternative: Secularity or Harmonious Complexity

We have declared ~~the~~ blessed simplicity to be the principle of distinction and intelligibility of monkhood. This principle organizes and arranges human life according to that paradigm; but we know that there are many other human efforts at living a full human life which do not draw their inspiration from this archetype. When the Cusanus, for instance, presents God as the "complexio omnium" as the encompassing integration of all things, he is no longer in the monastic mood but represents a trait of the European Renaissance. When Teilhard de Chardin, to give another example, sees the evolution of the universe towards an increasing complexity, he equally departs from the monastic ideal. When Abhinavagupta, for instance, says that in order to reach liberation one has to integrate and transform all the elements of the world, he seems also to express a principle alien to the monastic spirituality. ~~When~~ when St. John of the Cross, on the other hand, tells us that the way towards the All is to renounce everything or when the apophatic tradition tells us that the ultimate reality is void, nothingness, śūnyatā, ~~all~~ these voices express the monastic ideal. Not without a deeper reason than that found by philosophical enquiry, the founder of the most powerful monastic institution of the world, Lord Buddha, defended the anātmavāda or doctrine of the non-self as the very center of buddhist life: there is no substance, no permanence

We would like to subsume all the other non-monastic attitudes under one single principle ~~also~~ in a similar way as we have done with the monastic one. For reasons I shall explain later, I shall call secularity this other human archetype.

In point of fact there seems to be a double possible attitude regarding the ~~complexity of~~ approach to reality. It could be expressed in two words: simplicity and ~~harmony~~. complexity.

As we have already indicated, these two fundamental human options, that of monkhood and that of secularity are not taken simply

because of the private opinions of their followers. They are taken because they express and represent two basically different conceptions of reality. You ~~take to~~ follow the way of simplicity because you believe that the structure of the world is reducible to a single point, because you believe that the nature of reality is simple so that you really do not lose anything in the simplification and, on the contrary, you win not only a subjective wellbeing but also an objective truth. → 30,1

30,1 → Simplicity, as the meaning of the word suggests, indicates one single fold, singleness, a one without a second, without duplicity of any kind. Simplicity is only possible on the ultimate level if the multi-plicity is fruit of ~~an~~ the unfolding of one single reality and ultimately the manifold character of reality is only secondary, contingent. Simplicity as an ideal implies the belief that ~~there~~ either there is no way ~~in~~ of salvaging all those 'inferior' elements ~~of~~ ~~an~~ ~~only~~ merely apparent world. There is no point in wasting precious life and human efforts in utopian phantasies of a paradise on earth, of a just human order in which everybody will be happy, and the like.

the multiplicity is reducible to unity or that

because ultimately they belong to

The attitude of simplicity ~~It~~ entails a kind of universal and ultimate pessimism. We have already mentioned the underlying monistic ~~assumption~~ underpinnings of the way of simplicity: It is an implicit assumption not always patent, because most of the times we do not draw the ultimate consequences of our attitudes, and also because many other cultural and religious factors often counterbalance the latent monistic tendencies with their clear dualistic doctrines. Life after all does not need to be consistent, or rather it is in fact not always logically consistent.

regarding all the secondary structures of reality. Those

structures cannot be [illegible] We have to [illegible]

[illegible] this they achieve by [illegible]

Reduced to its bare bones this first basic attitude reposes on a monotheistic belief in a perfect and thus simple God at the very source of reality. To return to that source is the meaning of life.

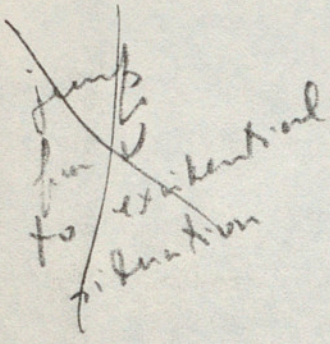
On the other hand ~~harmony~~ complexity, as the very word suggests implies the result of 'joining' all elements so that they may fit together in a ~~complex~~ whole, in a concordant and superior unity. ~~Harmony~~ Complexity is only possible ~~in the world~~ if the internal tendencies of the different constituents are not incompatible with one another and in the final instance all of them form 'part' of a whole from which those parts have been somewhat detached, from where they have evolved or come from. ~~Harmony~~ Complexity as an ideal implies the belief that there is an eminent unity holding everything together. It entails a kind of universal and ultimate optimism regarding the possibility of establishing a cosmic or personal order in this universe of ours.

The ultimate reality [illegible] really matter [illegible] monistic, viz. it is unequivocally one.

Those who take the attitude of ~~Secularity~~ complexity ~~harmony~~ believe that the structure of reality is pluralistic, so that you commit a sin of reductionism against reality if you attempt to reduce everything to a single principle. Reality

It does not believe in tragedy, it assumes the compatibility ~~and~~ of all that there is and the possible reconciliation of the different elements of reality. It minimizes evil

30



follow the way of
You ~~take the~~ complexity because you believe that
the structure of the world is pluriform, ~~so that~~
because you believe that the nature of reality
is complex so that your task is to collect
all the severed pieces of yourself, and in
(perhaps
the last analysis of the universe, into
a multicolored pattern.

30

is complex and realization implies reaching the highest possible ~~harmony within that~~ complexity.

Reduced to its bare bones this second basic attitude, reposes on a pluralistic belief ultimately incompatible with a symbol of a monotheistic God as an ultimate and simple reality.

It is here also clear that the belief in a plurality ~~at least a dualism~~ of irreducible elements is assumed to be at the basis of this attitude. It is worth the effort to bring ~~in harmony~~ together the different constitutive factors of reality, because they are all real and the puzzle can be put in order. It may very well be that the real solution is only on a transcendent plane, at a later world or still coming eschatology. Both attitudes, in fact are dynamic attitudes which do not need to be immediately realizable on the given plane of ordinary existence. This reference to a superhuman point is expressed in the two adjectives qualifying these two basic human options.

Blessed simplicity underscores the fact that it is not an automatic process, but one which has to be wrought with total dedication, by an 'extra-ordinary' grace and through a transformation of the very structures of reality. The monastic spirituality is not so naive as to embark us on a trip in which at the end all fades away. On the contrary, it will assure us that at the end nothing is lost, all is regained, but on a higher, incomprehensible sphere in which the 'things' appear as what they in reality are. It is not so, as the novice may tend to believe, that the rivers and mountains are again rivers and mountains, but that for the first time the rivers and mountains are real rivers and mountains — because the reality of the

and mountains is more than their geological appearance.

Harmonious complexity means also that everything has to be transformed so as to be able to be joined and fit together. But here transformation does not mean an ontological change as it were, so that the beings are, for instance, converted into Being, but an enhancement of their actual being — although here the language is bound to be the same, yet the meaning being different.

consciousness, and latter a change

The two attitudes imply then a process, a becoming, a change. But again the difference becomes clear when we consider that the former stresses the change in ~~oneself~~ with changing our awareness, transforming ourselves. ~~The latter~~ Secular spirituality, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with changing the circumstances, the surrounding world.

We could go on describing these ~~stressing the~~ two apparently ~~mutually~~ irreducible views or rather experiences of reality, but we may turn now to sketching their possible relationship, leaving for the last chapter of the Third Part an ~~further~~ attempt at reconciliation.

The first thing to note is their respective insufficiencies. The entire reality cannot be reduced to one single principle. In spite of all the subtle ontological distinction on the ultimate level, one single principle would consume all the rest. There has to be dynamism and a certain type of pluralism also within the highest unity. This is what, I submit, the doctrine of the Trinity as well as that of Advaita stand for. Or we could put it in the remarkable words of Parmenides at the very start of the Western Tradition: speaking about reality he says that it is given in the now as totality (pân), oneness (hen) (and) complexity (syneches). This is probably the language of most mystics and to it we shall return after having presented the announced ~~seven~~ nine sūtras with their corresponding bhāṣyas and ṭīkās.

Here is where I speak of the cosmotheandric character of reality.

b) ~~Seven~~ Nine Sūtras

In order to have an overview of the ~~seven~~ nine canons we give them here before the corresponding glosses and commentaries:

1.- The ~~Breaking~~ Discovery of the ~~Heart~~ Primordial Aspiration

2.- The Primacy of Being over Doing and Having

3.- Silence over Word.

4.- Mother Earth prior to the Fellowship of Men.

Overcoming 5.- ~~Sublimating~~ Spatio-temporal Parameters ~~into~~ Trans-historical Consciousness, above Historical Concern

6

7.- The Fullness of the Person over the Individual.

8.- The Primacy of the Holy.

9. The Memory of the Ultimate and the Presence of its Gate

Reality cannot be a sheer unrelated plurality either. In spite of all differences and irreducibilities the very awareness of plurality entails a higher unity. There has to be a certain relationship also between the ultimate ingredients of reality.

Revelation
Sensing
Discovery

1.- The Break~~ing~~ of the ~~Heart~~. Primordial Aspiration.

through

GLOSS: → 33,1

The monastic archetype lies hidden beneath the ordinary appearences of things and of human life. It is not a superficial whim. One cannot begin the quest for Blessed Simplicity just by abandoning things or wandering around to escape the burden of one's own responsibilities and duties. The world literature is hard on monks. The harshest words against the fake specimen of monks are spoken by monks themselves. Suffice to read the Rule of the Master. Of the four kinds of monks only two are worth the name, and the other two are condemned with the most execrable words. Monk is not just the one who wishes to be it. It requires a break through, an initiation, a dīkṣā, a new birth. ~~and~~ You have to be a twiceborn, a dvija in order even to begin. All monastic traditions stress the compunctio cordis, the conversio morum, the true metanoia, the firm resolve to leave behind the 'things of the world', the laukika and the stern urge for liberation plus the practice of all the virtues. ~~The~~ Shankara's Vivekacūḍāmani could serve as a classical example here. The desire for liberation (mokṣa): mumukṣutva has to be a burning fire. You

There has to be a rupture of planes, as any initiation requires, but the plane here is especially the plane of one's heart.

The heart here stands, of course, for the ~~center~~ core of the person. This heart has to be broken, or rather once the heart is broken one can begin anew by wanting to make it whole again in a wider and deeper way than it was before. The heart breaks because ~~of~~ hamartia, sin, duḥkha, suffering, avidyā, ignorance, injustice, war... pervades the world. "Save me from death, afflicted as I am by the unquenchable fire!" is the typical plea of the Hindu candidate to the monastic way as Shankara writes. Monkhood is not just the mere continuation of 'ordinary' or empirical life. ~~An~~ Initiation is needed. But this initiation, ~~unlike the initiation to biological~~

~~In the Christian tradition~~, for instance, ~~the~~ primitive monks never claimed to do anything else than to take seriously the baptismal initiation, to have plunged into the waters of death and resurrection and to begin to grow in that christic sphere where the entire renewed Body of Creation begins to expand. Christian monks did not want to be especial Christians, but just Christians. It was only when people felt the praxis of evangelical demands began to relax that the monks were singled out as ~~the~~ an example for all Christians, not because they did something peculiar, but merely because they tried to practice Christian virtues — which ~~since~~ Paul ~~have~~ twice

[illegible] to knock [illegible] at [illegible] door of the monastery to touch repeatedly [illegible] of the [illegible] to [illegible] only. Not [illegible] who say [illegible] it for The Kingdom

~~It~~ is not automatic. [illegible] has to be an aspiration: the primordial aspiration [illegible] than, that of becoming what he really is — [illegible] is supposed or called upon to be — has to break through. A discovery or revelation, as dim as it may be, has to be there. Christian tradition can speak of the baptism of desire, because the desire of purification is essential for the validity of the christian initiation. The

55

Simplicity is not just given. It has to be conquered and precisely overcoming the world of multiplicity. Dazzled by the many things of the world and the many desires of our hearts we have to retrieve ~~into~~ the essential unity of things and of our self if we are to be what we really are. In our first incursions into life we might have been deceived if not wounded.

→ 55

~~has been~~ summed up as ἁπλότης καρδίας, simplicitas cordis / simplicity of the heart. This simplicity already at that time meant also the purity of the total person at her source.

This break has to be both personal and public or sociological. It is not enough to have felt in one's heart the all pervading reality of duhkha, the prison of saṁsāra, the ἁμαρτία τοῦ κόσμου, the sin of the world; ←——; it is also necessary to fall at the feet of the guru, to leave your house and/or your family, to 'go to the mountains', to renounce the world, to publicly become a renouncer, to enter the sangha, or a similar act. You need to break with society, even if this means that you no longer perform the sacred rites. The entire monastic literature is full of sarcasm against those who deem it possible to be monks while living with their families or in the bazaar or town. The fuga mundi is more, although certainly not less, than a merely 'spiritual' attitude. The habit does not make the monk, but certainly the monk does makes the habit. You may hide the pearl for sometime, but at a certain moment you have to sell all that you have and buy that pearl. The monk goes extra mundum. Monastic asceticism is both inner and outer. →39,1

to practice xeniteia, expatriation

39,1 →

It is necessary to underscore this first ~~sūtra~~ canon, not only because it is essential to the monk-hood, but also because it is perhaps its most visible and probably specific trait. ~~Many a mystic, without being a monk, may have many other or all of the other sūtras~~ practice. This one has a sociological aspect specifically monastic.

It is also necessary to stress its importance because of misunderstanding, on one hand, and difficulties to put it into practice, on the other.

There can be no monasticism ~~without this breaking of the heart~~ without this experience of conversion, of turning around and in, of stripping off the so many things that cling to us, of abandoning the 'usual', 'normal' and even secure and often reasonable way. As one Upaniṣad says: "On the very day one is

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~~(1) Cf. Eph. VI, 5; Col. III, 22~~

etymology

'broken-hearted', on that same day one becomes a renouncer"; a broken-hearted, i.e. an indifferent to the world, a disillusioned person. This experience can take, obviously, the most variegated forms and does not need to be a psychological shock, but at any rate it has to be a break from where there is no return, as texts from East and West affirm. √airāgya means ~~literally~~ disgust from the world and literally hostility (vaira) — to it. To be a man (a hero, a vīraḥ) is to fight the

The 'broken-heart' is only a onesided metaphor, for in truth it is only a negative expression when seen from this shore of saṁsāra, of mere creatureliness. It is the old heart that is broken and opened, often with violence so that it may give way to a new heart and a healed person with throbbings of the new life of compassion, love and true understanding. The metaphor is onesided because seen from the other shore, from the already new life it is not that of a broken but of a new heart. Monastic life is also a life of peace, joy and serenity. The heart that has been broken was a wounded heart, a sinful one, a heart of stone. It had to be broken because the human condition is unjust, ignorant, sinful. The monk has to break through this thickness of callousness and selfishness in himself and around him, he has to break through mere temporality and inauthenticity in order to be on his way. Ahamkāra and abhimana selfishness and conceit have to be broken so that the

Now, who is going to open his heart? Nobody can do it by oneself, and the mere will is of little avail. No amount of personal suffering and of social disorder is sufficient either. Many see it and escape or fall into despair and their heart remains closed. Here we touch the mystery of this first sūtra. Somebody, something, God, the ātman, grace, love... has to touch or strike my heart and open it up. I am somewhat passive. It happens to me. I cannot give any ultimate reason, because it is a gift, although it may often appear as a burden and even as a curse.

Furthermore, except for very few cases, and even those have to maintain that heart, open, pure, simple, time and again, for most people this is a continuous process, an increasing opening, a constant purification of the ego that returns persistently to where it has been dethroned. Here is the place of sacrifice as a constitutive element of the actual nature of the real. Sacrifice performs this exchange of hearts, this opening of our lives, this rupture of planes, this throwing us away from the banality of mere instinctive life. → 35,1

35,2 →

COMMENTARY:

The modern monk cannot bypass the need for conversion, he cannot do without ~~the~~ initiation and every initiation means not only the beginning of a new life; it implies also a break with the previous stage of existence. But there are at

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Some of the classical Indian sūtras, precisely because their study is for the sake of mokṣa or salvation, begin with the adverb atha: here, now; and tradition has interpreted it as meaning exactly this: new beginning toward the path of liberation which implies a rupture with the past or what has been learnt so far. So begins the path of the yoga-sūtra, brahma-sūtra, etc.

→ 35, 2

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35 ~~35~~

The ~~Break-Through~~ eclosion of the Primordial Aspiration is the very beginning of spiritual life. ~~the often called initiation~~. Now, this aspiration necessary as it is cannot produce the effects it aspires. The will is here impotent. This aspiration is only a condition. It does not produce the goodness it aspires. ~~This is~~ For this something else is required. ~~grace~~. ~~It has to come from the outside: The guru, the God, The world, the friend, the spoken word ---~~ ~~This is what grace means.~~ ~~But even then the two have to meet, the break-through has to takes place.~~ ~~the inner disposition and the outer~~ calling. Only then

35

35,1

For reasons we cannot develop here I have called aspiration this primal dynamism of the human being, fruit of the spirit and rooted in the very spiritual nature of man, and not desire in order to dispell the possible misunderstanding of some monastic spiritualities, especially the buddhist, when they condemn straight away any kind of desire, be it of a bad or even a good object. Desire ~~implies selfishness~~ is the activity of the empirical ego. Aspiration is the blow of the spirit within.

35.

least two important variations in the way in which this vairāgya, this compunctio cordis, penthos, is experienced.

First, many praxis of the ancient style seem not only obsolete, but harmful and negative. The corporal mortifications, for instance, and the detachment from the affairs of the world appear often incompatible with the contemporary monastic spirit. The 'world' has shifted from the 'bishops and women', to quote facetiously from the first Christian monks, i.e. from the dangers of the social life of the community, civil and religious, to the political and socio-economic structures along with the ideologies of all types which represent a danger to combat and an enemy to conquer.

This shift of parameters of the world is all the more important to underline as many of the traditional forms of monasticism still operate in the institutional way with the old pattern while anthropologically the new pattern has already emerged -- creating thus sometimes unnecessary tensions. It is not that the world and its ways have not to be renounced; it is that the world is no longer seen in the theater, in the schools, in the 'profane letters', in sex or political activity. The world is seen, instead, as we shall have still occasion to show, in the 'worldly spirit' that today takes prevalently the forms of social injustices of all sorts, political manipulations of all kinds and in general the prevalent System of a competitive society when the people do not have the same tools, talents, opportunities and desire to compete. Perhaps money is here the invariant.

Much has been said and written about world-affirming and world-denying spiritualities. And all too often one has not sufficiently considered the conceptions of that world which some spiritualities are supposed to affirm and others to deny. If a certain Vedāntic monasticism, for instance, rightly or wrongly according to our opinion, but in fact so, believes the world to be pure illusion the corresponding world-denying attitude amounts to a true life affirming and reality-affirming attitude. The modern monks are interested in many things of 'this world' because they believe that the shaping of this world is a religious and even a contemplative concern not alien to the monastic vocation. The dichotomies temporal and eternal, sacred and secular, the human and the hindu or christian or the religious in general, the natural and the supernatural, etc. are no longer considered by and large valid by a good number of people. I shall call it the impact of secularity and shall explain it later. → 36,1

36,1 →

The second main innovation that present day mentality introduces in this first canon is the secular link between the individual monk and the rest of the world, including all the social values and secondary causes that seem to run the destiny of humankind. In other words, the disciple goes to the master because his heart is broken and asks for instruction and guidance; but he is uneasy and often revolts if he feels that what the master wants is to break further his will, obliging him, for

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In other words, while traditional monasticism often insisted on the sinfulness of the world and the need to break one's heart, the contemporary monk would like to discover the positive side of man's primordial aspiration to the infinite, to fulness, to perfect joy, and almost taking for granted that hierarchies will have to be overcome and obstacles conquered. The modern monk stresses the ~~There is here~~ a distinction to be made between that primordial aspiration of man which triggers the dynamism towards liberation, justice, peace and the desires of the human being which entangle our life in conflict, banalities, selfishness and sin. The modern monk is sometimes weary that having heard so much about the repression of all desires the aspiration of his being he also somewhat dulled ~~wearied~~. It has happened more than once that ~~the~~ young aspirants are ~~turned~~ turned off and go away because of the long faces and lack of joy that ~~he or she~~ they seems to have

seen among the elders who were supposed to be
Their ~~their~~ models. I am not blindly approving
the fact that most modern gurus appear as
smiling figures. I am just saying that joy,
ānanda, is also a monastic virtue and an essential ingredient
of the primordial aspiration of Man. Tradition
and Modernity would agree on this. Only
that this claim seems, sometimes, to the
modern monk, either too high, because
postponed ~~for~~ to another life, or too deep, because
hidden with too many cautions, warnings or
simply unfriendly appearances.

→ 36

instance, to do irrational things. The famous watering of a stick could serve as an extreme example. The new monk, first, has lost the innocence so as not to see clearly through the psychological motivations of his superior. Secondly, he feels humiliated not in his pride, but in his dignity to be treated in that artificial manner. Thirdly, he is also concerned with the stick and with the real plant and takes it to be an affront to the earth, the possible plant and the stick to indulge in such mockery. Or was it only an injunction to check his sense of humor? The zen master may still on the Desert Fathers

The breaking of the heart does not mean that others have to break my heart artificially, but that I have arrived at such conviction, certainly with the painful aid of authentic experiences and not artificial experiments. By all means the monk wants his will to be set in tune with the will of God or the master or simply with the nature of things or of reality, but not just to be broken for the sake of it so as to be prey of no matter what injunction may come to him. The limits to obedience are → 62

To be sure, I have forced the colors of a certain traditional spirituality in order to put the variation more forcefully, but we may have perhaps succeeded in doing it.

Perhaps the psychological shattering of many people today make them unable to see the ontological depth of such practices. But this is what it is.

2.- The Primacy of Being over Doing and Having

GLOSS:

Being is or can be unified. Doing and Having entail multiplicity. Monastic spirituality defends the primacy of being although it may consider it empty, śūnya, and in fact non-being, asat, wu; or full, complete, plēroma and in fact supreme or absolute Being. But in every case it is being before doing and having that prevails. Different schools may consider that what is, to be more or less dynamic or static or accept, on the other hand, that being is pure act. But what is essential is just to be there, here grounded in reality.

One of the words consecrated by usage to express this second canon is "contemplation", that is that activity which situates us in an open space from which we can observe and contribute to the course of the universe; or as the Gītā will say, that activity that delights in the wellbeing of all beings, or that maintains the world in cohesion (lokasaṁgraha). This contemplation begins by purporting to be the ultimate means to obtain the final end of human life, namely, to sustain the cosmos, or in terms of christian mysticism, to create, redeem and glorify (divinize) the universe along with God. But soon it is recognized that

Rather the means have evaporated. It only remains what it appeared as: means converted into ends.

the human condition cannot transcend itself. The ultimate means becomes thus in itself the very end of life, the fullness of existence. Therefore, for the contemplative, it does not make sense to speak of a model to imitate or even of a path to follow. The contemplative life is simply life, life in its fullest sense: for some it is the discovery of the person, or of the human being; for others, the discovery of the being of all beings. At any rate, the value of each being lies in its being what it is, not in what it does or has. The intuition of being thus stripped of all spurs or inducements -- that is what the monk glimpses. We do not have to justify our existence by what we do or by how useful it is to others. That would only instrumentalize our lives and convert them into a mere means for some other thing, for a better future whether in a vertical or a horizontal line. Life is an end in itself. In this manner contemplation became more and more opposed to action. And in this way the monk became

the contemplative par excellence over against the active religious people. the saṃnyāsin does not perform any rite, the hermit lives long periods without sacraments, the monk is not normally engaged in action.

Many other words may serve to express the same trait. The monk, for instance, is monk because he is in search of enlightenment. His whole life is geared towards it. And yet he knows that the very desire for it is somehow an obstacle to it. Paradoxically, we could say that enlightenment is thus the goal of monasticism, but not the aim of the monk. You are after satori and to get it you become monk, but you do not look for it, as it were. You are open and perhaps full of hope, but not of expectations.

At any rate monkhood is not primarily concerned with doing anything or having something. The central point is the development of the core of the human person to its fullest — in whatever sense this core may be interpreted.

COMMENTARY:

But what is this life? Traditionally, this primacy of being came to be understood ~~traditionally~~ as primacy in regard to doing: as theoria before praxis; as the jñāna-vādins before the karmakāndins, as contemplation being more important than action; or as the scholastics formulated it: operari sequitur esse (action follows being). Further, this being aspires to become the ~~very~~ absolute Being in which there is no distinction between having and doing, being and becoming -- or ~~in other words~~, even between 'being' and 'non-being'. ~~Being is not only opposed to doing or praxis but also to having or to the means. This having is not simply wealth or riches but is also doctrine. Having is the means to obtain an end in itself.~~ Being is not a means for anything, it is an end. The contemporary monastic spirit equally defends this primacy, but ~~this~~ being is not considered to be merely a theoretic vision, ~~or~~ pure gnosis or mere darshana; it is not ~~seen~~ just as an intellectual operation which relegates praxis to an inferior plane. To ~~continue~~ refer to the scholastic dictum cited earlier, its reverse is here equally stressed: esse sequitur operari. Praxis and theory are not in ~~any~~ dia-

on a subordinate role

lectical opposition. It is not a case of the former ruling the latter nor vice versa, because ultimately the one does not exist without the other. All praxis has a nucleus of theory and all theory is the fruit of some praxis. True action is contemplative and authentic contemplation acts. Such a dicotomy does not exist in reality.

but he underscores the distinction between being and having. having is not simply riches, it is also the power of the means. And

The new monk stresses the unity of being and doing, ~~on the other hand,~~ having can exert a deadening weight on being. The lighten being in order that it may truly be is the task of monastic spirituality. Having is everything that being has not yet been able to assimilate. I have stocks of food, but the daily bread is not having; it is being. Having is the artificial trappings that we accumulate; it is the knowledge stored in our memories or in books and not really transformed into our very being. Having is all the accessories that serve some purpose in the beginning but further down the line leave us entangled in the means without allowing us to reach our true goals. Having is all that weighs us down in our sack of provisions. Having is what prevent us from performing contemplative action in all our doing. Having is all the fabricated interests that impede the true purifying action that many would call revolutionary. The Eucharist is to be eaten, and not just enthroned in gold; the Buddha is to be discovered in oneself rather than adored in emerald. The contemporary monk does not want so much to wash his hands of all doing as to free them of all having, parigraha, precisely in order to put them to use for their proper task. He does not want to have chains on his feet. He wants to be able to go where the Spirit leads him with all his being, which has no longer having, because it is pure act. ~~Will he succeed?~~

or in a stūpa

→ 39,1

3.- Silence over the Word.

GLOSS:

Silence is one. Words are many. Strictly speaking, this gloss should be left blank, but priority does not mean exclusivity. In trinitarian categories we could stress the attention the monk gives to the Spirit over the Word, without this implying absolute priority. It implies, however, to be ever attentive to the spirit in the word. Expressed in philosophical categories, we are dealing with the priority of myth over the logos. And speaking with moral overtones, we could explain this canon saying that it deals with the new innocence that no longer has anything to say because it feels that everything has already been said and that speech is nothing but the cloak of reality and all too often its tomb. Those who ~~attend~~ listen to the silence out of which the word emerges often have no need of ~~the silence from~~ words and and those who have not discovered this silence the very word will conceal it. The kevala-jñānī, the perfect jain monk who has already

or the kevalin

29

The modern monk resents the fact that the traditional monk has often been 'condemned' to social inaction under the pretext of pure being, as if the two were at loggerheads. He would like to be active in the world — as an outcome of his own being; he strives fervently in having in order to have a higher freedom in doing. Will he succeed?

→ 29

obtained omniscience neither speaks, nor preaches. He has even dispensed with teaching the saving doctrine. The monks speak and write little and often do not sign their writings, although through their disciples we know their names. The Buddha commends the noble silence and the 'silent one' is a synonym for monk. Each word comes out of silence and when possible accompanies it.

The experience of silence is itself silent and therefore does not compete with the word. The very formulation that speaks of priority is deceiving. From the side of silence there is not any kind of priority, nor is there any from the side of the word, since it would represent a contradiction for the logos to affirm by means of the same logos that there is something preceding it. Yet nonetheless, human experience throughout the ages tells us repeatedly that the Tao that can be expressed is not the Tao; that those who know do not speak and those who speak do not know; that it is understood by those who do not understand and is not by those who understand; that it is those whose spirit is poor who truly shall see God, etc. There is a spiritual experience that is not conscious of itself. There is a meditation without thoughts: it does not think, nor even thinks that it does not think; and nonetheless it is not simply a dream or total unconsciousness. There is something awakened in us which later on can possibly be incarnated in word, but which allows us to see perfectly clearly that the word is word, precisely because it is itself incarnated by the work and grace of the spirit.

True 'orthodoxy' is not the correct formulation of doctrine but the authentic experience of the 'glory of the truth'. It is nothing but the other side of orthopraxis. The monk does not understand doctrinal disputes when they are extrapolated outside of their context. What in modern times has come to be called the 'sociology of knowledge' is what monks of all times have experienced, that is, that every formulation is dependent on a set of factors that relativize it.

To cite more than one tradition: "In the beginning was the word"; but the word was not the beginning since it emerged out of it. It is not that there exists a thing which cannot be said; or that there exists an ineffable something behind the logos. Silence does not speak nor has anything to say. Silence has no message. Authentic silence is not the repression of the word, but rather the non-reflexive consciousness of the very womb of the logos; but this is true in such a manner that if the umbilical cord uniting the two is severed, the silence disappears and the word dies. For this reason, the cultivation of silence cannot be commanded nor does it consist in the repression of the word. Recalling the classic humanist distinction between nature and culture, the word belongs to the latter, and silence to the former. There is no culture of silence; it is natural or it is not silence. You keep naturally quiet when

you have nothing to say.

Paradoxically, albeit understandably, the traditional monk takes relief from his silence in prayer, be it individual and silent or communal and vocal It seems as if more often than not the silence is not broken by 'talking' to God or reciting interminable mantras. In a cenobitic setting, the most marked characteristic of the traditional monk is a life of prayer. Silence blossoms in prayer. The monk only speaks to others on rare occasions; but on the other hand, he chants, recites, studies and meditates constantly; his ~~politeia~~, his *conversatio is in heaven." It is the others below who climb up to the high places where monks live to ask their advice. The monk does not speak, but is questioned. Curiosity is a sin. It does not even interest him to preach by example. He has submitted everything to God, to the Dharma, to what is, and he is not concerned with interfering directly in the course of events. His silence is acosmic. Not everything needs to be expressed in words. Life, gesture, attitude may be equally expressive. But not even everything needs to be expressed. Things can simply fall into the abyss of silence as to their proper place. → 41,1

πολίτευμα, his "commonwealth, his citizenship

COMMENTARY:

The modern disciple has learned well the lesson of his predecessors and will not fall into the temptation of trying to use the 'mass media' to make himself known or to influence others. However, he is equally aware of an unbreakable bond between silence and the word, and fears that the former degenerates if it does not incarnate in the logos, if it does not descend into the market place of Men and at the very least listen to them. He fears that his life will be short-circuited if he isolates himself from the clamor of his fellow Men who ask for bread, demand justice and sing and dance to the sun, the moon, the seasons, or to the religious and civil events and festivities of their time. The disciple wants to listen to the world although this later may trouble his silence. But, at the same time, it will make it more vital and perhaps more fruitful. The demons and asuras of the cold and lonely regions have been converted into the shouts and cries of the human centers below. But there they go, the modern monks. The daily papers with their news have been converted into spiritual reading because subject of meditation.

it would

his silence

- matter

they are the

The silence of the modern monk is not only at the beginning, as the very source of the word. The modern monk does not like high walls, enclosures and lonely places where the clamor of the world does not reach him. He tries to find the silence at the end of every word also, he would like to let the exuberance of the word land again into silence so that the perichoresis, or circumincessio of the word returns into silence. There has been a continuous descending of monks from the high mountains of the Gods into the low plains of the humans. → 41,3

or circular dynamism

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~~The monk understands with his 'hara'~~

The academician or the scientist experiments with his ideas. The monk does it with his life. The experiments with ideas is generally called thinking. It is the region of the 'mental'. It may be called perhaps 'comprehension', but not under-standing not the total human fact of standing under the might of the thing so under-stood. The monk understands with his "hara" as the Japanese would put it. The true gnostic of the Christian tradition is not the 'intellectual', but the contemplative. Contemplation leads to action, because the contemplative understanding is the total realization of the 'thing' so under-stood, so that it catches you , it dominates you, it has power over you.

It requires humility — monastic discipline will stress — to understand, i.e. to stand under the spell of the thing understood. You are vulnerable when you so understand.

Silence does not mean to be numb or dumb. Monastic silence is such because it has overcome the mental and gone beyond words, because it has transcended Thought. This is why the monks are not at ease among pure intellectuals. Of course, monastic discipline will recommend silence as a means against dissipation.

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41

This canon shows one of the places where the mutation, the split or simply the possibility of the other option ~~of~~ in favor of complexity may become more visible. There is the danger that the modern monk pays lip-service to the primacy of Silence without ultimately believing in it — and here the metaphor of the lip-service is ironically appropriate: to speak about Silence is already to betray it. Silence does not speak, does not witness, does not even exist — at anything — because ultimately Silence is not. Silence is fully acosmic. Silence is the absence of logos. Silence is not intelligizable. Silence does not hide itself, because there is nothing to hide. Silence is not in favor of silence, because it is not favor of anything. Nor does silence defend and justify itself either, because silence has nothing to defend: silence is not a subject-matter about which you talk. Silence is not against the logos; it is simply prior to it. The logos is the sacrifice of silence, the immolation

In the beginning is the Word.

of the word. Silence is the Father, source and origin of the whole divinity, as I understand the Christian Trinity, but ~~this~~ is not just a christian reflection. ~~we are here not on Christian grounds.~~ We are in a monastic setting.

In point of fact only very few monastic movements have been radical enough as to consider the muni, the silent one, the perfect monk. The ~~Jains~~ Jaina monks and ~~Zens~~? ~~The Zens~~ Zen monks are probably the most representatives ~~only ones~~ along with some Hindu saṁnyāsīns ~~and~~ a few Christian solitaries. But most surely ~~probably~~ the true silent ones are invisible to our eyes and totally hidden from our consciousness. They don't even know about their silence. Nevertheless, even without extreme positions, the traditional monk revers silence and values it higher than the word.

The modern monk is often torn apart. He loves silence indeed and would like to keep a balance between the apophatic and the kataphatic, but it is hard for him to believe that he has not to speak when ~~[illegible]~~ it would amount to repression not to allow his thoughts and words to penetrate and influence his surroundings. He is conscious

(41,5

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of
to having a mission and this fact alone makes pure silence impossible. He might have lost that innocence that he may still admire in the "fools-for-Christ" and the *mauna* hermits or wanderers. But the lost innocence cannot be recovered. A *second* innocence is a contradiction in terms.' Perhaps he may strive towards a *new* innocence, but this new innocence has already crossed the threshold of the Logos and proceeds ahead towards unknown realms. Or to put it more simply: the modern monk knows how to read and write; he cannot pretend to be an illiterate.

It is not a second one, it is new.

We know well — and Dom Leclercq could not come to sum up for us his fascinating book on the subject — that this tension is not of yesterday as also the Buddhist tradition shows. Yet what was the personal vocation of the few becomes today the general situation of the majority. The fact that so many christian monks were also ordained as priests one of whose functions is the διακονία τοῦ λόγου, "the ministry of the word" goes also in this direction.

→ 42

4.- Mother Earth prior to the Brotherhood of Men.

GLOSS:

The Earth is one; people are many. The Earth is simpler than Man who is more complex. If it is certain that the monk has his gaze fixed on the invisible, often called 'the beyond', the 'center', transcendence, God, ātman, nirvāna, etc., it is no less certain that he has his feet firmly planted on the ground. The monk stands, in a certain sense, between heaven and earth with the consequent danger of forgetting the intermediary world of his fellow Men. Of the three worlds, triloka, of which almost all traditions speak, the monk seems to live more in the nether world of spirits, demons, asuras; more in the telluric than in the human-social world in which so-called civilized humanity moves and bustles. The monk has a certain chthonic-telluric consciousness that characterizes him; he does not belong like the bees or other humans to a productive society, but to a living cosmos like that of the seasons, even if it is called ~~evolutionary states of consciousness~~ the kingdom within. The monk cultivates this earth and all the spirits that vivify her. The monk lives in communion with the cosmos, he is in contact with the saps of the earth — with the good and evil spirits alike. The same

Certainly it is not solely the privilege of monks to live with the seasons and celebrate ~~the~~ cāturmāsya, the arrival of spring, advent, new year and the festivals tied to earthly, astrological and atmospheric cycles; but it is the monk who primordially celebrates such festivities with the greatest independence from their socio-logical or agricultural effects. The monk leads a cosmic existence which then allows him to forget or at least neglect, the historical aspect of human life. Social issues, for example, have never been his strength nor historical problems. Between heaven and earth the monk seems to live in a vertical posture inclining toward Mother Earth only so as to better lift himself to look toward God, or the Gods, or the nameless Mystery above his head. He wants to live alone because he feels in his being the vital current that descends from above to the depths of the Earth. He has little time or interest in the horizontal currents that circulate between human beings. Only when heaven and earth seem to meet (as in the Crusades of the European XII and XIII Century) the monk seems interested in 'politics'. And often he betrays a lack of historical understanding (as the same example of the Crusades shows). The monk is a cosmic being who tries to disentangle himself from this common; he is not a social worker. The monk fights and deals with the elements more than his fellow beings.

COMMENTARY:

The Canon of the Disciple faithfully follows the Rule of the Master here: 'ora et labora', and labor consists in the cultivation of himself and Mother Earth. But the population of the earth's primitive inhabitants bhūtas, angels, asuras, elves, yaksas and marauding demons has been seen to dwindle.

42

Alchemy even more than
anthology was a monastic occupation. Alchemy, is not
~~before it became~~ a means to riches and power,
but the total transformation beginning with
matter. Alchemy is "the art to bring to an its
completion something which has not been completed"
said Paracelsus paraphrasing the common belief
of his time that all things are created in
an uncompleted way. The monk undertakes
this task beginning with mother Earth and
her elements which are not only the physical
~~one~~, but also the psychic ones — utilizing
modern parlance. In fact all the elements
are equally spiritual forces.

→ 42

~~But~~ What is important for the modern monk is the Earth herself. She too is a victim of the voraciousness of human beings who have abused her more than all the other living beings put together. Humans have not simply taken their sustenance from the earth but they have further exploited and violated her, trying to climb to heaven ~~even~~ although this Tower of Babel begins to crumble even as it is built. It is no longer so much the living spirits who still populate the earth that worries the modern monk, as he tries to re-establish a relationship of harmony and collaboration with her, but the living Earth herself. To work the Earth does not mean to exploit her, ~~nor is it to~~ for one's own gain, but rather it means to cultivate her as one would a friendship or a garden, and not as one would exploit a mine. Traditional monasticism offer us examples of this cultivation of cheese, wines, honey and crafts. Mother Earth is returning to life and recovering the soul which from ancient times she has always been believed to possess: anima mundi.

The attitude of the monk before the earth should not be confused with a fundamentally aesthetic posture. It is not so much the beauty of a garden that engages him so much as the pulsing life of a forest; it is not the immensity of a landscape, as much as the freedom of the waters and the spontaneity of the natural cycles. The monk is not a 'primitive' but he can claim to be a "primordial", not limiting his life to the merely rational or aesthetic. It is not only that he attempts to recover his own body, but equally he tries to save Mother Earth. We are not referring here simply to a franciscan or Zen attitude with regard to nature; we are trying to point out a more generalized sharing of a community of destiny and vital metabolism with the earthly. A major part of cult, or sacrifice, consists in the linking of Mother Earth with all her elements to the revitalization of life -- from the vedic yajña to the christian eucharist the examples can be multiplied. The vedic kesin and the jain digambara do not go naked, they walk clothed (but only with) the wind and covered by the air; as the famous rig-vedic hymn sings: Mother Earth protects them.

The unification of life cannot be carried out without the collaboration of the Earth and without ~~it too being~~ integrating her in the process. It is not only the body that is raised, it is the Earth as well. The monk seeks solitary places but he does not exile himself. He does not flee from the Earth; he roots himself in her. Many take a vow of stability; others carry the earth with them; the majority caress it with their bare feet and the sādhus when they die are not cremated like everyone else but buried in the bosom of Mother Earth, mostly thrown into the abyss of the Waters.

But the modern monk is not satisfied with this alone. Can he live in communion with the Earth and in community with his fellow beings as well? He conserves a certain ~~He does not~~ wish ~~any longer~~ to retire to the deserts, but he has seen these visited and populated by instruments of atomic destruction. There seems to be a shift from the

cosmic to the human. And also an inclination to find the divine more in Man than in the Cosmos. He likes the Earth, but he cannot dispense with the fellowship of Man. → 44,1

It is here that the Canon of the Disciple situates and frames monastic prayer. The monk is traditionally the Man of prayer. But his rite is as much cosmic as human. His prayer is not so much petition as praise and in many traditions is more a participation in the rhythms of the universe than hymns of glory or cries for help. The monastic prayer of the disciple is all of this, but it is primordially a contribution to the 'interactions' that govern the universe, an active introit to the co-redemption of the cosmos, a revitalization of the spiritual content of the world and a contribution to the total atmosphere of reality in which all beings breathe. Cult is the celebration of the order of reality.

5.- Overcoming Spacio-Temporal Parameters.

GLOSS:

Monastic existence does not move solely or principally in time and space. Interiority, on the one hand, and transcendence, on the other, are classic monastic categories. The spacio-temporal involvement is foreign to him. Reality goes beyond time and space. Human destiny is not exhausted by the achieving of our goals in time and space. Again we see here the principle of simplicity at work.

True life, traditional monasticism would say, has little to do with this mundane life that unfolds in time and space. The monk bears witness to the beyond, to the overcoming of 'worldly', temporal, transitory, cares and tasks, etc. "The life above is the true life." At best this one here below serves to make us worthy of the other.

To be sure the overcoming of the spatio-temporal parameters cannot be achieved overnight. Monastic formation takes this into account and leads the candidate through a whole process of purification and enlightenment. There is place for growth and room for becoming in traditional monasticism, but the goal is clear: total disentanglement from the structures of this cosmos, saṁsāra, world.

COMMENTARY:

Here also there exists a tension between classic monastic spirituality and its contemporary interpretation. While the former understands this going beyond to necessitate an abandonment of material parameters as a prerequisite for achieving

44 →

(Modern Science has demythicized the Earth. The modern mank may not go along with ~~all~~ it all the way, but he has suffered the impact. He reacts by adopting a less cosmocentric and a more anthropocentric attitude.

→ 44

the definitive end, the latter interprets this same going beyond as the discovery of a new dimension which does not render superfluous the material elements of reality but rather complements and transforms them. While the first emphasizes transcendence, the second underscores the immanent. We ~~must immediately~~ have already remark~~here~~ed that ~~this~~ immanence should not be considered merely as a negative transcendence, that is, as a transcendence interior to each thing. Immanence is not something that is so interior to a thing that it has somehow already transcended the thing itself, but rather something that dwells in the very marrow of the being in question and constitutes it without thereby being totally identified with it.

The contemporary monastic mentality seeks a spirituality that is not exclusively 'spiritual'. It wants to integrate and not exclude all the spacio-temporal parameters of human existence. Its fundamental category is transformation, metamorphosis, transfiguration. Not only by bread alone do we live, but certainly by bread as well, and without it we cannot subsist. But the bread must be assimilated, that is, transformed and converted into the very material of our beings. The modern monk wants to recover the ancient alchemy. Here the ~~modern~~ monk rejoins existing but somehow neglected threads of tradition. Many a mystic, East and West, show an extraordinary contemporaneity.

We have already said how

The reality that the monk tries to discover and adjust his existence to is not supra-or infra-temporal. Perhaps it could be called trans-temporal in the sense that it is inherent in temporality itself, although it transcends it immanently. The lived experience of tempiternal awareness, for example, is not that of an existence faced with an untemporal and, in the last analysis, post-temporal eternity, but rather the experience of those tempiternal moments of this very existence in time and space. The modern monk is child of our contemporary time and shares many insights of a Sacred Secularity. He does not await the 'other' life, but cherishes the hope of discovering in 'this' life his own soul, that is, the very Life of life, including his own. The monastic formation is aiming toward the aperture of the 'third eye', toward opening our senses to a reality hidden in the very ordinary things and events, a dimension that reveals itself as long as our vision is pure and our heart untainted. The monk does not cultivate the expectation of the future but the hope of the present; he does not want to live looking toward the past, but tries to drink in the whole transtemporal content of the present. The redemption of time and space implies a transformation of spiritual alchemy which is comprised in all his asceticism, sādhana, tapas, training and ardor. Many trends, ancient and modern, meet here.

The unification of being toward which the monk inclines becomes here more arduous. Not only will he not scorn any human value, but actually

he attempts to cultivate them all. Nonetheless he is ready to offer any value them in a sacrifice which does not destroy but transforms it them. True wisdom here consists in the transfiguration of all true values. Because of this, the monk loves everything that exists and is even passionate about everything human without excluding the material and temporal. In a certain way, the more ephemeral the value, the more it will awaken his interest and attention: it becomes all the more urgent to rescue and redeem it before it disappears.

The contemporary endeavor is audacious and difficult, because all that is not gold glitters. Viveka, discernement of spirits, is here needed. There are pseudo-values and there are allurements that distract us from the ultimate meaning of life. It has been written, that no one can serve two masters, that nitya is not anitya, paramārthika has nothing to do with vyavahārika, nor the World with God, nor flesh with the spirit:"Render to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's", and cease to lead a divided existence. "Take quick action because it is better to enter into the kingdom crippled than to remain forever excluded from it". "I have come only to teach the way that will free you from suffering; all the rest is superfluous and therefore an obstacle to obtaining nirvāna." The majority of monastic spiritualities teach this, albeit with some major refinements due to the exigencies of human nature.

Present day religious consciousness tries to realize an integration without falling into a compromise, to achieve unification without degenerating into mere juxtaposition. Is this possible? The theoretical answer which has been proferred for sometime still holds: the devil too is a servant of God; the temporal is the very manifestation of the eternal and its shadow; appearances are precisely that, the appearing or revelation of reality; the world is the creation of God himself and as such is good; the real human spirit is an incarnated spirit; Caesar himself belongs to God; true simplicity is that which has integrated all the elements of reality; amputation is not necessary when an organism is alive and retains its regenerative powers; freedom from suffering is only the other side of that first step necessary for the achievement of happiness; it is the very obstacles in our path that allow us to overcome them and ourselves in the process; etc. Reality is neither monistic nor dualistic, but advaitic, trinitarian, vital, that is, pluralistic although without separation, etc.

But theory is not practice. Current monastic asceticism tends to make possible what until now would have seemed inconceivable. It is asked, "how is this possible since I do not know man?" Is this faith force powerful enough to realize such a harmony and integration? And the answer that encourages him is to hear also that "there is no word impossible for God." And this is precisely the task: to achieve what at first glance appears impossible: to unite Heaven and Earth, flesh and Spirit, the

The Four Vows of the Rinzai tradition.

World and God, the Masculine and the Feminine, the Secular and the Sacred." The

The dilema of modern spirituality is formulated without palliatives and carried to its ultimate consequences by the contemporary monk. Either the perfection to which we have aspired throughout the ages is a pernicious alienating dream since it cannot be realized, or else we must be able to achieve it overcoming but not abandoning the spatio-temporal nature that constitutes us. A perfection that is not also in someway corporeal ceases to be human; a happiness that must be left for after, ceases to merit the name. Is there a middle way between an obviously insufficient and ultimately non-existing humanism and an equally unreal angelicism? The monk poses the problem in all its acuity to cure us ~~once and for all of~~ from half measures and beguiling short term solutions. This is the challenge of monastic spirituality in our day. Many pray, "on earth as it is in heaven", but sometimes they understand: "since not on earth, then at least in heaven." The modern monk challenges: "if not on earth, then not in heaven", because "to him who has, more will be given" since we only have what we are. The monk also "has heard it said" (itivuttaka) the Kingdom is neither without nor within, but between us, in the interregnum of cosmotheandric interaction. And to this end he strives: "to be a light unto himself."

itivuttaka

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ED BEDNAR:

Now we begin the question-and-answer period.

GURU JOHN SINGH KALSA, from Sikh Dharma: The question I have is about the definition of monk and monastic. When I hear those words, I automatically translate "monk" to equal spiritual aspirant in a more universal sense, and "monasticism" or "monastic" is translated immediately in my consciousness as spiritual community, or the global spiritual community -- not limiting it to a definition of one who sits in a monastery or ashram, secluded from everything, but the actual sādhaka or one who practices sādhana. I wonder if this is in line with what you are saying?

PANIKKAR:

This is very much in line with what I have been saying. The monk is precisely an expression of a constitutive dimension of the human being. So any sādhaka would be considered on the way to this monastic spirituality. A sādhaka is one who tries to unify his or her being around the center. These centers are interpreted in different ways, the sādhanas may be different, and the sādhakas may have totally different natures, but that would be monastic spirituality. Yet, I would not like to identify monachism with

with spirituality. And this is the reason of all my distinction between the monk as a model of spirituality, ~~the monk archetype of~~ and this archetype as one human dimension.

BROTHER LUKE:

Father Panikkar, the only thread that I had some uneasiness about was the third thread that you talked about today: Mother Earth is prior to the Brotherhood of Man.

I was wondering: Does that really fit into Christian monasticism?

PANIKKAR:

~~I think~~ It is good that I have a chance to make this a little more precise. Prior, to me, does not need to mean exclusive, or even more important, but simply before: I spoke of the consciousness that the filiation with the Earth comes before the fraternity or sorority with human beings. And the history of monasticism, East and West, seems to vouch for this particular thread. Monks choose a place to live more for the sake of the place itself than for the sake of its inhabitants, whether they are nice people or not. Sometimes they went to the desert to fight the demons and cosmic forces, not Men.

Now, Christian monkhood has been quickly aware that human fellowship is paramount. And this is precisely the wellknown movement within Christendom which led first the Mendicants (Franciscans, Dominicans, etc.) and then the Regulars (Jesuits, etc.) to shift from a ~~sturdly~~ strictly monastic spirituality to a greater involvement with the world. The more recent development of the Ramakrishna Order within Hinduism could be another case in point.

This I have called the crisis of Modernity, which is not the same as saying contemporaneity. Things that went without saying -- that first came solidarity with the Earth, and then human community -- are now in the throes of a certain tension, which may well bring about what I am calling the third stage in the monastic tradition, the New Canon of the Disciple and the further awareness it implies.

But look where the monasteries are situated, East and West. Not individual in the inner city, certainly, where monks today may feel impelled to take up residence, but I was also trying to say that this tension should not become a destructive, dialectical tension, but a creative polarity. Without ceasing to be loyal to something which is traditionally understood as monastic, we may still live with our eyes open to our own reality, which certainly is quite different and may indeed elicit from us a certain mutation of our ~~self~~ understanding of monasticism.

in holy mountains and hallowed valleys — in places of power. I mean of telluric power.

FRANCIS TISSO:

You spoke about the modern monk, and his or her concern with transformation. But yesterday you used the term Modernity, and I wonder if you could explain that term. It carries a tremendous amount of power -- it seems that when the spiritualities of the East or the West, whether immanent or transcendent, encounter Modernity, a tremendous explosion and transformation occurs. Could you discuss Modernity in light of the "modern monk"?

PANIKKAR:

That is, again, something I was trying to reserve mostly for tomorrow, but as the question is also implied in today's presentation, I may advance just one trait which is for me the very essence of Modernity.

Undoubtedly, any tradition has its past, its present and its future, and consciousness of its present, so that in any tradition you have some sense of modernity. So, no tradition is without that sense of getting up-to-date, modernizing itself or whatever is needed to carry on the tradition. No tradition is alive if you do not carry on and pass it ~~over~~ -- which is what the very word "tradition" means. To speak of modernity in that sense would then be just one case among so many. I think you detected very well that when I used the words modern monk or nun and modernity in my presentation, I was not using them in this way, relative to what is past. I would like to stick my neck out and present the thesis that today's all-pervading secularity is the fundamental feature of Modernity.

By secularity, I do not mean the history of the European churches, or of secularization, ~~about~~ which we all know. Nor do I mean the realm of the profane. I would make a very fundamental distinction between profane and secular. The profane is, by definition and etymology, that which is not the sacred, that which stands in front of the fanum, namely the profanum, in front of the temple, that which is not encircled by the sanctum. So the dialectic between the sacred and the profane should be carefully distinguished from the dialectic between the secular and whatever else. The distinction sacred-profane is a priestly distinction. The realm of the priest, qua priest is the fanum, the temple, the numinous, the sacred. The realm of the lay person, of the non priest is the profane. The monk has little to do with this dialectic -- although in the Rule of the Master (I, 6) the tonsure prohibits calling the monk a layman. Yet, monks are not purohits, priests, and belongs to a peculiar trait of christian history the tendency of monks to be also ordained as priests. was perhaps needed a process of secularization, in order to bring about the meaning of secularity -- as I would like to use the word.

Until now, due to very many factors, which I shall not elaborate, the secular has been more or less identified with the profane. I think it is time to disentangle the identification of the profane with the secular, and to discover that the secular does not necessarily mean the profane, but something else altogether.

And here again I align myself with that accumulated and crystallized wisdom that we have in the words themselves: saeculum, ~~which~~ comes from the Etruscan, most probably, and has connections with the Greek aion, aeon, and with the Sanskrit āyus, which means life-span. Saeculum means time, or rather the time-span, the life-span of the world. Per omnia saecula saeculorum: what does

it means? Secularity, which I now relate to Modernity, means the saeculum, i.e. the temporal span, i.e. temporality, that is time, the flow of time, the temporal character of things. This temporality is now being taken not only as something that matters but as something definitive. The temporal structure of the world instead of just being fleeting, passing, ephemeral, represents an uneliminable coefficient of reality. The most important single factor impelling a mutation in our time —for good and probably also equally for ill — is that the temporal structure of reality is no longer considered something you can dispense with, or even utilize (i.e. manipulate), in order to reach... something more important. The change is that secularity, i.e. the temporal character of things, has become something with which you cannot dispense. And thus the temporal structures can no longer be dealt with as only instruments, means or whatever.

This raises a very important theological and philosophical problem: How do we deal with this secularity and at the same time stand for something which has traditionally been called eternity?

Here is where I would venture a non-dualistic approach. Monism would be wrong, pantheism would be wrong. To identify without qualification the temporal and the eternal, the divine and the human, etc., would be wrong. By the same token, to defend a dualism which puts a chasm between the two which you ultimately cannot bridge -- the natural and the supernatural, the spiritual and the material, the temporal and the eternal, etc. -- is equally wrong. Is there a possibility of a non-dualistic approach? And here I would not say a non-dualistic "bridge", because if the non-dualistic approach is correct, it is correct precisely because it denies there is such a bridge. It denies that the reality is the two extremes, between which I try to concoct a compromise. Just the opposite: the non-dual concatenation is the real, and the extremes are one-sided visions of that reality. Because what is, (for instance, Christian) fundamental insight? If Christ is not a split personality -- i.e. not half-Man and half-God, one thing here and another thing there, and then we try to put it together -- then the primordial insight is that theandric unity. It is only afterwards, when you see it from one side you call it human nature, and from the other side divine nature, and so forth -- but nevertheless it cannot be divided... I refuse to say that Christianity is monotheistic, but I equally deny that Christianity is tritheistic. It is neither the one nor the other. The whole advaitic approach is at the very core of the Christian intuition, in my understanding — let alone of the Vedāntic insight, where advaita (non-dualism) is perhaps more familiar. comes from its expansion today's

So, Secularity would then be the sign of Modernity, and -- having already exposed myself -- an advaitic approach would be the way by which I keep myself from falling into pure secularism, or some other type of agnostic or purely

atheistic or just one-sided view of that reality. ~~And this is a~~ Reality is so rich in itself that it has life, and having life it has an integrity which I, from my limited point of view, cannot perhaps help but see as complexity, though in truth it ~~is a sign of the very highest simplicity.~~ may not be so.

For so many great monks of the East and the West, but that could not come to the fore because the sociological time was not yet ripe for it.

Perhaps, I should have said Secularity from the very beginning and described it more extensively avoiding the word Modernity except for saying that the trait of modern i.e.present-day Modernity is Secularity. But again I am not saying that every problem is solved and the symbiosis between Tradition and Modernity achieved. I understand our whole symposion as an effort at one such aggiornamento. I surmise, further, that this sort of secularity was very much implicit in the insights—

ROBERT VACHON:

You spoke about contemplation, and listening, and I think that generally when we are talking about East-West dialogue we are talking about listening to other religious traditions, contemplating the mystery within, the transcendent and immanent mystery, and so on. And about six years ago, I started becoming aware that in contemplation there was a dimension that we were neglecting, namely, to contemplate the cultures and the cultural dimension of reality, of the various so-called ways of life: the economic culture, the political culture, the juridical culture, even the "cultural" culture.

We have a tendency to neglect the cultural matrix, and it seems to me very important to look into that, particularly as it is all part of the secular world. In a sense, the traditional religions have a secular dimension; they have always had a secular dimension, which is not often emphasized. We have, I think, to discover the truly secular dimension of religion. It is a reality of which we are perhaps not aware, but I think it is part of the awareness of the secular, and I would hope that the contemplative life of many religious contemplatives would really come to grips with that, and not limit ourselves simply to looking at the "God-dimension" of life. It is high time we began looking at the depths of culture in all its dimensions, and contemplating it with the same deep respect with which we contemplate the Mystery, as being a dimension of the one Reality.

Now this relates to Modernity. If we call this a secular world, and we talk about "the modern", I think there is a danger that with our evolutionary preconceptions we think that "the modern" is only what is now, but we have a tendency to neglect the whole secular dimension of the past. This will have to be recovered, not only in the sense of going back to the past, but of course reenacting it...

PANIKKAR:

Amen!

I feel that is a very positive contribution more than a question, and I can only agree

with everything you have said.

I would make only a footnote, that the word "modernity", etymologically, It comes from modus; means just fashion, fashionable, something which just lasts for a moment and immediately passes away. So, I would not like to stress the word "modernity" too much, because its very meaning is something which if you do not like it today, wait until tomorrow. But I still do feel that ultimately we are undergoing a cosmological change in the self-undertanding of the different cultures, which vouches for my suspicion that we are assisting at a mutation in human consciousness, for which I would like to use the codeword of Secularity. The universe today is no longer considered that of the Vedas, Confucius, Ptolomeus, Copernicus, even Newton. Even life, time, human identity, human body, etc. are ideas which need a new frame of reference — which by and large does not exist.

Certainly all traditions have had their own secular understandings and, as you were saying, each tradition has a world of life -- economy, politics, art, and all the rest. The relationship between religion and culture is a very intimate one. In that sense, I think what you are saying is very valid and very healthy. We need a reminder that our reflections on monasticism and monastic spirituality should not be one-sided. So, agreeing with what you said, I would stress that the understanding of Secularity today is somewhat different from the secular aspect of the religions of the past.

KEZITO THOMPSON, monk of Spencer:

Given that the monastic dimension is constitutive of the humanum, perhaps three related questions: Is it possible for everyone to give expression to this dimension? And to what extent is it necessary for them to give expression to it? And who gives the expression, who identifies it for them?

PANIKKAR:

I would not like to quibble by giving a subtle answer: I feel it is necessary for everybody to live that dimension.

If we use the metaphor, for what it is worth, of the vertical dimension, I think that this dimension is constitutive of every human being, so that for the fullness of the humanum you have to be trying to unify your being -- you have to be something of a monk, and somewhat religious.

Now, if by expression we mean just expression, I would say yes, it is absolutely necessary. And if this is stifled you have not only stomach trouble and psychiatric disorders, but very many other problems too. And I would say that any culture which stifles the expression of this innermost core of the human being is doomed by an explosion from within.

Now, this expression does not need to be a conscious

formulation, ~~expression~~. Man is more than reason alone, the human being is more than logos alone, and cultures cannot be built on the logos alone but also need the pneuma and the myth and what have you. So the expression does not need to be a conscious expression, when by I subscribe to the tenets of a church or belong to some religious organization or consider myself "religious" in the current ~~or common~~ sense of the word. It can be in a thousand other, different, ways. If I were to say that the prostitutes will precede you into the Kingdom, I would be saying something of this sort. They are not an "approved" expression of religious life, but it seems they take a certain precedence -- at least in the Christian Kingdom. So that is my answer to your second query

Your third question asks whether there are -- let me use the wrong word, just to be clear -- specialists, whether there are "mad" people as in the reading about the kesin, people who are as we would say in India "God-intoxicated". I would say yes, without a doubt. There are people whose lives are geared, centered in this dimension (and using the pejorative word "specialist" underscores the difficulties you may have in accepting what I am trying to say). There are people whose main concern, main vocation, main calling is to succeed in bringing the two other factors of your neatly hierarchized question together, so that the unconscious, unformulated, unarticulated expression — your first level, which is necessary for everything -- and the second, the conscious expression, becomes really incarnated in you as an institution. And the "you" can be in the singular or the plural. And that is what would be considered monasticism stricto sensu. This implies a certain type of institution, which is where I would like to consider the institution / a living organism and not necessarily an organization.

I said that 'specialist' is a wrong word, and it is. We cannot speculate about ~~very special~~ personal vocations. We cannot institutionalize them. It would destroy them by obliging them to become 'normal', 'ordinary', 'common' . But they exist. You are bound to admire some sādhus, but you are not supposed to imitate them. Woe to them if they become conscious of being models for admiration. Nevertheless the ideal of the perfect traditional monk is oftentimes more like an ikon to wonder at than an ~~image~~ model to imitate.

SPEAKER:

About the question of the sacred and the profane: In the Old Testament teaching it is sinful to disregard the division between the sacred and the profane. It is sinful to violate the Sabbath, it is sinful to violate the temple, it is sinful to violate marriage. The separation between these things and many other things -- some profane, some sacred -- is very basic and fundamental to the Old Testament. And some of what you are saying seems to be that it is sinful to separate the sacred and the profane. And

in that case, I think that there is a collision involved there.

PANIKKAR:

Well, I have not used the word "sinful" at all. I would abide by your exegesis of the Old Testament. I would not perhaps understand myself to be saying that it is sinful to maintain separation.

But I remember a young rabbi of Nazareth who violated the Sabbath in the most outrageous way -- which, according to the text costed, him his life. So, I may not be on the best of terms with the Old Testament, but I may perhaps have another Testament in my favour. So, I am not in such bad company...

But more directly to your question,
I would not like to say that keeping sacred and profane separate is sinful, because I ~~would~~ uphold the distinction between the sacred and the profane. I would just not identify it with the distinction between the secular and the sacred. Indeed, as I am going to say tomorrow, the priority of the sacred constitutes ~~the~~ my ~~final~~ eighth thread in the sūtras of monasticism.

ED BEDNAR:

Father Panikkar, could you begin the morning's program?

PANIKKAR:

I am trying to do the impossible, but that is obviously the only thing worth trying. So we shall continue with our sūtras.

× × ×

6.- Transhistorical Consciousness Above ~~the~~ Historical ~~Task.~~ Concern

GLOSS:

Although the avatars a) of monasticism on this earth have contributed substantially to the history of their people, the monk, as such, lives primarily in an a-historical compass. The concepts that we forge of the absolute or of reality certainly fall under the historicity of the human being, but the monastic invariant does not lie in such notions. Rather, we find it in the yearning for total unification which can never be content with the distensions inherent in historical, ~~temporal~~ events. Time is always fragmentary and the monk would like to embrace all the three times together. Yet history does not allow it. There is no event complete in itself; it must always have an antecedent and a sequel. Peace does not exist in history because history must always

matter to
gues a kingdom
you lose your
?

(Peace is a a-historical category.)

advance, and peace ~~also~~ means repose and quiet. However, there exists in us a consciousness that is not exhausted by historicity. We can call it mystical, supernatural, intuition, wisdom, anubhava, prajñā, jñāna, dhyāna, samādhi, love or whatever we wish, but there is something besides history to which the monk bears witness. What does

We have here again the principle of simplicity at work. Not only is time threefold, but also history is manifold and polyvalent. The monastic urge is to transcend such multiplicity. The problem is how.

COMMENTARY:

While the Rules of the Masters have ~~dwelt~~ insisted on the eternal, perennial, nirvānic, in a word, on the suprahistorical, the Canon of the Disciple emphasizes a transhistorical awareness of Reality. The former attitude permitted the monk to place himself above the disputes of Men. He was a valid eschatological symbol for all those who believed, in some form or another, in eschatology. But this attitude loses its symbolic force the moment its power is not recognized. A symbol is always a symbol for someone, but the symbol is at one and the same time trans-subjective and trans-objective; its (subjective) interpretation is as necessary as its (objective) position. A symbol ceases to be a symbol if it is not recognized as such.

The trans-historical consciousness ~~that dawns to the minds of contemporary Men, although it could~~ which can already be found in a certain kind of mysticism throughout the ages and across the continents, recognizes no kingdom 'above' or 'beyond' this world, but rather it discovers a more hidden dimension of reality which in a certain manner transcends history and yet remains still immanent to it. This is the experience of tempiternity which is not a more or less perfect temporality nor an eternity impervious to the temporal, but the perfect and thus hierarchic integration of apparently two factors (time and eternity) ~~of~~ in the one single tempiternity. Salvation, mokṣa, nirvāṇa, and other expressions of the ultimate end of human life are not ~~longer~~ projected into a future that has been somewhat purified or perfected, but are discovered in the very fullness that we are capable of experiencing in time and not "later". This awareness discovers in and through the temporal the tempiternal nucleus of the fullness of our being — or however we would like to describe this reality.

The consequences for a contemporary spirituality are incalculable. It is not a question here of projecting into a linear future what was formulated in a vertical future, as has often been attempted by a certain kind of dialectical materialism. Nor it is a matter of merely interpreting the vertical existence of the other life with new cosmological and/or metaphysical parameters. Rather, the problem

lies in experiencing this other dimension in this same everyday reality which normally presents itself to us as spacio-temporal. Human salvation will then be the realization of the greatest fullness and happiness of which we are capable 'while' we are living, although transcending, mere temporal duration. It will be the experience of the Life in life, if we can be permitted to express it by thus paraphrasing the prophet of Israel. The monk will try to live this reality and his life will remind others that the meaning of life is not so much in anxiously striving to obtain what we do not have, but in being intensely concentrated in order to discover and even conquer that which we are. It is not the historical victory, whether of the individual or the collectivity which matters, but personal (and thus also communal) happiness, the re-velation that strips us of the veil of inauthenticity so that we can enjoy the reality of that which, thus appearing, is. Here the christian symbol par excellence is the transfiguration. The apostles see, feel, and speak a Christ reality in time and space which nonetheless has transcended that sphere. Not only is the past with Elias and Moses present, but also the future, since the one they have before them is not the historic Jesus but the resurrected Christ, and in fact they speak about the forthcoming events. The buddhist symbol manifesting the same intuition is the Buddha-nature of all things which needs only to be discovered as such. The mahāyānic tradition will express it saying that samsāra is nirvāṇa and nirvāṇa, samsāra. Vedāntic hinduism will emphasize that we are already brahman, even though we fail to see it. And jainism together with gnosticism will tell us that the ātman and the real are simply buried or enclosed in karman and matter and one needs only to be freed of them.

Cosmologies, anthropologies, and theologies vary and are often incompatible; but the deep intuition goes always in the same direction. In modern parlance: history is not the sole dimension of the human nor even the central dimension of reality. And nonetheless it is not a matter of denying the reality of history or of temporal events, as some of the traditions mentioned have done. Nor it is a question, and here is the relative novelty of our times, of superimposing on temporal reality a second atemporal, super-spacial, eternal story and relegating to this above or beyond the ultimate meaning of life. Rather it requires that we open ourselves to the --taboric, if you wish -- revelation that reality is non-dualistic, trinitarian, and simple but with a simplicity that is at the same time multifaceted and whose interpenetration -- περιχωρησις -- is not always given to our experience.

Perhaps the lesson of the last six thousand years of human historical consciousness begins to convince us that history leads inevitably to war.

5711 →

The Taborac experience is for me a paramount example of what I call sacred secularity. The transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain, not in the temple, breaks down the separation between the profanum and the fanum, the profane and the sacred. The everyday secular can be transfigured — if one has only the 'single eye' to see it. This seeing is the kingdom of God — now, here.

→ 5211

(Letterhead for Interdepartmental Use)

Perhaps the monk is the harbinger, on an effective sociological plane, of the awareness that we cannot be reduced to merely historical beings without thereby more or less schizophrenically dividing our existences between a world here below and a kingdom above and beyond.

Transhistorical consciousness confers on the monk an irreplaceable calling in the realm of the secular, as we shall later describe. It is not only a matter of underlining personal and intimate values, transcendental values, the 'peace of soul' of the traditional languages. Transhistorical consciousness summons the monk to cultivate that hidden core of human being which assures that this being is not less but more than mere historical being. Perhaps humankind is beginning to become aware that it is on the threshold of a new and radical mutation: that of ceasing to be an animal species with an historical consciousness. I understand historicity as something more than just the remembrance of the past, it is an intellectual memory which enables Man to accumulate his past, to relive it, to assimilate it in spirit in order to enrich his present. Perhaps the historical epoch and not merely an historical period is coming to an end: the atomic catastrophe is in the long run inevitable, the ecological deterioration inescapable and the violent explosion of the present paneconomic and technological system very probable. After the catastrophe, the human being will not live looking forward towards the future, it will no longer experience time as the western world mainly experiences it, that is, as a succession of more or less homogeneous and therefore quantifiable temporal fragments, but as a new and instantaneous creation with no other guarantee than the immediate experience of the transtemporal moment. The dimension of interiorization which is characteristic of monastic spirituality is here translated as a conscious breaking open of the temporal shell of existence in order to savor its tempiternal kernel, not only at the individual level but at the level of the entire mankind. It is not necessary to subscribe to millenarian, eschatological, joachimist, teilhardian, aurobindian, messianic or evolutionist theories of any type to accept what I want to point out here, although all of them can be seen as concrete insights into the fact that the present day human species is not the end of the whole creation nor the completion of the actuality of what human being carries in its womb. Monasteries would then be the 'high places' of this transformational alchemy of man on his ascending way toward a cosmotheandric reality which surrounds him, which he himself is, although it surpasses him.

Transhistoric consciousness makes us perceive that the meaning of life consists in reaching the greatest happiness that each of us possibly can, freeing us in this way from the desire for happiness where it cannot be found. Salvation, says an immense majority of religious traditions, consists in joy, beatitudo, χαρα, ānanda, sukha, nirvāna, heaven, etc. The fact that this happiness was not seen fulfilled in the lives of the majority of mortals during this life and the fact (or because of it) of a certain cosmological interpretation of time and space, has deferred and transplanted happiness to another otherworldly sphere. It is for this reason too that the majority of traditions believe that ----------

it is only a very few who are saved: Very few reach complete happiness and peace in this life. The rest are either miscarriages that do not carry through to the true life (and this failure is hell) or else they must return to recommence the cycle of inauthentic existence with the hope of someday freeing themselves from it -- or even without such hope, as with the jain abhavyatva or the calvinist predestination. ~~And~~ In the non-dualistic conception equally few are those who reach this fullness compared to those who might otherwise have reached it had circumstances been more favorable. Thus the religious importance, although never ultimate and definitive, of sociological structures. The monk is precisely the one who witnesses that we can still reach the peace and joy of our plenitude even in a filthy favella ['suburbio' 'bidonville'] Even in a concentration camp we can reach our salvation. Not without reason many thinkers consider slum hope the central problem for the concrete individuals of the industrialized worlds. → 59,1

7.- The Fullness of the Person over the Individual

59,2 →

GLOSS:

By individual I understand that which results from the expedient of cutting off a sizeable and useful part of the human being. An individual is the result of a pragmatic cut of a certain number of diverse constitutive relationships of the human being in order to create a practical subject of operations. The individual is an abstraction, in the precise sense of the word: all that would make Man too complex and unmanageable is abstracted from the human being. An individual is a manegeable entity of clear-cut bounderies. It is an identifiable piece standing isolated on its own. It responds to an 'identification card' (miscalled 'identity') and supports a social security number. The person, on the other hand, encompasses the whole complex web of the constitutive relationships of Man with no limits other than those which spontaneously appear in each case. An I is a person only to the extent that it does not isolate itself: a thou is precisely required in order to be an I. And vice versa. Further, both need a place of action conditioned by the so-called third person, even if this be a thing. And this takes place not only in the singular but in the plural as well. The we, you and they belong equally to the person, which has neither singular nor plural, nor feminine, masculine or neuter. The gender of the person is the utrum. quia It embraces all that we truly are because we participate in it without the obsession of private property or exclusive possession. The person can reach to the very limits of reality; it reaches up to where we in fact stand when the stance is authentic, that is to say when it is the true dwelling place (estancia) of our being. La persona es, en donde está. The person is where, there-it-is, in its Dasein. Personality is measured precisely

59

Two seem to be the ~~the~~ answer of the human heart to the almost universal experience of the ultimate frustration of most mortals. It does not need to be a consciously psychological frustration, but it certainly is the deep feeling that our lives have not been lived to the full, that we have not ~~have~~ had the ~~the~~ proper opportunities to ~~develo~~ awaken all our dormant talents. The one answer is ~~eschatology~~ Eschatology: (the ~~eschatological view of reality~~): later on, in another life or lives we shall be given the retribution and the ~~the~~ chances. It is the way of transcendence. The other answer is the way of universality, be it of the individual person, be it of the corporate person of the community. In the first case we feel that at certain moments of our existence, ~~albeit~~ at least at the moment of our death, we reach that human depth, that center which compensates for a whole life only half lived. In the second case it is

leading to envy, hatred or depression

a transcendent

Dharmakaya, Body of Christ, Communion of Believers, Humanity, etc.)

the corporate Self, the incarnate nature of personhood, the totality of the cosmos, --- that compensates for the individual shortcomings. It is the way of immanent transcendence. In the first case of an individual person reaching 'salvation' within herself. In the second case within the 'real' Self.

In spite of cultural trends and systems of belief depending often the eschatological view of reality, monkhood has always been more inclined to the path of interiority.

→ 59

"Be attentive to the place where you stand" is a well-known Zen expression.

by the different limits in the stance of each individual. The isolated Man has no personality; he is drowned in himself; whereas the boddhisattva or saint has a personality which reaches to the place where his action makes itself felt because he has put his heart even to the limits of the universe. The monastic ideal does not seek an egoistic perfection (that is to say, of the individual), but places the meaning of life in the total perfection of the person which reverberates in benefit for all of reality. Monastic spirituality does not try to reform the world by direct action upon it, but tends rather to reform Man with the conviction that such reform is not his egotistical individuality but his whole person, which on the one hand reflects and on the other ~~transforms~~ influences all of reality. Here there is a striking difference with other forms of spirituality. The emphasis here is on the human person and not on the reform of structures social, material or even intellectual.

Traditional monkhood had it without great difficulty because the sense of individuality was not so developed as in more recent times. The fullness of the person was felt to be in the saṅgha, in the community, in the Body of Christ, in the totality. ⟶60,1

saṅgha

60,5 ⟶

The principle of simplicity works here in a peculiar way. It entails getting rid of the complexity of the individual in favor of the simplicity of the person. ~~The individual does not need to succeed or to become endowed with a great spiritual dowry. It is all left to the free interplay between person (s).~~ You do not need to keep anything for 'yourself' because the real self is not a private substance of your own.

individual is closed system. boundaries are an exit. the mine and the Thine cannot be mixed. It person is an open system. Its limits depend on the power of the center. Each person is an expanding

COMMENTARY:

In our times, we are witnessing an anthropological change regarding the awareness of the ~~extent of the field~~ boundaries of personal being. The new limits refer both to those of a certain conception of the absolute and to those of the world around the person. Monastic consciousness has become universalized, so to speak, by grounding itself in what is specifically monastic and thus placing monkhood before the historical ties of belonging to a nation, race, or even religion. Buddhist and christian monks, for example, seeking a shared monastic experience, will not be deterred by the fact that they belong to different religions.

But the fundamental distinction between the traditional and the contemporary understanding of monkhood consists in the surreptitious dualism of the traditional monastic anthropology contrasted with the underlying monism of the contemporary conception, although in both cases they try to avoid falling in the respective

60,1

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60

This is a salient monastic feature: the person is the community — even if there is only a solitary monk. The monastery is more than a family in the modern sociological meaning of the word. The monastery is the full person. The saṅgha is one of the three jewels of life; it is necessary for liberation. The links between the members of the saṅgha are stronger and more intimate than the blood-relationships. The guru-cela, master-disciple bond is the strongest bond on earth. The abbot is abba, i.e. father. Monastic life is more than just communitarian life, it is more than an association for the sake of reaching or realizing somme common goals. Only when the limits of my person reach the limits of my entire world can I stand alone, all-one, as a solitary hermit, as a muni in silence and solitude.

→ 60,3

The saṅgha is a saṁskāra, the monastic community is a sacrament. The same that the spouses do not chose each other, but are chosen, the members of the maṭha or monastery are equally bound to each other by a sort of ontological link.

in a transition world-view

60,4

The little monks with whom I lived in a Tibetan monastery would not understand that you 'enter' into a monastery. You do not enter into a family. You are born into it. The whole is prior to its parts.

→ 60,4

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60.1

There is a fundamental difference between the koinonia of the monastery, the brotherhood of the saṅgha or even in more general terms the appurtenance to the dharmakāya, the buddhakaya, or the Body of Christ and the membership of any other type of association. The external difference is clear enough: whereas the latter bind us together in view of the realization of a partial goal of human life (money, wealth, education, health, political concerns, etc.) the ~~latter~~ former claims to have a wholistic character embracing the totality of the human being in its ultimate perfection, goal, liberation, salvation. But the internal difference is more subtle and precisely depends on the very degree of surrender and confidence (belief) of the person concerned. The membership in the ecclesia, the summa, the [illegible] is not in view of doing anything special, but of being — and of being totally (perfectly) what I ~~am~~ (believe) am supposed to be. ~~The former~~ (is a technical one. ~~relationship~~) It is ~~The latter~~ a natural ~~one~~ relationship whereas the other ~~In the former I am an~~ individual party and can go in an out without a

In the membership an ordinary association we are

fundamental damage to ~~my~~ our being nor to the association concerned. ~~I~~ We are a part in the machinery and this part can be replaced by another individual. Not so with the membership in a religious community of the ~~monastic~~ type. I am not only a pars in toto, but also a pars pro toto. I am unique and indispensable. If I go out I simply kill my being and also do an irreparable harm to the ecclesia, the sangha. There is hell for me and an incurable wound in the organism. The hand cannot live cut off from the body, nor can it be replaced by the eye — although in due time there may be regenerations (kalpas and the law of karma) and reconciliations (forgiveness of redemption). The famous dictum extra ecclesiam nulla salus (outside the sangham, Nature, the Buddhakaya, the Dharmakaya, the Church) there is no salvation) is an essential feature of True Communion of the Earth. When a particular group ~~claims~~ pretends ownership of that ecclesia ~~Church~~ or knowledge of its boundaries, this is another matter altogether. → 60,6

We are simply a member of an organization.

60,2 ←

60,2

60,6 → Now the monk discovers his roots within the entire reality. His fidelity is to the whole, to the Earth we have said in order to show that it is not to humankind alone →60,5

60,4 → with whom he is ontologically linked. To be a person here means to be a center of the entire reality.

→60

60,4 → The community outside of which there is no salvation cannot be, obviously, an organization. It has to be a sacrament, a saṁkāra, a μυστήριον. By burning your passport you may renounce to the State (and its protection or oppression over you). You do not cancel by that fact your language or your nation. → 60,4

temptations. The traditional monk is precisely a monachos, because he is not a dipsuchos, a being with a two-fold soul, with a double end and a double life. Between the paramārthika and the vyavahārika, sat and māyā, God and the World, the temporal and eternal, nirvāna and samsāra, etc., the monk has chosen the first and renounced the second. Or rather, in moral terms, greed, envy, worry, sin, all this belongs to the world. The monk wants to jump to the other shore where he will be free from all this. We need only to read Buddhist and Jain Scriptures along with Christian books to be convinced of this. To be sure, the monk is not yet an arhat, a bodhisatva, a saint, but on the way. Now, monastic spirituality in order to overcome the dualism of the two Men, two shores, two realms will have to say that perfection consists in realizing that samsāra is nirvāna, that one has already arrived at being, at least potentially, a comprehensor and is not a viator, that we all are jīvan-muktas and not mumuksus, saints, and not only aspirants who still live in confusion and distortion; that the union with God who is all in all, is the destiny of everybody. But this perfection is only at the end of the path, of the sādhana. Monastic perfection is reached by living with one's face turned towards the absolute and turning one's back on the relative, 'seeking God', concentration on the One, the ekam, with a single intention in one's heart and mind, ekāgratā, without any kind of compromise. Liberation, moksa is all that matters. Everything that divides : the world, woman (for the male and male for the female), passions, pleasures and especially one's fellow Men is scrupulously avoided. One must live free from all cares and worries, stripped of and unattached to all that is earthly, contingent and perishable. Personhood is forged only in contact with the Absolute. God alone suffices ("Sólo Dios basta"), kaivalya.

The fundamental category in classical monastic spirituality was obedience. Through docility the monk attains his perfection, and by it the bikkhu ~~forged his destiny~~ and the muni reaches his goal. Fidelity to the path, the dharma, the rule, the ideal came to be symbolized in and through obedience, the ob-audire: knowing how to listen to the mysterious and ultimate voice embodied in the Tao, the dharma, the śastras or the will of the guru, the abbot, the father. The objectivity of what is commanded matters only in part. What is important is the subjectivity, and from this point of view it amounts to the same whether watering a dry stick or caring for a sick person. What matters is the intention. What is important is the subjectivity that is expressed in fidelity to the master, the only thing that will help us free ourselves from ourselves and leap to the other side of the barrier, since the will itself is the ultimate refuge of ahamkāra, egoism and abhimāna, the ~~more or less proud~~ vanity of the individual value. This is not pure irrationality: the monk should see that he must obey, that is, discover the power within the command that

evokes obedience (the 'obedientality'); but he does not need to see the intelligibility of what is commanded. All the vows, vratas, can be reduced to this fidelity above all, where objective judgement is transferred to the superior and we are left with the inalienable subjective insight of our willingness to obey because we are convinced of the obedience due to the rule, 'the will of God', the dharma, the Absolute, the very voice within us whose echo can only be discerned when we hear it from the lips of the master, ācārya, or whatever we may call him or it. That this obedience must be interiorized, that it is not true obedience unless it is from the heart and without any willfulness are obvious stages that must be reached in the ascent of the mountain of perfection "until the morning light dawns in our hearts."

The winds of contemporary spirituality may come from the same Source: God, Vāyu, Pneuma, but seem to blow in the opposite direction. They seek the same perfection and plenitude of the person, but this is not seen so much in traditional isolation or autarcheia or self-sufficiency as in the realization of the person through the cultivation of the bonds that unite it to the fathomless riches of creation. The monk does not want to be a Man set apart, but one integrated into the whole. Perfection is seen not in the immolation of the person on the altar of obedience in order to arrive at ἀπάθεια, "blessed holy indifference", as in the possibility of actualizing the sleeping potentialities of our being.

The new winds are being felt in three almost antagonistic directions, although at heart they are perhaps complementary: corporality, intimate personal relations, and political awareness. The famous plotinian saying of living alone with the Alone does not strike a chord with the modern monk. ~~who does not envision the monachos as a solitary but as a unified being~~. But then this unification is certainly not individualistic. It can only be realized if we assume the fullness of our being, unify our divided existence and integrate our life in the destiny of the community. In other words, the body, sex and politics belong to the perfection of the human person. Let us try to describe these winds without attempting too quickly to direct or judge them.

Corollaries

a) Corporality:

Without reaching gnostic, angelic, or arhat-like extremes of scorn or radical forgetfulness of the body, there seems to be common to traditional monastic mentality, a certain neglect of the body and of corporeal

values. ~~(the health, the beauty and the very materiality of our being, for instance).~~ The body is considered at best a collaborator and more generally a mere servant whom it is necessary to treat well in order that it might serve us well; but at bottom it is a dead weight. And if some traditions, like the christian, speak of the resurrection of the flesh, they recall ~~it must never be forgotten~~ that it is not yet resurrected and that in the meantime the flesh is treacherous, or at least ambiguous. It is interesting to observe that while the hindu monk goes as scantly clad as possible and the jaina digambara completely naked, the christian is weighed down with robes. With exactly the opposite signs all of them want to show that they have overcome the body, that they have no bodies because they really do not want to be their bodies.

The contemporary monk wants to be able to say that he is also his body, that the body is not an enemy, nor even a friend or servant, but rather is he himself; that health is an element as much physical as psychic, and that the soul depends as much on the ~~mind~~ body as the ~~mind~~ body on the soul, if one were to use such dualistic language. A Man is not just a body; but he is his body and without the body there is no Man. ~~Yoga is a word whose meaning has expanded significantly. It no longer means the ascetic 'yoke' which keeps the body docile to the rule of the spirit, but the integration of the two in a harmonious~~ union. The monachos is one not through his soul or spirit but because he aspires to succeed in realizing the union that exists between the diverse elements of his very being. The present day monk understands what etymology merely suggests, that meditation has to do with medicine (medere), salvation with health (salus) and freedom (soteria) and the two together with sarvam, the totality, being whole. And if it is true that the monastic ideal tries to go beyond humanism, this is not so in order to take refuge in some non-human angelicism or in some disincarnate and thus inhuman 'spirituality', but rather in order to achieve a human fullness from which no truly human value be missing. Asceticism is no longer so much the mortification of the flesh as the vivification of the body so that it too might participate in the destiny of the person. ~~Body~~

There is no doubt that the monastic viveka, madhyama, sobrietas, and discretio prevented many abuses, but the ascetic exploits of monks east and west are well documented. — 63, 1

The practical question today is how to integrate corporality into ~~the~~ those monastic ~~ideal~~. It is much more than body awareness and care of the material needs. This existed already in ~~the~~ old ~~monkhood~~ times.

traditions which had neglected the body.

or reintegrate

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Here mention should be made of tantric monasticism, be it hindu or buddhist (especially tibetan) and better known under the name of yoga. The cakras of the yogic spirituality, the practices of the tantrikas to ~~put jus~~ mention just two examples try to incorporate the body in the spiritual sādhana. The body is the seat of power. The ~~crude~~ coarse dichotomy between body and soul is overcome by discovering a continuum formed by many kinds of bodies and different sorts of souls.

Yoga is a ~~word whose meaning~~ polysemic word. It does not need to mean the ascetic 'yoke' which keeps the body docile to the rule of the spirit. It means also the integration of body and ~~soul~~ mind in a harmonious union. Tantra is equally a multivalent word. It does not need to connote just bodily experiences, ~~[illegible]~~ or otherwise forbidden practices. It means also the sacramental view of reality, the conception that everything is both material and spiritual, and that salvation consists in transformation of both.

The Canon of the Disciple cannot give now a set of rules, but only express a felt need and direct our attention. If it is true that we are - also-our bodies and not only have them the consequences are revolutionary.

b) Sexuality:

With no need to emphasize those noxious and all too prevalent extremes that have appeared throughout the history of humanity, traditional monastic mentality has always defended that "entre santa y santo, pared de cal y canto" (between a holy male and a holy female, a strong firm wall), that is to say, that human perfection has to sublimate in a single individual the androgynous nature of the human being. In most cases monastic spirituality is simpler and does not worry about the androgynous character of the person. It tells us that this life is provisional and fleeting and thus that perfection as it is experienced on this plane is not the perfection to which we are finally called. So it does not matter much if the human being does not reach fulfilment in this field. In the other true world there is neither male nor female, nor any kind of giving or taking in marriage. Celibacy, brahmacarya, and the renunciation of family were all seen as essential to traditional monasticism, in spite of a few notable exceptions such as the tibetan nygma-pa and japanese zen monks. Eschatological perfection has no sex; the monastic form ~~treats~~ attitude Man as an asexual being. If sexuality does make itself felt, then one must simply overcome it by ignoring it. And if this exacts a price, we are told that it is a fruitful sacrifice, one which places us on a higher plane than the merely biological. This ~~is even~~ becomes often the standard by which ~~one can~~ some measure the authenticity of a particular monastic calling. That one is 'capable' of living a celibate life.

Contemporary monastic spirituality tries with various degrees of success to recover the sacred sense of sex and the positive function of human sexuality. This function reveals itself when we find ourselves confronted with our own limitations and realize that we need an exogenous complement and not simply an endogenous supplement. We seem to need somebody else and not just something else. We feel the need for intimacy, interchange, friendship and love, not as distractions from the one needful thing, but first as a spur and inducement and finally as a culmination. The word which in this context has transcended the bounderies of a single religion and culture to enrich others is tantra, that form of spirituality that ~~could be~~ I have translated as sacramentarian and which suggests that the path to perfection passes not only through the correct ~~practice~~ use of all creatures, but also through the mutual compenetration of human beings. The issues here are burning and once raised cannot be ignored. To be sure, sex here should not be reduced to the merely genital, nor ~~even solely~~ to the exclusively physical. Sex is the very

human individuals are not just instruments for the perfection of others. More than interaction and collaboration is needed. Community, friendship, intimacy, is required.

(linga)

sign of differentiation of the human being just as in biology it is the cause of the differentiation between individuals and even species.

The human person is, to varying degrees, the harmonious conjugation of all the personal pronouns. The strong monastic emphasis on the 'we' made the relation with the 'thou' less urgent; and the filial-paternal relation with the guru or abbot, diminished the importance of any other intimacy between two people. Moreover, being heedless of the body could permit a certain personal intimacy between two brothers or sisters without sexuality apparently becoming an issue — the well-known warnings against 'particular friendships' and the ingenuity shown in averting pairs in the ~~mahs~~, vihāras, and monasteries, not withstanding. But the problem becomes acute when the divine 'thou', the bridegroom Jesus, the Krsna of the gopis, etc., is demythicized and deanthropomorphized. What F. Ebner has called the Dulosigkeit, the deprivation of the 'thou' necessary for the realization of the 'I', is being felt more and more dramatically. Modern forms of spirituality which do not want to break with tradition thus emphasize the 'you' : the apostolate, the mission to accomplish, service to others, external activity, in short. This work, called 'mission', 'apostolate', and the like becomes then the surrogate for a living thou. We hear often the exclamation: "I am not married because I have no time (for it)". But experience shows that the 'work' with the complexity of the modern world very rapidly bureaucratizes, and is converted into an it. Then you marry your co-worker.

All of the pronouns must be declined for personal fulfillment, but the contemporary monk suffers from the debilitating lack of the 'thou'. The 'thou' is the friend, the beloved. The 'thou' is that one who best enhances the dimension of intimacy, caring, delicacy, attention and finally, love in human life. The nygma-pa sect of tibetan buddhism, the most ancient as its very name indicates, ~~recognizes and~~ has married monks without even requiring that the spouse also belongs to the monastery. But the lama with his red cap was perhaps more married to the plot of ground he worked and the community with whom he lived than to his wife. Perhaps marriage is not the real issue but rather friendship. Now is it the problem of tantra must be internalized, ~~it is not~~ concupiscence that we are dealing with here. ~~but the~~ śakti ~~cannot be oneself~~.

→65,1

The problem is paramount. The perfection of the human being is at stake. The Canon of the Disciple cannot go further; but it can still add a methodological proviso and insert an excursus.

The methodological question is the following: We need a new anthropology to deal with this question. Now, on the one hand, we cannot stick to the old customs just because they were good and yielded good

65

(and dualism)

The issue at stake is whether the monachos can be 'all-one' being 'alone', whether monotheism (and trinity) or Duarta) is the paradigm of perfection. Tantric spirituality emphasizes time and again that the śakti must be internalized. But the śakti is not the ego; it is the Thou. And yet it has to be the Self. The celibate, as the very word suggests, is the kevalin, the single, the alone.

Sometimes I get a glimpse that the spirituality of 'foolishness' is the instinctive reaction against the luciferian temptation of the monk: αὐταρχεία, to be self-sufficient. Those poor monks totally vulnerable, insufficient.

→ 65

results (if this is the case); we have to find convincing reasons to fit our understanding of the human being. Man is not made for the Sabbath. On the other hand, we cannot defend a new anthropology, based on recent discoveries, and throw overboard centuries and millennia of human praxis. Human problems are not just mathematical puzzles which can be solved theoretically. They need the marriage between theory and praxis and this may be one of the tasks incumbent on the present-day monks.

The excursus ~~will be just a footnote~~ regards the problem of celibacy, which is not the same as what we have been speaking about, though that is very often the way in which the issue is put. The problem of celibacy ~~does not directly have to do with~~ should be distinguished from the question ~~of the~~ sexual.

To justify celibacy a priori implies that we have a convincing anthropology which tells us that virginity is a higher human status, or family life a burden for human fulfilmente or a spouse a bondage, or individual androgyny a valid human option, etc. We can also adduce historical reasons as the shortness of time, before eschatology, or cosmological arguments like celibacy being at the very end of a karmatic line so that there will be no longer children of that person to perpetuate karma, or ~~theological~~ spiritual ones as divine marriage and the like. I may even venture an astrological reason which shows that for the hero of the just begun Aquarian period the biological family has no place. We could multiply this list, but all is reduced to accepting one particular view as powerful enough to justify the ~~praxis~~ theory of celibate life.

The Disciple's stand here, in our times of crisis, may be closer to having convincing power, because it is at least humbler. It is not an explanation, ~~but~~ a justification a posteriori.

It is a fact that celibacy is a wide-spread human institution, mostly linked to monkhood. It is equally another fact that there are today --and here -- many celibates who voluntarily choose celibacy even if ~~today~~ many of the reasons are open to be contested. The argument a posteriori would then say: "and so what? You did it in good faith and it is not a bad thing in itself, even if it may not appear as the ideal. It may be worse to break it now and you may not know how to do it without causing real harm to yourself and those around you." Celibacy does not need to be a superior form of spiritual life, nor to have any theoretical justification. ~~There is no reason to dispair if I am bold.~~ We may even find ~~the~~ many advantages of celibacy, positively accepted, like a not very fine-looking young girl has to countereffect with sympathy and intelligence the long nose that she has. Thanks to it she has developed many other more important virtues.

66

~~In some sparsely ch~~

A powerful argument, mainly christian and hidden is the spousal argument. Christ, Krishna or God — is the divine spouse, jealous and unique. "Quia incandum Deo in tua virginitate habitaculum preparasti", = because you have prepared a joyful dwelling place for God in your virginity, says the Catholic Breviary singing the exploits of Saint Lucia. ——→ 66

This is not an invitation to sheer passivity or a neglect of mystical reasons. It is a call to real prudence and respect for the praxis. To want to justify celibacy may ~~be the~~ become the beginning of its condemnation. → 67,1

c) Political Awareness:

67,1 →

If in traditional monastic spirituality the human person is realized through contact with the Absolute and isolation from (the world of) Man, this separation, signified in the enclosure, seems to have acquired a negative character in contemporary consciousness. If we are political animals then the contemporary monk seems unable to believe that he can attain his human fullness without cultivating the political dimension. Obviously we are not referring to mere party 'politics' with its partisan squabbles or to arguments over the technical methods for achieving some preconceived ends; but rather to the wellbeing of the polis as the symbol of human community, and to a participation in the problems of our fellow beings allowing us to realize the importance of the very structures of human conviviality.

Undoubtedly the monastic praxis has not always been consistent with its theory. History shows us monks, East and West, ancient and modern, involved in the affairs of the local communities and often detecting political power. But either it was simply accepted and tolerated although not in accordance with the acknowledged monastic spirit, or it was justified as belonging to a supra-political realm, be it the 'Kingdom of God' or ~~be~~ the 'salvation of the people'.

At any rate the modern monk still wants to be solitary but he will not tolerate being isolated. And as he has perceived all too well the functioning of second causes, he cannot be contented with a union with the first cause that prevents him from contributing directly to the life of the community of which he feels himself to be an integral part. "God has left the world to the quarrels of Men" and the monk realizes that true prayer is not an excuse for inaction in the world but is an intervention in the dispute itself.

When cultures and religions live without major conflict within a single myth there are values that are respected without argument and attitudes that are accepted without debate. In such cases where monasticism enjoys such recognition the monk can remain outside and above political and temporal options ~~quarrels~~ because he is granted by the whole community a superior sphere. The recognition and acceptance of his renunciation by the community confers on him the power and influence that he himself has renounced. The monk is not a marginal being, although he might have gone to the fringes of society. But in the contemporary world, if the monk renounces the world, the world also has renounced him and can get along quite well without him. And it seems certain that this attitude begins to prevail

67 → It may ~~betray~~ show the lack of innocence; it may jeopardize ~~endanger~~ the spontaneity and freedom ~~of~~ with which the option was made; it may betray a secret disenchantment ~~and~~ triggering the need for justifying it by something else. When you pray you are not asking for the proofs of God's existence ...
Why so many books today trying to justify religious celibacy? I am not denying that there can be an adventure androgyny within the ~~a~~ single individual person. I am only indicating a present day state of affairs.

→ 67

in parts of Africa and Asia as well where the renouncing ascetic is beginning to feel alienated due to the passive ostracism of society. He can no longer threaten to hold back the rain if the people do not believe in him -- or if they have a reservoir close at hand.

In the modern political situation there is no neutral ground and taking refuge in the so-called supernatural ~~plane~~ sphere represents already a decision of a political nature, generally in favor of the status quo. The buddhist monks in Vietnam, the Christian monks in Latin America could be adduced here as examples. This awareness throws the modern monk into the strife of everyday life -- perhaps to witness to non-violent means, or perhaps to the relativity of our ends and goals themselves, perhaps simply to elevate the level of the dispute, but without ~~being able to~~ claiming a sphere of privilege or a recognized superiority that would permit him to act as the final recourse. And if he were to consciously attempt to reserve this function for himself he would commit a ~~the~~ greatest ~~of~~ hypocrisies. The monk does not offer his services if others do not ask for them. The monk does not enter into the game of a competitive society. Moreover, the human situation is so complex that we cannot even hope to find among those very men and women consecrated to a monastic life unanimity concerning the question of politics. The person is forged in the crucible of those very contentions between human beings. The world is left in the hands of the strongest and to the same destiny as human strife itself. Or as the arabic refrain says: "the world is God's, but the Merciful One has rented it to the most courageous". We cannot aspire to the Kingdom of God without seeking first his Justice, but this is no longer mere supernatural righteousness, it is also a political problem that cannot be side stepped. Put in another way, the great religious problems of humanity today all have a political face: Hunger, Peace, Freedom, Justice, Happiness, human Dignity. → 68,1

68,1 →

Summation:

The ultimate reason for this triple change is simple. We will see it more clearly in Canon VIII but we can, perhaps, anticipate ourselves somewhat here. The classic monastic attitude comes to us saying that true human perfection is transcendent and is situated in the beyond, in such a way that all desire to obtain it here below is a childish illusion that cannot distinguish between the temporal and the eternal. We should not dream of realizing happiness and perfection in this 'valley of tears', in this realm of duhkha, of suffering and pain. Monks should not worry about being apollonian models of beauty, socratic examples of wisdom, renaissance paradigms of global knowledge, or olympic athletes of physical prowess. They

68

The quandaries accumulate.

Political involvement cannot be left to the initiative of the single monk. The problems are too complicated for this. To enter into the political world ~~require~~ personal preparation and social backing is required. Otherwise the monk will be used against his own intentions — as the experience of the worker-priests in France clearly showed. But can a monastery take a political stance? Yet not to take one is already a decision in favour of the status quo. When the reigning order is accepted, when we live within the same myth, there is no problem. ~~But the issues become~~ When the persecution is clear it may be a matter of courage or of prudence. Christian and buddhist monasteries in Communist countries, ~~for instance~~ are a telling example of how difficult it is to agree on the path to follow. But when the reigning order is seen by some as [illegible] only as weak the dilemma is even more excruciating. Whatever position we may take to ignore the issues is no longer acceptable.

To stand against the tyrant.

→ 68

have renounced all that because their perfection is in heaven, in the nirvāna or in a transcendent moksa.

The monk is available for any service because he does not look for his perfection in this earth. "What does it matter if you ruin your health, or fail to study sociology, or live a few years less if in so doing you gain the kingdom of heaven, attain enlightenment?"

The contemporary mentality rebels against this attitude. The contemporary monk does not want to palliate his thirst for the infinite, but he resists believing that the path to human and even divine perfection must pass through the immolation and deprecation of human values or even simply that it lies above them. He does not renounce the transcendent but he does not want to be separated from the immanent.

This does not discard all the virtues implied in Canon I: penthos, tyāga, compunctio, penitence and especially the purification of the heart. But the new monk would like to go beyond what he often considers only the first step towards sanctity: the stripping off, the negation. He would like to go beyond the mentality of the novice and the fervor of the junior in order to reach a more balanced and mature second level -- all the dangers of lukewarmness notwithstanding.

The problems remain distressingly unresolved since there does not yet exist an adequate formulation, let alone an experience which would encourage and ground such optimism. The non-dualistic solution that timidly emerges from these pages is very far from possessing the patina of a multisecular experience or the seal of a sufficiently generalized acceptance. The Canon of the Disciple is not a substitute for the Rule of the Master, but tries only to raise a voice for a fruitful dialogue

8.- The Primacy of the Holy.

GLOSS:

Reality is complex and so is human existence. The unification toward which the monk strives is effected under the aegis of the holy. The monk is not like the priest, the dispensor of the sacred mysteries; nor like the prophet, the conscience of the community; nor like the sage, the receptacle of liberating knowledge. Neither is he like the scientist, the expert, who understands how things function; nor like the artist who shapes the invisible realities into sensible forms; nor like

the worker who carries out all the labor necessary for the accomplishment of all these things. The monk endeavors to attain unqualified holiness. He strives for holiness. He is in quest for God if God is the holy, he strives for the Absolute. The monk does not need God, but he needs Holiness. The buddhist and jain monks do not have God as a supreme Being, a Creator, and their search for absolute truth is in no way less intense than in the theistic cases.

Many people besides the monk will try to become holy; but they will do it in and through something else: marriage, art, work, good actions and what not. Monkhood stands for the quest of ab-solute holiness, i.e. of holiness in itself, unrelated to anything else (ab-solute) in as far as it is possible. The holy is neither the sacred nor the profane. The profane is everything that is celebrated outside the temple. The sacred is the realm of the temple. It is the domain of the priest and not of the monk. The saṁnyāsin does not perform any rite at all. Many christian monks went into solitude without priest and sacraments. The hermit does not leave his cave to go to the festivity in the temple. "Quid facis in turba qui solus es?" says Jerome (What do you do among the crowd you who are a solitary?).

The sacred stands in relation to the profane; the holy is the center of everything and every activity; the center ~~that~~ can remain immobile while everything else turns about it, the center ~~which~~ remains equidistant from everything that circles round it, which is precisely what constitutes it as center. The center is equidistant and thus the equanimity, sobriety and indifference of the monk. But the center is also separated, segregated, apart from everything else. This is one of the meanings of the word sanctity and historians of religions link it with the meaning and function of tabu. The monk is set apart, he severs his links with society. Monkhood is a dimension of human life but does not exhaust it. The monk wants to realize the integration of his person by choosing the 'better part' but in no way does he claim to have a monopoly on human perfection. Reality is not the center alone. The sphere could not be without its center, but the two should not be identified or confused. Monkhood is only a part, and it is only the whole of humanity which can reach that plenitude to which all human beings aspire. The plenitude is communal, and ultimately the anthropocosmic.

COMMENTARY: While for the classic monkhood the center of holiness is found in the transcendent, the eternal, the other world, the religious spirituality of our days seems to have effected a mutation of considerable import: ~~It may perhaps be the most fundamental human change since the last millenia of our historical existence.~~ the holiness of the secular. The secular too belongs to the very center

of reality, although it is not the only factor which constitutes it. Expressed from the inverse perspective: the holy is also the center of the secular and acts at times as a catalyst which activates a process without in the end intermixing in it.

From the preceding canons we can clearly infer that contemporary monkhood tends towards the secular, without thereby diminishing its pursuit of holiness. It cannot renounce the secular world because it does not believe it to be ~~evil~~ secondary; it cannot renounce a certain activity in the world because it believes it to be indispensable. The monk does not ~~renounce his~~ give up his struggle for a total personal perfection being satisfied in saving only a human misfit. He does not believe in an ill-structured world that has to be cancelled in order to reach the goal of Man. He will abandon neither time nor space because these are his dwelling place, and his dwelling, like his body, forms part of his life, and he cannot believe that perfection consists in alienation from the structures of the real or in an exile from this earth. And nonetheless he claims still to move within the compass of the holy. Is this feasible? Is it not a compromise? Is this not a naive optimism, explicable perhaps only as a reaction of an earlier pessimism?

The mutation alluded to earlier suddenly places the monk in the center of our times. Awareness of the secular has been growing in tension and all too often in conflict with the holy.

Traditional religions found themselves, and still greatly find themselves, in opposition to the secular. Today, however, we glimpse that the movement of secularity is not necessarily directed against the holy. Secularization, certainly, has been the fight against a special regimen of the sacred which had accrued to itself privileges little less than unbearable to those outside of it. But secularization was only a process. The crucial feature of secularity lies somewhere else. It lies in surmounting this dichotomy between the temporal and eternal worlds and in recognizing the ultimate and indispensable character of temporality. This saeculum is not un-test, passing, provisional, unreal, a shadow or whatever we would like to call it in order to mollify the factor of an unjust and violent status quo. Secularity represents the affirmation that the body, the material and all temporal values in general are definitive and insuperable although not exclusive or complete. They are found along side of other values which also make up the warp and woof of the real and the human.

history

The monk's entrance into the secular realm represents a mutation of considerable religious magnitude. That the world is not evil, that it is legitimate to become involved in temporal affairs, that time has a positive value, and that the religious person must occupy herself with reforming the very

socio-politico-historical structures of reality, do not today afford much difficulty. And in fact, most of the religious movements and orders, East and West since the sixteenth century are operating on those lines. But it seems as if traditional religions had reserved for themselves the definitive reality of another superior sphere called the other life. And if the priest stood straddling these two worlds, the monk, surely represented the one whose acosmic vocation placed him already on the other shore and made of him the eschatological witness of the definitive human state.

Either the monk remains outside the secular sphere or, if he enters into it without ceasing to be a monk, then this must signify that the secular is also somehow definitive, ultimate and equally important as the so-called other life. This means that the two lives cannot be separated, that the one does not exist without the other, that the true life does not belong to another world. It means the incarnation of the divine in the human and its impregnation of all the structures of the material world; the descent of the real into appearances; the eruption of the noumenon into the phenomena; the transformation of the divine avatar into the human. Either the monk ceases to be a monk or the secular ceases to be profane and is integrated into the holy.

This change is of no little import because it tells us in short that the separation between the holy and the secular is no longer sustainable, or at the very least that temporality with all its consequences is as holy as that which traditionally was maintained apart from the "noise of the world" and the servile chores of temporal affairs. But if this represents a mutation in the conception of the holy, it equally signifies a parallel revolution in the experience of the secular.

The secular is no longer that which is fleeting provisional, perishable, contingent, but is rather the very clothing of the permanent, eternal and immutable, to continue using for a moment categories that must be superseded. The secular should not be abandoned in order to achieve the real way a snake sheds his skin in order to continue living. Or to put it in christian terms: the resurrection of the body is not to an everlasting life with another body and another kind of flesh than that which we now have, feel and are, but is rather this very flesh that now constitutes us, as more than one Conciliar text will tell us.

In many periods of human history, in times of emergency, monks moved by compassion and sense of duty have descended from their 'high places' into the political arena. But once the order restored or the duty fulfilled, the monk withdraws and regains his secluded place. It may well be that

the situation of the world is so desperate that this has awakened monastic conscience to this new step, but the fact remains that when the buddhist, christian, hindu or jaina monks today enter into the struggle for a more just world they do not do it as something alien to them. It entirely behooves them to enter into the territory of the secular world. They will no longer accept being shut off from full participation in the true human reality. [There is no 'other' life, even though the existence led by the majority of humans does not often reach the minimum standard of what could be called truly living the only one life that exists. And this is precisely hell. It is with the redemption of this life and not any other that we are dealing, as the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh will tell christians or as the vedāntic intuition will show hindus, and the teachings of Gautama, buddhists. But this life must be won, and as the majority of religions emphasize, this true life is hidden in our present everyday existence. It is necessary to 'believe' in it, or 'to know how to' or 'be able' to penetrate it, discover it, realize it. Salvation is within the reach of the hand; it is near by and even within us, but we are in need of a revelation, a word, a redeemer, a gift of grace, a personal effort, a spontaneous decision, a teaching, a guru or of the very best that is in us in order to attain it.]

The monk bears witness to the primacy of the holy discovering its hidden nucleus in the very material structures of reality and in the very yearnings and strivings of humankind. The classic buddhist conception of the momentariness of existence or the equally traditional christian one of the continuing creation, on a par with the hindu concept of the simultaneous work of ~~the trimurti~~ could all perhaps serve to express the human experience of the unity of each and every moment of existence, the incommensurable importance of all that is, the irreducibility of every being. Things and events are not mere means for some other thing. It is precisely this which ~~comprises~~ constitutes the alienation of human beings: the race toward an end which does not exist, the temporal anxiety for a future which will never arrive. And if the danger of former times consisted in having bound oneself to being exalted in a vertical future, the modern temptation lies in wanting to throw oneself headlong into a horizontal future. Neither future ~~will arrive~~. The activity of building a better world is not a mere technique, but the very art of the present. Authentic work is not a means for an end, but a basic form of human creativity. [Anything else is slavery and when the machine imposes its conditions on human productivity, it dehumanizes and condemns it. Modern technological society cries out to be redeemed from the enslavement into which it

has fallen. The contemporary monk withdraws from that society, not to abandon it to its slavery, but to incarnate the authentically human which ends up being the most divine.

The secular function of the monk in the modern world could perhaps be described in the following manner:

There are four sociological groups of great importance in society: 1) Church or religious groups; 2) Academia or teaching and research institutions; 3) Government and military; 4) Industry and commerce. These are as valid in an agricultural civilization as in the emerging techniculture (word which would signify the positive and civilizing aspect of a technified world). Strictly speaking, the monk belongs to none of these four groups. He is neither priest, nor intellectual, nor public officer, nor producer. A great number of traditional societies admit a fifth state: 5) that of the person who has abandoned the world, the monk, the saṃnyāsin, the renouncer, the one who has ~~renounced~~ all the rules of the game of human intercourse, has leapt over the wall and yet remaining as a symbol for the rest of mortals of the provisionality of all human enterprises. In his own eyes, the monk is one separated, set apart, but in people's consciousness he is holy and thus by no means a marginal or peripheral being. The monk rests in the very center of society and when they are faced with what appear to be technically insoluble problems the people approach their saints, monks, hermits and ascetics.

Since time immemorial there seems to exist more or less underground a sixth group as well, 6) that of the guerrilla, ~~or of~~ the so-called counter culture, ~~or of~~ the dissident or revolutionary, those who are not content with merely reforming the ~~structures~~ of society or simply rotating the seats of power, by just turning the tables, but who strive to radically change the whole system. Now, these voluntary marginal 'citizens' are, however, to a large extent dependents of the anti-system, that is, in the final analysis, dependents of the very system they claim to combat. In opposing the system dialectically one has no choice but to accept the rules of the game that the system defines, even though it may be with the aim of overthrowing it. The contemporary monk may well belong to this group, but with one fundamental difference: he has, as far as possible, eliminated the negative factor of simple opposition to the system. He takes, on the contrary, a positive stance of the greatest possible independence in regard to the system and then to actualize in his life and experience a radical alternative to that system. The esoteric movements belong also mostly to this group. Now many of the already existing groups of men and women who strive today to realize this new style of life or who dedicate themselves to studying and formulating its basis, are authentic

successors to traditional monasticism -- imperfect and provisional as these first essays may be.

There is still a seventh group: 7) the true marginals, those without a voice, without means of subsistence, those exploited, by all the others. The monk establishes also a singular relation with the wretched of the earth, but in this case as well, there is a basic difference: while the genuinely destitute have a vague consciousness of their own marginal status, the monk preserves the traditional belief of seeing himself to be at the very center of reality. Authentic non-violence is something more than a mere means for obtaining what is sought; it is an end in itself, because it is a form of life that believes ultimately in the harmonious structure of reality. Without this faith in the radical goodness of existence, non-violence is not only impossible but ceases to be non-violent and contradicts itself. If evil is found on the same ontological level as good then it is not enough to oppose it non-violently; it is not sufficient simply to not collaborate in it with the confidence that it will thus burn itself out and the basic harmony of the universe be re-established. No, in this case, it must be eradicated, pulled out by the roots without any sentimental consideration concerning the uprooting of good grain growing together with it in the same soil. Non-violence has meaning only in a non-dualistic conception of reality. The monk's entrance into the secular world, his witness concerning both the means and ends of our human struggle continue to be an expression of his vocation to an unqualified holiness. (You may well read unilateral disarmament).

9.- The ~~Ontological~~ Memory of the Ultimate and the ~~Psychological~~ Presence of its Gate:

GLOSS: This combination of a psychological ~~factor~~ and an ontological ~~reality~~ belongs most especially to the archetype of the monk. It is not an ontological presence. ~~This~~ is simply a given fact. To ponder over the Ultimate may be the mark of the philosopher, but the monk as such is not a philosopher, and is even rather suspicious of a certain predominance of mind and thought in Man's life. This sūtra speaks of an ontological fact brought constantly to one's memory, i.e. a psychological calling to mind of the ontological fact of the reality of the Ultimate.

Nor is it a psychological remembrance of the Gate unto the Ultimate. This remembrance is the lot of almost any human being, at one time or another. It is rather the ontologization of this psychological fact,

i.e. the remembrance is to some extent considered an ontological given. In so many words, ontology is psychologized and psychology ontologized. Ontology is brought to mind, and Psychology is given an ontological weight. The ontological fact of (the existence of) the Ultimate is converted into the psychological center of the monk's life; and the psychological fact of the convenience and usefulness of such a remembrance becomes the ontological pivot of the monastic way of life. Let me explain this a little more clearly.

The Ultimate has many names: the Absolute, God, Brahman, Nirvāṇa, Nothingness, Absolute Future, Justice, etc. The Gate has also had many expressions, the most important of them all being Death, but it can equally be called Justification, Innocence, Initiation, Love, etc.

The monk is fascinated by the Ultimate. His or her life is geared toward it, and it is the only thing that really counts. But this Ultimate has a Gate, and this Entrance into the Ultimate is what concentrates all of ~~our~~ efforts and energies. To have the four noble truths ever before our eyes, to constantly recall the caducity of all things, to meditate on death day in and day out, to see every event in our lives under the perspective of death, not to be affected by anything that passes away or has no immediate bearing on the ultimate goal of life or nothing to do with the Gate conducive to the goal, to conserve equanimity and serenity in the face of world calamities and social upheavels because they do not belong to that ultimate level, to be free and prepared to face ultimate reality, and similar injunctions are well-known features of monkhood.

As a matter of fact, the psychological motivation of most of the monastic vocations comes from the experience of the seriousness of this fact, be it called death, the transient nature of visible things, or by whatever name. As Brother David tells us, "it is in confrontation with death" that the monk situates his encounter with the Ultimate Reality. This "is the basic experience which makes a man become a monk". At any rate, the monk is carefree, serene, non-attached, uninvolved vis-à-vis all the ripples agitating the common human affairs of the majority of mortals because he has already squarely faced death. The monk is something of an aristocrat. He belongs to a minority fully dedicated to that final goal, and he may also be living such a life vicariously for everyone. He is not selfish, but somehow an exception. Yet he relies on the existence of the others. The whole world would collapse if all were monks, and the monk himself would not be able to survive were it not for the fact that there are non-monks around (and devotees).

has died the Great Death
Zen puts it.

Death and Ultimate Reality are facts of human consciousness, but the monk has a psychological relation with the Ultimate and ontologizes the Gate. The Ultimate is there not only as the goal of existence, but also in the mind and heart of the monk all the time. Death is not only recognized and accepted, it is given a status of its own and allowed to dominate and condition all other human activities. It is precisely because of this that monkhood has a tendency to be institutionalized. The presence of the Ultimate and the reality of Death are too serious an affair to leave to freewheeling human nature or to the will of the individual. Monasticism, as it were, institutionalizes the presence of Death and the reality of the Absolute. The monastery is the institution where Death is present and the Ultimate constantly remembered. It becomes a witness to and a sign of the reality of the Absolute. → 22,1

7.7.1 Nowhere, perhaps, is the principle of Blessed Simplicity more evident than in this last sūtra. It is the experience of the Ultimate, the reality of God, the Other Shore or whatever that magnetizes the monk and allows him to simplify his life. This would not be possible if the Gate to this Ultimate were not a New Life, which can be put forward and symbolized in many ways (initiation, profession, dīkṣā etc.), but which culminates in the mystery of Death. Death is the Gate. But death kills everything. So the monk is not much concerned with anything mortal. Death simplifies everything.

COMMENTARY:

The Modern monk is equally the 'God-intoxicated', as some people still say today, but he would not like that this intoxication be a merely cutaneous eruption. He fears sometimes that the constant thought of death may paralyse the human efforts for mortal values which are nevertheless worth our effort and attention. The modern monk is fascinated by the intuition that nirvāṇa is saṁsāra and saṁsāra nirvāṇa, that the talents have to yield fruit here on Earth as well and that the hundredfold is also for this life, but he can equally be torn apart because his elders tell him, and his own experience confirms, that this ideal synthesis may be unreacheable and any mere compromise lethal.

In the face of the easygoing contemporary efforts at harmonizing these two extremes, the monk feels inclined to underscore the traditional line, harking back to the one and only thing that Lord Buddha taught to his disciples and which the Christian Gospel equally emphasizes. He shuns instant spiritualities and superficial gratifications. But he equally senses that a certain preoccupation with death

It is this constant re-enactment

of the Ultimate and the permanent presence

of the Way to it that has led most

monastic institutions to cultivate the

Liturgy in a special manner and to

live the whole life as a ritual which

expresses and unfolds the very destiny

of the individual and of the entire

universe. The real clock of the vihara,

the monastery is not the movement of

the sun, or the events of history, but

the clock of the anthropocosmos on its

way to liberation.

and the centrality of the eschatological may not only dehumanize him and alienate him from his fellow beings, but also make it all too easy. He fears spiritual selfishness, in a word. He is uneasy chanting psalms while his brethren suffer or struggle for economic or political liberation; he feels uncomfortable looking after his own perfection while many of the urgent tasks to be done for the world require a certain renunciation of his own good manners and virtues. He knows well the ambivalence of all these thoughts, and also the excruciating pain of disentangling himself from the common affairs of the world out of love and interest and hope for them.

Certainly, naked we came into this world and naked we are going to return to Mother Earth, in spite of all Egyptian and cryogenic mummifications. Certainly, the monk submits to being stripped of all inauthentic adherences and is ready to concentrate on essentials; but is not the Ultimate linked with the pen-ultimate and from there on to the least grain of sand? Is the Ultimate so foreign and transcendent, so wholly other that it has no relation to the strivings of Man? Undoubtedly, Death sets all our perspectives aright, but there is a double reaction to Death. ~~She~~ It may be seen as the End or as the Beginning. She may be considered the final stage of all human endeavors, even if 'afterwards' there is something else. Or ~~she~~ it may be considered as the real birthday of authentic life. This is the monastic attitude, and for this reason this act of dying is advanced in the monastic profession. The monk takes in the most radical way the second birth implied in most initiatory rites. After the monastic profession, ordination, consecration... there is no more 'life as usual.'

But the modern monk feels that this Death is not only his death or human death, but the fate of everything. He is ultimately concerned with helping everything that exists to perform this most momentous act. This leads to the paradox that the more ephemeral a thing is, the more interest and attention it should suscitate in us --so as to 'save' that little thing. The philosopher will say that a more adequate idea of the Absolute and a better grasping of the mystery of Death will correct all those exagerations and defects. But the monk is not so much up to experimenting with ideas as with life, and his life seems to be caught in the dilemma of the Absolute and the Relative, even if he agrees that theoretically it is a false dilemma. Always we have known that to love God is to love one's neighbor, that to seek nirvāna is really to aid saṃsāra, that sublimation of a value represents a higher fruition of the 'renounced' value, that abandoning the world contributes to its salvation, etc., but the monk has only one life and often wonders how all this can be possible.

The old masters knew well that one has to integrate Death into Life, that you should look to the lilies of the field even if their existence is fleeting, and they also knew that the monk is not life-denying -- but what is this life? The life which does not die, or the mortal life? The sociological pattern of monasticism was turned toward everlasting life. The winds of secularity seem to be blowing in favor of mortal life. Can a monk be so secular and still be a monk?

It is this last sūtra, especially, which will prompt us to examine this underlying tension in a more philosophical light in the last part of the presentation.

EPILOGUE:

The Canon of the Disciple does not intend to replace the Rule of the Master. The "Kanon" is only a 'kanna', a cane, a walking stick, a measure, something used for comparison to be able to have some kind of standard. The Canon does not offer a model nor even provide answers. These have to be elaborated through praxis and discovered personally in a unique and existential way. The majority of the problems brought up do not have theoretical solutions; and if they did, they would only be valid within a very restricted field. The solution is not the individual, but it is personal. And it is here that there lies room for prophecy and leadership, for initiative and creativity -- and I feel, for a truly monastic vocation.

DISCUSSION:

Fr. DAVID TURNER: (St. Procopius Abbey):

I would like you to comment, Father, on the concept of the fuga mundi, or the "flight from the world" which is supposed to be part of the monastic life in the Western tradition. I would like you to comment on that specifically within the framework of the way you have discussed the world this morning, and the monk in relationship to that world.

PANIKKAR:

I may offer two very brief comments. The first is that I do not feel that contemporary monastic spirituality needs to subscribe to all the statements and propositions and even ideas that traditional spirituality has had. The first part of my answer is that even if we would drop some aspects of the fuga mundi altogether, that would not cost much damage to ~~the continuation of~~ monastic spirituality.

I spoke of mutation, and any mutation implies a certain type of transformation. Mutation implies both change and continuity. It implies something new that is not just an unfolding of the old. Monkhood is undergoing such change. But mutation implies also an underlying identity. It is not rupture. It is a particular form of growth coming from both an internal dynamism and an external grafting. In the fuga mundi we may have an example of it.

And this is the second part of my answer. In point of fact in the traditional fuga mundi I see a very positive aspect, though I shall not dwell now on what mundus meant to those generations. In my description of the modern monk, I have stressed enough the elements of swimming against the current, of participating and yet having another attitude, of sharing with the fifth and sixth group and yet not admitting the 'rules of the game'. It is the non-violent, holistic and all-embracing attitude that makes of the monk someone who precisely does not accept the trends of the times, the 'mundus' as it goes, i.e. the 'system'. So the fuga mundi would not be an anti-system, i.e. a dialectical opposition to it, but the monk's non-acceptance of the ways in which the problems are put. If instead of mundus, you put today what we call 'the system', then you have a positive interpretation of this fuga mundi of the monastic vocation. The monk is the person who simply does not play that game. This is very traditional as you see. At least in as much as the monk does not abide by the rules of the world. The change may be expressed perhaps in the second part of what I said: not abiding by the rules, and nevertheless playing the game. Here is the difference. You do not escape from the world, although you withdraw from it and struggle against it striving towards a better alternative.

You may retort that the rules are the game so that if I do not follow the rules I cannot play the game. I disagree. This would be the case if our relation with the world were a dialectical one. But this is what I contest and the mādhyama-mārga, the middle path of the Buddha and the 'in but not of the world' of Jesus are in this line. You are 'in the world' playing the game which is not 'of the world'. But, further, the game is in the playing and by doing this you may be able to put another set of rules different from those imposed by the people in power. Without rules there can be no game, but the imposed or accepted rules are not the only ones. And here is where you have again the difference. Some will say: let us disturb the game by a violent revolution, grasp power and impose our set of rules. The monk, I submit, playfully plays the game and in playing changes the

rules, at the risk of his life obviously. For changing the rules he will eventually change the game, and this will not be tolerated. Civil resistance, for instance, is an example of playing the game, accepting the framework of that society, not just shooting it down or substituting it with another scheme; but not abiding by the rules, resisting the rules felt to be unjust or inhuman and being ready to become victims, martyrs, put aside.

ED BEDNAR:

I keep hearing echoes of the Old Testament in some of the things that you say. There is a notion of tragedy, of loss, of sorrow, of grief, that is connected to barrenness, to no children, to a body which does not bear fruit. And it always struck me as sad and ironic, when I was living in the monastery, to chant the Psalm that says "Your wife, like a fruitful vine at the heart of your house", and be surrounded by men whom I know would be very good fathers, men that were kind and gentle, and whom I could see having beautiful children -- yourself, also, you know.

So, that is one side of it. There seems to be something tragic about barrenness, something sad and painful about barrenness. And, on the other side, I have spent all of my life thinking about God and trying to realize God. And I have been free to do so because I do no have to worry about feeding my children and clothing my children and taking care of all of these other things. And this gives me a freedom that I appreciate. So that is another side.

And there is a third side, too. I notice that some of the most materialistic people that I went to school with now have many children; they are working for the stock market or in business or law or construction, some type of work where they have a lot of food in the house, and money in the bank, and children. And somehow, I wonder, what is happening to the gene pool? I mean that by "natural selection" at least, people who are interested in religious life, are not reproducing themselves. Centuries and centuries this happens, over and over again -- if you are attracted to the religious life, then no children. And the ones that are attracted to the world and to family and household, there are more and more of them.

So there are three parts to my question about barrenness and fruitfulness.

PANIKKAR:

I thought for a minute you were going to say that God is a married man.

ED BEDNAR:

He is not a married man; and that is my question.

PANIKKAR:

That remains to be seen. As to your first question, it is important to realize that the celibate monastic tradition is not universal. It is mainly found in those traditions that link up a notion of individual salvation with a very peculiar mode of temporal consciousness, so that individual destiny is emphasized, though in many different ways. Traditions which stress celibacy seem to stress the salvation or destiny of the individual human being. Buddhism would not use such terms, but it comes to the same." Work out your salvation with diligence" said the Enlightened One. By contrast, Judaism and many of the African religions seem to think of salvation collectively, as a people. I say this to situate the question of celibacy, ~~which has very little to do with~~ sexuality, and has, on the other hand, a great deal to do with non-attachment. If, as it is for the Jewish people, and for most of the African peoples, salvation and the entire human pilgrimage is a collective affair, a people marching toward an end... from this point of view, the barrenness of the celibate life would appear as a kind of cosmic pessimism, and it could not be accepted. So, celibacy, in this instance, proves not to be a universal category, but a particular way of seeing, a way of realizing the perfection of the 'individual', given certain conditions. The conditions are, first, this emphasis on the individual (and the word individual is a little misleading here), and secondly this peculiar non-historical sense of time. The spiral conception of reality -- the karmic, kalpic, and the Christian -- vouches for this view that nothing is lost if you have no children. For the Hindus, not to have children, especially male children, was a calamity. The Hindus have insisted that, as far as possible, you have your children before you embark on your saṁnyāsa. In other instances, when the group, the tribe, the 'chosen people', the race, etc. are the most important category, that would be totally out of place. So, I think we should shift the reflection on celibacy from the basis on which it is generally put nowadays, to that other, more cross-cultural -- and, in my opinion, deeper -- series of reflections.

should be distinguished from that of

Now, I fully understand your feelings of sadness, chanting Psalms of the Jewish tradition in a congregation of unmarried males. I think I have practically one answer to your three questions. You see, if you ask me about the genetic manipulation of mankind, I would not admit that kind

human

of premise. One of my resistances is that methodologically -- ontologically, as well as epistemologically -- it is wrong to treat human beings like so many peanuts. I do not think that even if the genetic laws are indeed laws (they apply here) Certainly, one can manipulate genetics, but I do not feel that we can reduce everything to genetic laws. So, genetics is neither an argument for nor an argument against monastic celibacy. I could be sarcastic, if you want, and say that it is a blessing that 'over-religious' people do not reproduce themselves. Their offspring would likely be bigotted either in favor or against religion... But this is just to continue in your jovial mood...

EUGENE PASCAL (Analytical Psychologist, New York):

In the quest for wholeness in monasticism, and not perfection, the trend seems throughout the centuries to have been Apollonian. I would like your comments on integrating the Dionysian aspects of wholeness. And also, as a second part of the question, how does the male monk, in your view, integrate the feminine; and how does the nun integrate the masculine? -- again, to achieve this wholeness.

PANIKKAR:

To the first question, I would say that the Dionysiac, by definition, has no blueprint or pre-programmed plan; or else it would be Apollonian. It has to be holy (or unholy) spontaneity, an orgy or whatever it is, but something is really Dionysiac because it surprises you as much as everyone else taking part in it. The only thing one could say would be: Do not stifle the spirit, even for the development of the Dionysiac aspect of life. And I would say to monks just that: let us not stifle the spirit. Now, this implies and demands a real purification of the heart, so that

the spontaneity can not lead to the orgy of a bachanal,

To your second question -- how the monk integrates the feminine, and the nun the masculine -- let me say first that I think this integration is a totally healthy and necessary one. If you delve into the Christian monastic tradition a little, you discover an extraordinary number of friendships between males and females -- and these are paradigmatic examples, many well-known and many others less well-known -- these are extraordinarily intimate relationships, which must certainly be considered sexual relationships. Not that they had gone to bed together, that was considered beyond the pale... perhaps because the whole beauty and dance and play of communication and mutual excitement and mutual inspiration would fade away the moment one part (a certain aspect) of the sexual imposed itself on the whole interplay. The sexual ~~implies~~ encompasses the body, the spirit, the eyes, the hands, the gestures

-- everything, any connection, any friendship, any relationship. The fact that you are another living being is already something which puts not only my mind but everything into play. ~~You see,~~ We seem sometimes to think in black and white; here is the male and there is the female... But the whole thing is a gamut, and precisely the normal cases are those which are an interplay in between, in myself and with every living other. ~~And~~ When I speak with another person, I am all the more sexually conditioned the less I think that the other person is a man or a woman. It is this discovery that the less conscious you are that your partner in dialogue and discourse is male or female, the more genuinely at play your sexuality is -- understanding by sexuality this polarity, this yin/yang of the human being. In the Vedic ritual of marriage -- just before the step when the two go to discover the pole star as the center round which everything turns -- there is a moment when the male says, "I am He", and the female says, "I am She". I am "the" He; I am "the" She. I incarnate and represent one pole of the polarity, and not just this individuation of a nice girl or a young bridegroom. How? First, by conquering internal and external freedom. I call this the new innocence, which takes in your spirit as much as your thoughts, ~~as much as~~ your intentions, and everything else. The moment I want to possess, ... concupiscence is a sin; in marriage and out of marriage this is parigraha, (grasping). The real free and spontaneous action is not conscious that it is free and spontaneous, like ~~the real~~ meditation ~~which~~ is thoughtless ~~and~~ when it is not worried by the thought of thoughtlessness. These relations ~~which we have had throughout the ages~~ in the Christian tradition between ~~couples or~~ pairs of holy men and holy women are extremely revealing; these people were not living a life of sexual starvation. And yet they had neither children nor that sort of make-believe of which modern films invite us to suppose sexuality consists. I do think we are in one of those moments when things open up, and may take new avenues. And if this is truly creative, well, creation is out of nothing... and I would say out of no pre-planned thoughts and preconditioned ideas.

Now, in the pointed way you put it: "how does the male monk integrate the feminine and how does the nun integrate the masculine?' I am not precisely proposing a greater frienship between monks and nuns. ~~Almost the opposite~~. I am proposing a greater openness of the nun towards the animus and of the monk towards the anima if you accept these Jungian notions. The important thing is to have no fear, or in traditional language, the purity of the heart.

Fr. CHARLES MURPHY (Atonement Friar, Graymore, New York):

I would like to speak, or would like to hear you respond, Father, a little bit more on the role of

the monk in the political order, if we are going to look upon the monk as the integrated individual, the Self who has achieved personal self-individuation and fullness of self.

I personally feel that what has happened in Western society, and especially in the United States, in the political order is that our political servants, our politicians, have become so dishonest that we hear them and immediately it registers in our mind that they are not telling the truth, they are not honest. I have even been in the presence of people who --as soon as even a President of a nation as big as ours begins to speak, people will laugh and mock. I feel myself that the dishonesty of the Western politicians is due fundamentally to the "dis-integrated-ness" of the Western politician. And for that reason, I feel that the role of the individuated monk in the political order is not just okay, or permissible; I think it is necessary, because the individuated monk has a very, very strong witness -- by his very integration -- to give to a disintegrated political order.

PANIKKAR:

I would be very much distressed if what I have been saying is not exactly what you say. I was just trying to say -- perhaps in more general terms than those of one particular nation in one particular situation -- that this is a must. I fully agree with you.

Let me make a general statement: Thinking leads to intellection. And that is one approach: you think something, and then finally you may understand. Contrariwise, contempation leads to action. If I think that so many people are dying of hunger, or whatever, I may finally find the causes and the whys and wherefores, and I may be able to explain how this whole thing has happened. But if I contemplate the very same case, I cannot leave it at that. I will have to do something. I will have to dirty my hands or plunge into action. The real criterion of true contemplation is that it leads to action, even if that action consists only in transforming one's own life and immediate environment. If this is the case, the monk has the strictest moral obligation -- to denounce, to cry out, to speak and to act. Now, this action may not be just a re-action -- like throwing a bomb, or writing a letter to the editor -- but something more effective. Contemplation is a dangerous activity. Now, contemplation is not the exclusive prerogative of the monk. And this leads me to warn of an over-compartmentalization. I spoke of monkhood as the archetype, the person

who is a canonical monk may also be many other things.

Yet, I think the monk today is plunged by his very vocation into action, with all the dangers this implies. If we do nothing, then we are in the same boat as the French bishops blessing cannons and the German blessing planes to fight each other. If we do nothing, we bless and condone the status quo, which is already a political decision. So, I could not more fully agree with you.

GURU JOHN SINGH KHALSA (From Sikh Dharma):

I would just like to take a brief second and add a footnote to something you said. The spiritual aspirant, whether he be a household or a monk, is basically on the same plane. They have the same duties. In fact, as a householder myself with three growing little daughters, I find that you must be even more contemplative than the most contemplative renunciate. You must be more meditative than the most meditative yogin, because the values of spirituality have to be given to the children -- and that begins at intercourse, through gestation, at birth, and through the early years. It is a mammoth job, that has to be done.

Now, the spiritual aspirant has the opportunity to exercise his option: to be single and to go to God that way, or to bring others into a life of spirituality. And what we find is that those children blessed with a spiritual beginning are shining lights of spirituality, even at five or six years old. And they are the future. And those little ones, if they can be encouraged into honesty and truth and love of God from an early age, are the future saviors of mankind.

And with regard to Ed's question about his friends, the stockbrokers with all the children and lots of money and cars, those children are free spirits and they also will have a chance to seek God, in some way, shape or form at some time. A little bit later, maybe, but they will have that opportunity.

So basically, the householder has to practice non-attachment just as strongly as the celibate spiritual aspirant. We are not the owners, we do not possess the children. The children belong to God, they are God's creation. It is our job as parents to pay rent, to see that they get the spiritual foundations that are necessary to give them the consciousness of brotherhood and love.

PANIKKAR:

This is a very valuable comment, exactly in the sense that I have tried to say that the monk is not superior to the lay people or to the householder. In the same vein, I would say that the householder is also not superior to the others — although

And regarding what you said about children, I think it is very beautiful and very true. The only thing I would say is that I have all my life not liked and refuse to be called "Father". And perhaps it is a sign of senility that I begin to understand that I also have many children, almost in the same sense in which you have spoken of them.

Fr. CHARLES MURPHY:

Raimundo, in all of what you are saying -- not just anything in particular this morning or any one of these days, but in your whole approach — what guideline do you use for distinguishing between synthesis and syncretism?

PANIKKAR:

Syncretism, as you call it here, is external juxtaposition; synthesis is a living assimilation. Syncretism is amassment; synthesis is a living organism. A ~~The~~ symbol of ~~the~~ synthesis is the Eucharist. You eat and you assimilate, and it is not that you are converted into Christ but that Christ is converted into you. It is not that you become the consecrated bread, but that the consecrated bread becomes part of your proteins. And that is synthesis.

Synthesis is produced by the way by which we assimilate; it reveals ~~is~~ the metabolic aspect of the entire reality. And you grow, and religions themselves grow, by this positive metabolism -- and not by mere juxtaposition. Syncretism, on the other hand, is a kind of indigestion we have to beware of today when we suppose too optimistically that we can just eat everything that comes in front of us. And when we meet, and religions East and West meet, I would certainly want to forewarn you of the possibility of indigestions which would not lead to a synthesis. Abbot Tholens gave us a beautiful example yesterday of a meeting which is not an indigestion, nor a superficial juxtaposition, but what I would call a mutual fecundation.

The secret is to keep the balance. Some people would just like to eat everything they are presented with, and other people use all

kinds of spiritual and intellectual preservatives which may stifle the openness of the spirit. At the present moment, I think we are at a crossroads where viveka, discrimination, discernment and patience is needed to discover the rhythms of the times. The challenge of modern monasticism is that it finds itself at the crossroads, and on the deepest level of very many traditions. It is not just by imitating a few externals that I become a Hindu, or whatever, ~~but by assimilating something which I consider essential to my life~~.

The gist of my presentation is not so much a solution, or an answer, but rather to evoke in all of us this sense of uneasiness -- which is perhaps one of the best translations of the Buddhist duḥkha -- which is the human condition itself. It is creative, in that it makes us aware of the enormous responsability we have. It makes us conscious that to trust in God —which is a very normal thing to do — today implies the tremendous challenge of trusting in ourselves ~~—~~, personally, and also collectively. A small group of people can do enormous things. I think the monk should overcome the sort of inferiority complex regarding the political situation that says we can do nothing because we do not have the means. I think that the most effective way of destroying the power of the powerful is not to be impressed by their power, and to render them powerless because you just do not notice that they are so powerful.

And so I just walk on, in spite of the cannon pointing at me. I just go by them all, and as in the example that Michael brought us yesterday: you just make a five-minute meditation and walk on... and people obey. That is a common experience, and I think many of you have done precisely that. This is easier said than done. We know it. Perhaps we should not even say these things, but just do them. And we do them when we have integrated our doing and our being.

RP/mct

III. Synthesis

'Synthesis' is the title given to this extra talk by the organizers. A synthesis is neither a systematic overview, nor a summary. I will try to put together three different groups of problems, followed by a fourth more general reflection.

The first group of problems would come under the cross-cultural pattern guiding our over-all symposium. The second would frame the sociological challenge, the third would be to sketch some anthropological problems, and the fourth will try to bring to a provisional close the dilemma of the two 'spiritualities'.

1) Cross-Cultural Pattern

I have presented nine sūtras. They are a challenge. They invite a further understanding, or perhaps herald a new mutation in the monastic life, or else they demand rejection altogether, so that monastic spirituality is kept uncontaminated from ~~Modernity~~ Secularity. I should note that we have during these days also lived together four liturgies, which indicates to me at once the way in and the way out. If the solution is not in some sense liturgical, I do not think it will endure. But liturgy, as you know, means 'the work of the people', leit-ourgia... so we still have much work to do.

I imagine that to speak of a synthesis requires a certain explanation of the ground on which one builds the intellectual construction of what has been said.

We all know that monotheism is not essential to ~~the archetype of~~ monkhood. Christian monks are generally theistic, buddhists and jains are certainly non-theistic, and hindus by and large neither/nor.

I cannot now elaborate a proper background for a synthesis, ~~of the monastic archetype~~. I shall only sketch my trinitarian hypothesis over against the backdrop of a scientific model and a judaeo-christian paradigm.

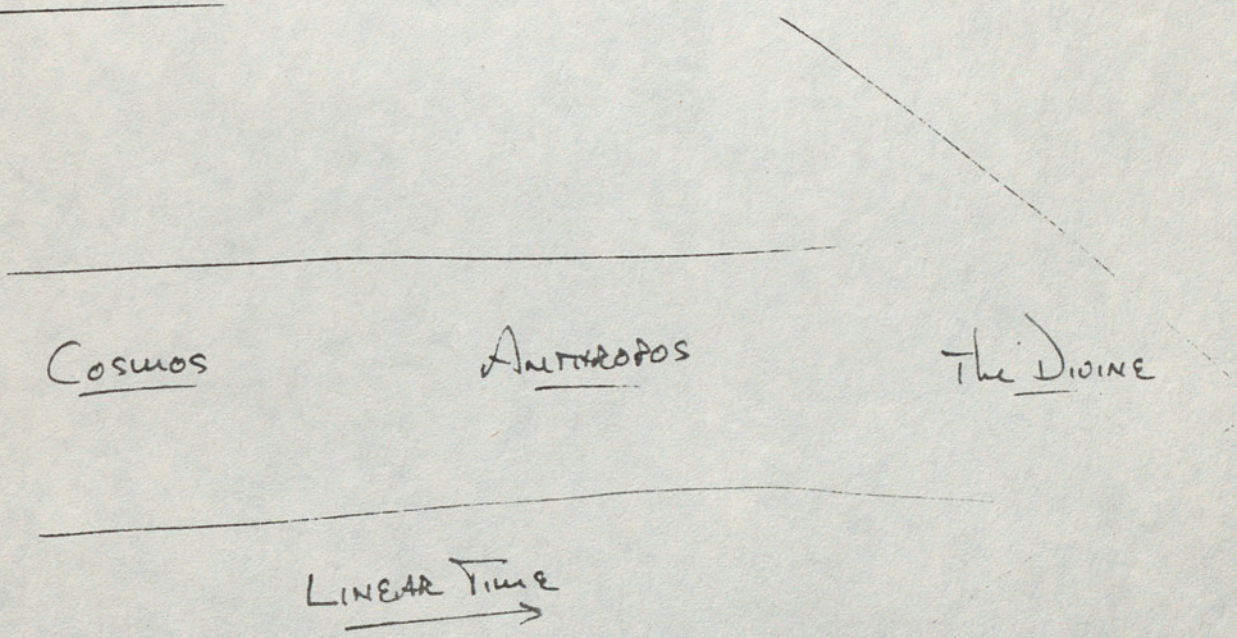
In Paolo Soleri's presentation the other night, we had a well-condensed assessment of the scientific option. The scientific option says that there is a starting point here — which is matter, which is the cosmos — and that there is a temporal and linear evolution which passes through vegetative and animal life, then through human life, and ultimately gets to the divine, and continues. The scientific view says that this is, in a certain sense, the entire reality. From primal matter, a cosmic reality, through four billion years of evolution, up to Men and then the Divine. This is the mystery of the Cosmos. One may refine this vew, or say that it is one of the many possible scientific paradigms, but at any rate it can serve as a model for the scientific worldview.

We could draw it like this:

(FIGURE 1)

It is clear that the word Divine used by Soleri will be contested by other scientists. We can call it the Superhuman, the Future, the Unknown. This is not relevant for our purpose. The monk collaborates here in the unfolding of the

FIGURE 1



Please leave a little drawing

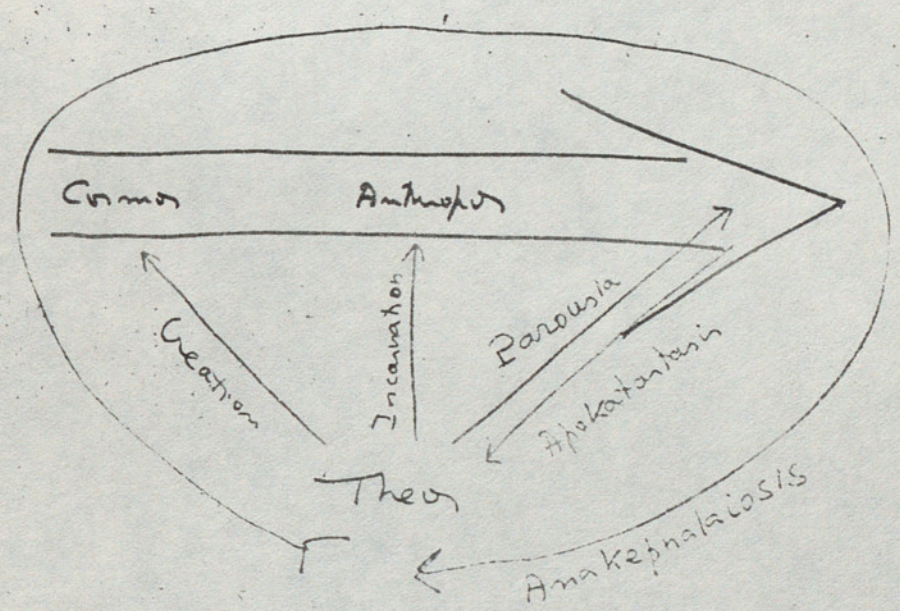
Universe toward the Divine by being rooted in the Past and open to the Future.

Another option is a ~~traditionally~~ certain Christian view — and I only say Christian to make it a little simpler — which admits this line of evolution, but emphasizes that the divine point is also a theos outside the whole concatenation. This theos has a triple function. At the beginning, there is God, the divine impulse, who or which starts the whole show, gives the 'kick-off', as it were. So it begins here. Obviously, this 'kick-off' is divine, so this God is also already at work so that evolution may take place. A typical example of this view would be Teilhard de Chardin. Now such a God has three main points of contact with this world. At the beginning: creation, the first arrow, the starting point, the kick-off. Then here, when human beings appear — whether Abel or Christ or whoever — a second descent of the divine takes place. The Christian word for this is Incarnation: the second irruption of the divine into the temporal reality. And finally there is a third line, distinguished from these two (though I won't now enter into all the subtleties of the theologians), and this is the notion of a two-way traffic. (On the one hand, it is called parousia, the second coming.) On the other hand, Peter calls it apokatastasis panton (the restoration of all things), and Paul calls it anakephalaiosis (recapitulation) of all things in Christ. This last contact reabsorbs the whole of creation in the way it began, and all that's the end of the story. God and Man live happily ever after... together

We could combine the two schemes like this:

(FIGURE 2)

FIGURE - 2


Cosmos
Anthropos
Creation
Incarnation
Parousia
Apokatastasis
Theos
Anakephalaiosis

RP.

If scientific time is linear, monotheistic temporality does not need to be it. The christian monk here is rooted in the mystery of the First Coming of Christ and stands as an Eschatological sign of the Second Coming, as a witness that only one thing is needful. → 94,1

94,1 → I would like to present a third ~~alternative~~ scheme, which offers a cross-cultural pattern. We have at the very beginning a dimensionless triangle, a still point, in which the material element, the factor of consciousness, and the unfathomable freedom (I ~~we are so bold as to~~ call divine) all three are already there. ~~And~~ Then ~~that~~ the triangle evolves: a spherical wave unfolding globally in different directions. There is a kind of rhythm, or breathing -- the systole and diastole of reality -- and these pulsations are what constitute time(s). ~~If I could draw that here,~~ We would have then the following mandala:

(FIGURE 3)

The mandala ~~is the process of finding that~~ helps us to visualize the center, which is not always easy. That center, ~~is neither outside nor inside~~ immanent and transcendent at the same time, ~~but it~~ is at the very core of the three constitutive ~~elements~~ dimensions of reality, each of which is ~~essential~~ present and effective in the unfolding of everything that is real: the Cosmos (or matter and energy); Man (or consciousness and will); and the Theos (or freedom, ~~and~~ absolute indeterminacy, and love -- if you will allow me this much abused word, ~~-- I would also say~~ love ~~belongs here).~~

I shall not develop now what I call the quaternitas perfecta represented by the four Sanskrit words (soul, I, self, ground). The con-centration of these four, i.e. the ~~finding the~~ letting the four centers coalesce in one, would amount to realization.

jīna, aham, ātman, brahman

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94

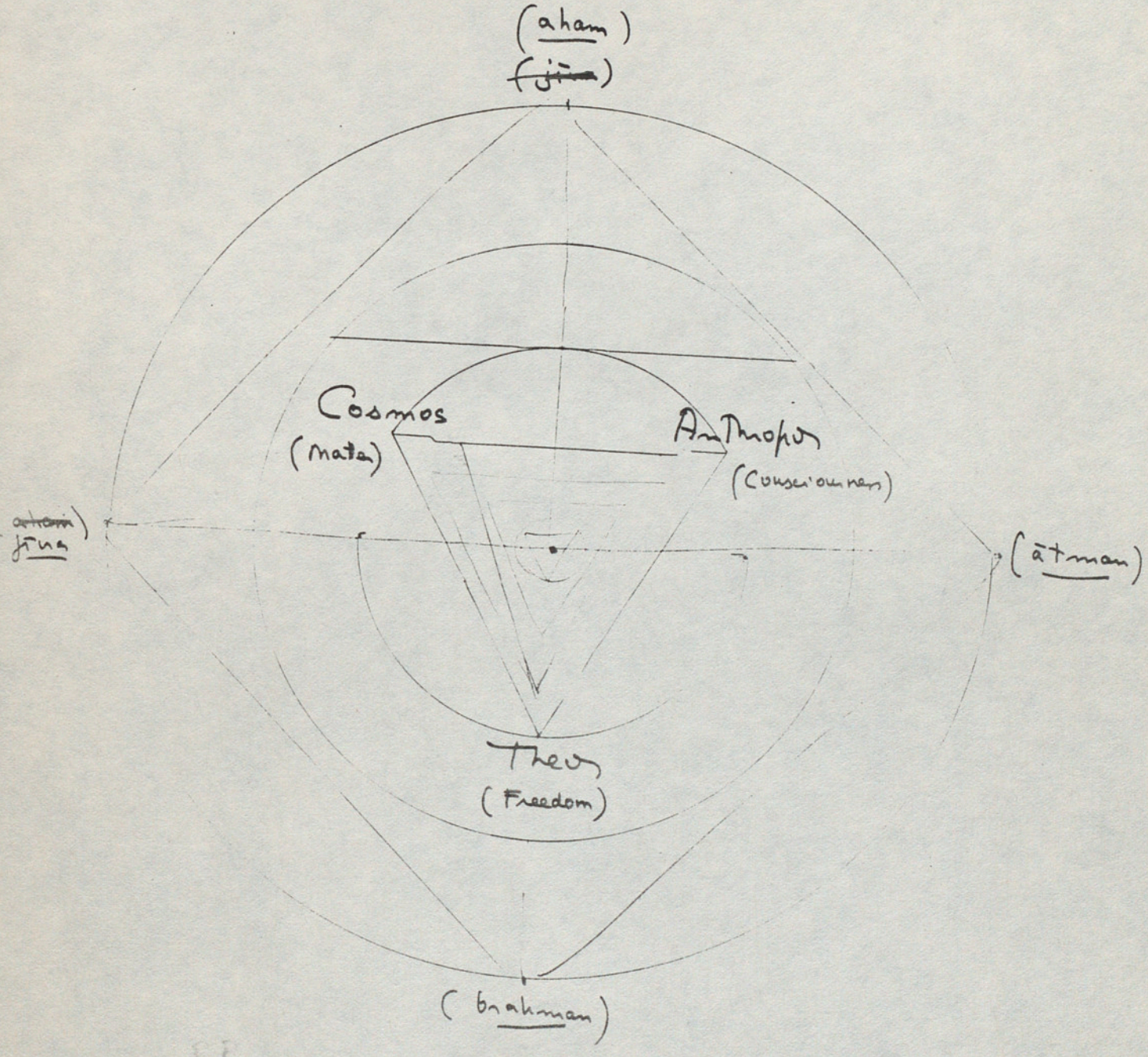
We could refine this scheme, obviously, and consider the passage from Cosmos to Anthropos as a more complex process of evolving forms of life and consciousness. So under Cosmos we would have anorganic and organic matter, vegetal and animal beings, etc. Under Anthropos we could also include the different kinds of bodies (the gross, the subtle, etc.) and of conscious beings (demons and spirits of all sorts, including the gods). We could equally assume that this scheme, once it has come to an end, repeats itself be it identically the same, be it on different planes, and so forth and so on.

(circular view)

(spiral view)

→ 94

FIGURE 3


(aham)
(jīva)
Cosmos
(nata)
Anthropos
(Consciousness)
(jīva)
(ātman)
Theos
(Freedom)
(brahman)

→ 23

surmise, believe, experience, ...

Monkhood would ~~would be~~ represented here ~~as~~ the quest for the center. The center is totally simple. We do not know anything. But the activity by which one reaches the center depends on how we imagine the center to be. By and large, ~~wherever the center may be,~~ the thrust of the monastic tradition has been to reach that center by simplification. The Modern monk, as I have said, would like to get at it through integration. This does not deny, of course, that before you can embark on a proper integration, you have had to purify your being and simplify your life; only then is integration possible. Inasmuch as to look for truth, to create beauty, or even to earn one's livelihood or organize society or increase wealth or produce instruments, is related to that activity of centering, of concentrating, of striving toward that very center, we are cultivating the monastic dimension of life.

And how do we get centered? The answer differs according to culture(s), religion(s) and time(s). ~~Let me put~~ We have already given just one example, ~~In order to spell out what has been indicated.~~ The of hindu and christian monasticism.

Two characteristics differentiate the monastic archetype of the West from that of the East, and more particularly that of Christianity from that of Hinduism. These two differences are obviously not to be taken in an absolute way. East and West, as well as Hinduism and Christianity, are not rigid and incommunicable categories. Nor are the two differences meaningful without their respective counterparts. It all depends on emphasis and centrality.

12 → ~~The first difference is this:~~ ~~The~~ christian monasticism is a Way of life. It is the commitment to the uncompromising Search for the Absolute and the readiness to break all the obstacles on the way. It is the path towards the Center and the vows are the viatica, the means for this pilgrimage towards God.

~~The~~ Hindu monasticism, at least in the traditional understanding of ~~the~~ saṁnyāsa is a way of Life. It is the very Life of the end of life, the goal of the journey, the aśrama beyond all aśramas, only improperly called the fourth one. If christian monasticism is an answer (that you give). The saṁnyāsī does not renounce the world or whatever in order to achieve something. Because he has seen, experienced, lived the real, he discards all the rest. He is not the novice, the brahmacārī, but the comprehensor, the jīvan-mukta. He has to do nothing, because all has already been done. He is at the Center, peaceful, quiet and serene. No sacrifice, no vow, no anything is required or remains to be done. The texts are explicit. → 13

a vocation you have to follow, hindu monasticism

The second differentiating feature is this. The eastern monk looks for that Center in the pure immanence. He has to realize that he has lost nothing nor gained nothing. All that really is, was and ever shall be. In the pure immanence, you don't need to somehow recover what was sheer illusion. Certainly as long as you are not 'there', you have to transcend yourself.

The western monk looks for that Center in the pure transcendence. He has to transform, to transcend himself in order to reach that Center which encompasses everything, the new Heaven and the new Earth. Certainly it may be that this

transcendence is hidden in the very interior of his own being, but it is not his own being.

The scientific model is part of the western approach in which the transcendent seems less transcendent and more futuristic. It is the futuristic center; here transcendence is not outside time, but in the future. Perhaps the greatest tribute to this modern scientific archetype is that no less a theologian than Karl Rahner will speak of God as die absolute Zukunft, the Absolute Future. In the scientific model, that futuristic center is attained by means of measurable knowledge. There is also another path within the Western system, the Marxist one. It is equally futuristic, but oriented toward the perfect classless society. A main difference is that the means is not measurable knowledge but politico-economic action. Still, these are all considered means to attain the Center.

The monk, then, can exist in different cultures, ideologies and worldviews. In all these lifestyles, however, the monk seems to have a kind of anticipation of that very center which spurs him or her on in the quest. In sum, this quest for the center depends on the different conditions and beliefs assumed about where that center is, or what constitutes it.

2) The Sociological Challenge

And now we leave behind those grand scenarios of cosmology and metaphysics in order to enter into modern Western society in a way which is also applicable, with qualifications, to societies on the way to Modernization. In spite of other theoretical possi-

bilities, today de facto Modernization and Westernization are almost synonyms. The dream of modernizing without westernizing is just that -- a pious and beautiful dream, but one which is not incarnated in reality. But this is a different topic.

What, then, is the sociological challenge? It is that in this Modern Western society, the System is breaking down. I use this word simply as a codeword: the System, i.e. the social, political, economic and religious order, seems to be collapsing. For many the System seems imperfect, unsatisfying. But I daresay that it is injust and even inhuman. It has shifted the center from God, Man or Cosmos into one particular corner of reality with pretensions of universality. I suggest that this System falls apart because it has tried to resolve the global human predicament by and with the means and insights of one particular culture and/or religion. And here lies the seriousness of cross-cultural studies, which imply a good deal more than patchwork or cosmetics to beautify or whitewash the existing System. I repeat that, ultimately, the reason for the collapse seems to be not that the System as such is so bad, but that in today's context it represents an abortive attempt to solve global human problems by means of the structures and strictures of a single culture. Thus the System is 'de-centrated', off-kilter, distorted; it has lost (or not found) its center.

To be sure, there has never been a spotless and ideal human system. But all the systems of the past were partial empires. The empires of China, Rome, Christendom, Spain, and Britain did collapse, but there were always other heirs and other victors to learn the lessons or to repeat the mistakes. The Modern techno-logico-economic System is not the American or Russian empire, for

instance; it permeates in a protean way the face of the earth; it is multinational and even multi-ideological. It is one thing to want to impose the Roman vision of the world, or the British rule. It may be good for Rome or for Britain, it may even be beneficial for the people thereby 'civilized', i.e. subjugated peoples; but it cannot claim to be universal in the sense of the present-day anonymous System, which offers neither heirs nor alternatives on the same level of the System. When this System crumbles, it is the End of History! — of the historical myth of humankind.

The task of the monk is to concentrate on and in this quest for the center. But today many no longer see this center in another world, in time above or ahead. When the center was believed to be God (you recall St. Benedict, "Si revera Deum quaerit" ("if one truly seeks God"), ~~Regula 58.7~~), and in this search for God one looks for God and God alone, then that would center you and the entire universe. Secularity may be telling us that the center itself is not ~~only~~ in a transcendent, atemporal God disconnected from the world — so that we can reach the center only once history is over and the world finished, in the parousia, at the very end, the Last Judgment, when God will be all in all and the arrow of evolution will have reached its target, but that this center is equally material and human, i.e. cosmotheandric. This is the ultimate challenge of Secularity to the monastic dimension of Man: the looking for God and God alone in a disincarnated and utterly transcendent way may not help us in finding the very center of reality and thus centering ourselves and the universe on the ultimate truth.

To be sure, we should not make a caricature of the

symbol God, but we cannot deny either that the whole problem today requires a deeper and enlarged experience.

The task, then, is the quest for this center, along with a search for the factors which have 'de-centered' the universe of our experience. I may use a single traditional word here, but we shall have to translate it in an existential way. The traditional word would be hamartia, sin, avidyā, ignorance, but the translation will have to explicitate the results of this severance, or hatred, or whatever: hunger, injustice, wars of every imaginable variety, inequities and iniquities of all sorts, and so on. I submit that today's most urgent monastic task involves a search for God in the direction of politics, society, economics, science and culture; and not in perpetuating a supra-societal, non-political institution sublimely unconcerned with economic affairs, sovereignly above scientific quarrels and exquisitely supra-cultural. Such a God would be an abstraction, not a living God and not, certainly (to take an example from the judaeo-christian-islamic tradition) the partisan God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

x x x

Concrete Concerns

Three very concrete concerns appear to me to issue from the sociological challenge. a) First, a need for formation. But the first step towards it is genuine in-formation. The monastic traditions are generally not sufficiently aware of the state of the world. By this I do not mean just mass media information or newspapers, the latest idea or instant replay of what happened somewhere in the world, which may indeed only distort the real vision and genuine perspective which belongs to that adventure

of the entire reality on the way to its center, toward a destiny, however we may interpret it. But there is a tremendous lack of information, nonetheless. That sovereign nonchalance, or unconcern, disinterest in worldly affairs in fact appears today as the most un-monastic of virtues, since it fosters the cruelty of indifference, callousness and guilty ignorance. Many anchorites of ancient times became cenobites for the sake of 'edification' of the brethren. Perhaps the new monasteries should again be centers where the real 'building up' of the world is studied and cultivated.

b) Second, a contemplative study or approach to the same problems, so that they are not viewed as merely technical problems of data and information, science and logistics. Today's global human dilemmas are not ~~even~~ subject to immediate or technical solutions, so that here all we have been saying about contemplation should have a direct bearing on the very way we tackle the urgent human problems of everyday life: society, politics, economics, science, culture, etc. A sui generis methodology must emerge which integrates the activity of contemplation and the life of contemplative action. I should not be understood

saying that this
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equally imperative
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rightly know ourselves
ny longer if we do not
know also our neigh-
bours — and even
their opinion about us.
The knowledge of
other spiritual
traditions is a
monastic
imperative.

c) Third, a call to action. For monasticism, a call to action does not mean activism or mere 'politicking'. We could perhaps re-interpret the words Father Armand quoted on the first day: Conversatio nostra in caelis est. Our políteuma is in Heaven, says Paul. It is on Earth, says the modern monk, because Heaven is not only merited here on Earth, but is also incarnated here below. Our polity, our conversatio, our activity, our field of action, our lifestyle, our commonwealth, our state, our concern is on Earth. Heavenly citizens, if we want, but here on Earth. We must dirty our hands, says the modern monk. Our políteuma is in the polis of this world, and this has become a monastic imperative

-- action, a call to action for the new polity, the new political incarnation -- not, I repeat, in the minimized sense of the word politics in common language.

Traditional monasticism converted the monasteries into a políteuma, a model commonwealth in symbiosis with the environing world. But what was a symbiosis once upon a time can become a parasite if communication, and even communion, is not re-established. It may be retorted that this is a very lofty and idealistic view of the monk. I was encouraged to read in the Supplement of the New Catholic Encyclopedia (1979) that "the monastic instinct is prophetic". Without wanting to identify the two charismas, it cannot be denied that the new monk cannot be satisfied with a fuga mundi and has to accept a consecratio mundi in a very special way.

And here I would make a very concrete proposal in the light of all I have been saying. I would urge you to bring about a commission, or a group, or a symposium on monastic formation in our contemporary world. This may perhaps create the atmosphere where a more existential change may occur. The time is ripe for it.

3) Anthropological Problems

The third way in which I would synthesize all that we have been saying could come under the heading of anthropological problems. I say 'problems' because we are not prepared to face the fact that our underlying anthropology does not have the answers. And this amounts to a cultural scandal. That science changes is not a scandal under the assumptions of the prevalent worldview in the West today; it belongs to the very nature both of science and of the human mind. Pure natural science can have the freedom and the beauty of changing every five minutes, like

103

It is against my grain, because history ~~and~~ ~~experience~~ show that questions of this caliber cannot be settled by setting up commissions, but through the struggle and experience of a few. Nevertheless this will show my spirit of collaboration and adaptability: → 103

the weather in Vermont, because science does not claim to offer an anchor for human life, but just an explanation of how things happen. But that we try to found our lives and direct our own existence on the basis of something that is 'A' today and 'B' tomorrow, and changes to '-A' the day after tomorrow: that is a scandal. That something can be a sin one day and a virtue the next ~~represents~~ shows an anthropological unwariness and instability, which is the fruit of very many cultural factors.

In other words, the scandal of a scientific view of Man is that this view claims to be rational and, because the human being is assumed to be a rational animal, Man is supposed to follow the findings of ~~that~~ modern science. And yet this very science changes constantly, not to mention the many different opinions represented by acknowledged scientists. It is the same scandal that was felt so acutely by Descartes, but this time in another, almost ~~a~~ contrary, direction. Descartes was taken aback by the many divergent and disparate theological opinions of his time, which obviously could not pretend to direct human life. He made a tabula rasa of all of them and wanted to found an indubitable -- and thus rational -- method. Now, ~~there are~~ very many mutually incompatible rational systems which ~~have proliferated~~ and thus defeat ~~ing~~ the rationality of their purpose of directing human life.

I am not proposing to go back to unexamined theological beliefs, or to fall into irrationality, or democratic intellectualism. I am endeavoring to rediscover the place and function of myth in human life, and to situate rationality in the total human -- and cosmotheandric -- context. But I cannot pursue here this line of argument, which has been one of the main concerns of my academic life.

Yet it does not help to say we have no anthropology ~~equal~~ to meet ~~to~~ the challenges of our day. At least we may be coming to grips with the problematic. And to be aware that the problematic is unresolved

is already the beginning of something. That something may be, to begin with, precisely that we cannot rely on scientific paradigms, as also we — cannot rely utterly and blindly on any of our own conceptions of the human being. This, if you understand me, is a daring proposition: that we cannot rely completely on the logos, that we cannot rely fully on orthodoxy, that we need either wings to fly with the wind, or a deeper ground which does not depend on our ideas, conceptions or ideologies. It would mean the end of the platonic period of civilization; the eidos would cease to be the final criterion. This is what I meant by the new innocence, which is not a 'second' innocence. It would be impossible to regain or pretend to have regained lost innocence. The new innocence is so new that we do not even know if it is first, or second, or whatever.

I hear already the objection that I am contradicting myself by establishing ~~as a~~ the doctrine that we cannot rely on doctrines. This is not so, on at least two counts. First, because I am not saying that should not rely doctrines. I am affirming that this alliance is shaky. If you want to rely on any doctrine you are perfectly free to do so. It may be yourself at a later stage, and ~~certainly~~ probably the others around you, who will contest your doctrine. You can then say that ~~this~~ your doctrine is good for you: Period. You don't extrapolate. Or you may say that the others are wrong and don't see the issue. Neither case presents major difficulties regarding our question.

On close dialogue communication.

But secondly, I am not contradicting myself because I am not contending that the rational aspect of Man should not be rational. ~~but~~ I am affirming that rationality and even the logos are not the only aspects of the human being which constitute its 'essence'. Man is also spirit, ~~but it~~ and the spirit is not subordinated to the logos; Man is also myth, and the myth is irreducible to the logos; I am further affirming that these ~~two~~ elements cannot exist one without the other, so that I am not propounding the preponderance

you engage in a doctrinal debate

We have a plurality of conflicting doctrines and so doctrine is no criterion for supra-individual truth.

What Man is.

Man is also body and the body is irreducible to the mind.

Nor am I advocating any kind of materialism.

the Spirit is not subordinate to the Logos.

of the myth over the logos or vice-versa. Theologically speaking, I recall that already the early Christian Church had condemned "Subordinationism" as a heresy: Pneuma and Logos are knit together by the Abyss or Silence or Non-being of the Father, Fons et origo totius divinitatis, to speak with the words of the Councils. But I should revert to our Synthesis.

(source and origin of the entire Godhead),

We have situated some of these problems during the past few days. I would like to mention this problematic in concrete terms now. Regarding the definition of the monastic dimension, we have probably spoken of three types of monk. Monk #1: the archetype, that central dimension which exists in the human being. As I have said time and again, if we hold up this monk #1 as a model for the humanum, then the trouble begins. It is only one dimension. Then, monk #2: people and groups who strive to cultivate the dimension of monk #1. And monk #3: institutionalized or traditional forms of monasticism. →106,1

We should carefully distinguish them now, not to induce into confusion

It might have been good to keep them together until now, not to compartmentalize too quickly, but

106,1

I would submit that the most practical issue we face today is the double relation of contemporary monk #2 to monk #3; that is, how the emerging and proliferating contemplative groups (monk #2) can relate constructively to the institutionalized forms of monastic life (monk #3). With this we touch on problems of temporary monasticism; of monastic spirituality in concreto; of active life; of mixed communities of men and women, of transcultural lifestyles, of plurireligious monasteries, and so on. It is the privilege and burden of monk #3 in the traditional monasteries, and developed further by monk #2, the new groups, so that a healthy pluralism might be attained, or at least sought. Many modern monk #2 may not at present be willing to look to monk #3 as a source of inspiration, and yet this needs to happen, for without it the link with tradition may easily be broken. And if monk #3, in the traditional monasteries, does

understand, listen, advise & help to

both will then be the losers

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We may now reach some clarity if we address ourselves to two groups of problems: i) practical issues and ii) theoretical questions.

i) Practical Issues

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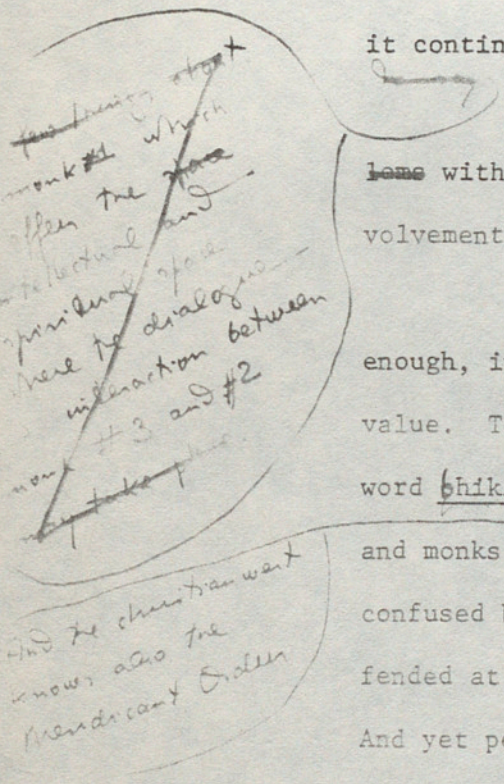
not open up, or descend a little, monk #2 will not be able to climb up. The meeting place may very well be in between, but precisely in the land of Man, not in no-man's-land.

And how is the traditional, classical monasticism to open itself up? How is monk #2 going to climb up and purify the many tentative and experimental paths into a new pattern of monasticism? These are primary issues with which we can only begin to deal effectively if a healthy dialogue is fostered between monks #2 and #3. All over the world there begin to be some essays of such a dialogue, and it continues to need encouragement from both sides.



Finally, I would like briefly to go into four types of problems with regard to monastic lifestyles: a) poverty, b) marriage, c) involvement in the world, and d) sexuality.

a) Poverty needs fundamental reconsideration. Interestingly enough, in non-economic societies, poverty was not seen as an economic value. To be a beggar could be a decent way of life. This is what the word bhikshu means, incidentally. Poverty later became an economic value, and monks began defending economic poverty. And now we find ourselves confused because in a paneconomic world economic poverty cannot be defended at all; it would amount to sponsoring starvation and injustice. And yet perhaps the name still conveys more than just an economic value: "Blessed are (you) the poor in spirit..."

b) A problem which I would not like to see closed off a priori is that of married monks. The question of married monks must be considered not only from the monk's point of view, but also with respect to the change it would imply in the very conception of marriage. Married monks will change our perceptions of marriage at least as much as they will change our notions of monasticism.

There are practical problems in the present setting of monks #3, indeed. But I am addressing myself to a more fundamental question of whether celibacy belongs to the essence of monasticism. If my distinctions are valid, we will agree that monk #1 as the archetype of monkhood is perfectly compatible with marriage; that the contemporary experiences of monks #2 have not as yet sufficiently crystallized to offer us a pattern; and that the immense majority of monks #3 are vowed to celibacy.

No need for me to stress again that I find great value in and valid justification of celibacy, although always a posteriori. The point here is different. It is double:

α) Whether it is of the essence of monasticism to be unmarried. Given the examples of the married monks of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism, I shall have to answer in the negative — besides some contemporary essays of monk #2

The reason why the greatest proportion of monastic institutions have opted for celibacy may be due to three main concerns. The one is the sociological context where monasticism has grown. It would have been practically impossible to institutionalize monasticism of married people. The second reason is the prevalent conception of marriage and of married life practically until our times — whether as a consequence of the praxis or the fruit of a theory does not make much difference for our case. Not only women, but married life on the whole was considered practically secondary to the primary concern of human perfection. If the monk was seen as the paradigm of perfection, it seemed but natural that married life was not fitting for a monk. Females can also have a monastic vocation, but we all know from the jaina sādhvīs onward the subordinate role of female monasticism throughout the ages. I also have the same suspicion about the traditional married monks. I say this

as the fruit of observation, and also with reference to what we know about the subordinate position of married women in most of those societies. This suspicion is enhanced when considering the role of the greek παρεδρα and the hindu śakti. Everything is geared to the perfection of the male, or at least male-centered. This model certainly may not serve our present-day sensitivity.

Certainly, the virgines subintroductae and the agapites will not solve the problem.

The third reason is the underlying model of monasticism as vita angelica, life on the pāramārthika level, with no fostering of saṁsāra and the like. The monastic ideal claims to be 'super-natural'; not laukika, worldly; on a higher plane.

I am not implying, for my argument, that males and females are equal or that celibacy is superior. I am only saying that the moment that monasticism is not seen as the perfect life, even if these two hypotheses were correct, the impossibility of married monks does not follow.

β) The second point is the difficult practicability and feasibility of lawful married monks today within the major monastic institutions of most religions. And I — leave it at that.

c) The question of personal involvement in the world. That a 'Salesian' or a 'Sister of Charity' does something out of his or her personal charisma, forgetting that there is a collective charisma of that particular religious congregation, is understandable insofar as each person has a special vocation, but we may say that such a person acts only in obliquo as a member of that association. I would not say the same thing for a monk. Christian monks during the last few centuries have been more or less influenced by this kind of collective ideal, instead of discovering the heart of their personal calling -- of which Father Armand of Mistassini spoke so eloquently. Perhaps the

Jesuits here could be said to represent the adaptation of the monastic ideal to the new mentality of their times.

My point is the following. The monk's involvement in the world is not an activity institutionalized on a collective basis, like schools, hospitals or the like, but the personal concern of the monk with that part of the world that is near to him or to her. And here another set of problems opens up: personal idiosyncracy vis-à-vis hierarchical authority, and so forth. Along this line, I may say that the cenobitic and eremitic styles of life need reshuffling. And I would subscribe to what has been presented here as networks of the heart. If such networks of the heart could be established, that may indeed have the very practical consequence of creating this new state of affairs and further degree of consciousness. Because, on the other hand they we already said,

involvement in the world cannot successfully be an individualistic affair, as we have already pointed out.

d) Sexuality. Traditional monasticism has considered the monk an asexual being: the sexual needs are needs for the sake of the species, says Christian scholasticism, not for the fulfillment of the individual person. So the monk has simply to overcome and at best sublimate the sexual urges, and the more he or she ignores sexuality the better. Today's Western sensibility is certainly different, and this can be neither bypassed nor ignored. There are ~~four~~ five areas here which should be considered, and I shall simply enunciate them.

i) The body, which I need not develop.

ii) Sex, in the sense of sexuality and not just the 'sex needs' of mammals. Human beings have sexuality, which implies the whole interplay of human relationships. In this sense I would say that the play, the pleasure of the polarity of human beings, can be a highly contemplative activity. ~~Friendship is a chapter in itself.~~

→ 110,1

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iii) Friendship is a chapter in itself which needs a sober discrimination from the two extreme positions of seeing in friendship a disguised — and often unhealthy — sexuality or of considering friendship as a totally asexual relation. I still believe one can live without a spouse. I doubt one could really live without a friend.

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iii) Genital sexuality should be distinguished from the constitutive sexuality of human intercourse in the more general sense I have elucidated. The genital aspect has very often been exaggerated -- out of a sense of repression, perhaps? -- but it is a problem which has to be considered.

iv) Celibacy is again an important aspect which should be considered.

So this would be my synthesis for today, which in no way claims to be the final word. And so, with a sense of imperfection and inadequacy, I close my 'synthesis'.

* * *

RP/sc

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c2) Theoretical Questions

Time and again, since the very beginning, although always in a subdued voice, I have been putting the question whether monk #1 is only what we detect and discover in the best monks, or there is something else that might have been more or less latent in olden times and that now is more forcefully emerging. In the new monk, as I have sketched it, a variation of monk #3 so that it still fits into monk #1 or is another archetype altogether?

This question has also the practical implication that it is in answer which provides the space to deal with the relations between monk # 2 and monk # 3 as we have been describing a moment ago.

The monk, i.e. monk #3 (an archetype gives us an entrance into the archetype of the monk, i.e. monk #1. But also through monk #2 we have had an access to monk #1. Now, what we have found, the vectors we have detected and the force-factors we have discovered allow us to say that we are speaking of the same archetype or should we recognize a nonum here. In other words, are the old monk and the new monk radically incompatible? Is it a reformation? Or a mutation? Or perhaps a new thing?

The question seems to me so central as to require a chapter to itself.

→ III

DISCUSSION

(Following is R. Panikkar's response to a series of questions by Sr. Myriam Dardenne, F. Basil Pennington, Paolo Soleri, Michael Von Bruch, Ewert Cousins, Abbot Tholens and Armand Veilleux. --Editor: You may formulate them as they are in the transcript.)

ED BEDNAR: You once said that the only interesting question is the impossible question. You have just been given ~~seven~~ impossible questions. What do you do with them?

PANIKKAR: I spoke in the singular, not in the plural. But let me try, very briefly, to present these impossible answers.

1) I fully agree with Myriam. You have also noticed that I have put the question of marriage independently from the problem of sexuality.

2) I also agree with Fr. Basil's comment, that particular groups of people will always want to take refuge in tradition, and that everybody first needs the depth of being founded in a particular tradition. I could not agree more, and I take that as a very important and positive contribution, in the sense in which I have spoken here, without having been able to stress all the aspects. So I am thankful for that comment.

Yet, one observation and a warning. The observation is that I have not been talking to young people here, but to all of you mature monks advanced in the ways of spirituality. And a warning, which I would put by means of an example: the peculiar example of Catholic Christianity in Japan. Every year, a goodly number of Japanese are converted to Christianity because they find in the Christian presentation that inner logic, sense of belonging and attraction of a well-structured tradition for which they are apparently

longing for. But the fact is that these conversions last only three or four years, sometimes less. And when they ~~retrieve~~ retreat from Christianity, the results are less than happy. They become more and more uprooted.

We all know of half deserted monasteries full of people years before.

3) To Paolo, I must say that I am very happy to have at least provided a vocabulary for his arsenal of guerilla warfare. And I am not only happy, ~~but~~ I would say... well, I am a fellow-traveler.

PAOLO SOLERI: A fellow guerilla!

PANIKKAR: Indeed.

4) I could not agree more with Michael's first point, that the primary synthesis is in ourselves -- and I would add that only through ourselves may we reach the higher synthesis. So in ourselves first and, at the same time perhaps, through ourselves.

He has put, secondly, a very delicate question: What is the relationship between simplification and integration? And he has warned me that he didn't want theoretical answers. So let me give first a theoretical answer -- in a single word -- and then a practical example of how this integration could be achieved. The theoretical answer is that I understand integration as assimilation... toward health, if you will, or toward transparency. This integration then is a simplification, not through juxtaposition and enrichment, but through assimilation -- of which, I repeat once more, the Eucharist may be a symbol.

The practical example I would like to propose arises from my own despair during seven years of struggle with the rather complicated problems of chemistry. Chemistry is perhaps one of the most complex fields, to the point of driving one mad. In analytic chemistry, in organic chemistry, you realize that you cannot memorize everything; even when the tables and the abstracts and everything ~~are~~ is open before

you, you are still absolutely lost. I had the great joy of studying in Bonn with von Antropoff, the direct disciple of Mendeleyev, from whom the whole of modern chemistry comes. He was a White Russian, he would arrive at 7:00 a.m., and so forth. He understood my plight. I didn't have a bad memory at the time, but that wasn't enough. Yet there comes a moment in which you develop a sort of sixth sense, or third eye, or something... and then you come up with what is called 'the chemical criterion'. You smell the compound, and you say: "Well, try cobalt first, and then put in some of that other thing, and you will probably find something sulphuric in there which is blurring the radical of the organic thing, because I feel sure that this is an oxylate of an organic complex of something." And where did I come by all these insights? Just by smelling and seeing? My friend could not explain it, but he said: "Well, you have a con-naturality with things."

And with the things of the spirit, you have something similar. In the blink of an eye, it comes to you and you say: "Well, this has to change", and you get it point blank. So there is a kind of simplicity, or an intuition, some sixth sense you acquire. And there comes a moment when you are suddenly familiar, and you know what kinds of ingredients you have to add, and how the thing is going to reveal itself... because you are friends, and the things tell you what you need to know, and you understand their language. It's a very peculiar language, because you can't translate it. But you know, and you are not afraid, and you act. So that's the practical part of the answer.

...ld have put as well ...e example of a ...anist, of any art ...even the art of ...oking.

Now, how do we acquire such practice? And the only ~~silly~~ answer that comes to me is: By practicing! St. Benedict knew something of it when he called the monastery a school where ~~the practice of~~ the way of the Lord is simply practiced — much more than just (theoretically) taught. Zen buddhists speak of the Way simply as practice.

Third, 'we are not universal'. Indeed, and thank God, there is no lingua universalis. We have to be humble and concrete. And here I would only rejoin Fr. Basil's comments about being concrete, and living it. I make a distinction between being provincial and particular (which is over against general and abstract), and being concrete and alive, which is not in opposition to being universal.

There is no lingua universalis. We have to be ~~absolutely~~ convinced, first of all, that we have constitutive limitations -- thanks to which, we exist. But what we also ~~have~~ to have ~~today is~~ an open eye and an attentive ear, to see and to hear and to understand that there are other tunes, and other dances, and other languages, and other rhythms... which are real, even if we do not understand them. Perhaps ~~the only~~ thing I would call universal and this is a kind of loving madness, but that's another question. That has to do with the ānanda of Śiva.

5) Now Ewert Cousins puts me to the task of discovering my own archetype. What I am saying and dancing tells you where this archetype dwells. Nobody knows his own deep archetype. I am in great sympathy with what I call the Christophany. To me every being is a Christophany, a revelation of that Christic mystery. The locus is... well, here I have emphasized the cosmic aspect, perhaps, but elsewhere I emphasize the more sacred and transcendent aspects. It depends, like a chemical reaction, on the milieu in which one finds oneself.

Now my difference with Teilhard is, I would say, a double one. On the one hand, I would call him pan-Christic, which is not my bent. I would not like to defend a pan-Christic ideology in the way that Teilhard -- legitimately, given his own presuppositions -- defends it. And secondly, in all that I am trying to say I am—consciously, at least and, I surmise, coherently—pluralistic; which is something for which there seems to be little place in Teilhard's system. To maintain

a pluralistic vision, I have had to pay a big price. I have mentioned it several times when I have spoken about joy, or even about the myth, about the crypto-heresy of supposing that the logos is everything, about cosmic confidence, or new innocence -- about all these things, in short, on which you can put neither your finger nor anything else, and which you simply have to let be.

6) To Fr. Tholens -- I can only kiss him, and embrace him, and say that I am as happy as he is in stressing the sat, cit and ānanda, exactly in the same way -- giving 'equal time', as you say in America -- although the blissful simplicity can sometimes be forgetful simplicity, which I would not like it to be. But certainly the very criterion that some type of genuine synthesis has been arrived at is that you can bubble with joy, even in a concentration camp. But my warning of the other day still stands: I should not be bubbling with joy just because I am oblivious and feel that everything is rosy. There is more to it.

7) Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, I must respond to something I was half-expecting to emerge here. Fr. Armand has perhaps the most concrete and even the deepest intuition from within one tradition -- with all the openness of our era, etcetera -- and yet he feels uncomfortable with some of my presentations, as I feel the internal contradiction in his.

The internal contradiction I sense is that on the one hand he tells us: "Monasticism is not objectifiable. Why do you objectify?" And here I would say: "Certainly, I fully agree, it is not objectifiable." And if I have used the word archetype, an archetype is by definition precisely that which is not objectifiable, because an archetype is always a function of the consciousness you have of it. The archetype is not an object sitting quietly somewhere, but is something in which your whole

relationship, the more or less amorphous fund of collective humanness, is precisely what constitutes the very nature of that archetype.

And then on the other hand he tells us: "Well, no... my way of life is objective, clear cut, and you should not introduce confusion. If you call married people also monks, you are stretching the words beyond permissible bounds. This is because I feel that the way of life of the monk is already somewhat objectified and clear cut, and you should not confuse the issue." I may agree or disagree, but that is ~~the~~ here second ary ~~question~~. Perhaps he means this internal contradiction as a paradox. Monasticism is a way of life which as a way of life, Armand tells us, has to stand as it is. And we should not mix the issues. I would respond that we have a semantic problem: What is monasticism? Is it the particular and objective way of life as it has been for the most part understood, or is it one particular and culture-bound expression of a more universal archetype that I have called monkhood? And yet I should accept his more important warning: I should well beware, even with the best of intentions, of introducing confusion. This is the purpose of the dialogue, to help clarify the issues. But perhaps today the way of life of this concrete and historical phenomenon is beginning to change.

Now if you say that you became a celibate because you chose such an option -- here I would join Michael's pertinent comment -- such language is unintelligible for three-quarters of those, even the monks, outside the First World. If I say I chose celibacy because it is my option... Who is deciding? Who puts the option? A much more traditional answer would be: "I just found myself a celibate, due to my family, my tradition, everything..." that's the best way; but neither I, nor any choice, nor any option nor anything decided. And I am very

happy in this kind of celibacy, so please don't ask me why I happen to be celibate, and don't put me in crisis by demanding a reason for it. That to me is the best reason: that I cannot justify why I am a celibate, and yet I am quite happy in it. If you ask me for a justification, I really can't find one. And this, again, is part and parcel of the blessed simplicity, the new innocence. ~~And~~ If you ask me to speak as a theologian... well, I think we are then in an awkward position if we try to justify or rationalize celibacy in our modern times. All I need to say is let it be, let it go. By their fruits you shall know them. And I think there are very many fruits which vouch for this path." Of course this is not a modern way of putting it, but if we admit this change perhaps we should also be open to the corresponding changes. We should not stretch the meaning of words into meaninglessness, certainly, but is it not also true that certain types of cultural patterns have very often monopolized the meanings of words? Is a nygma-pa not a monk?

There is something most revealing in the life of the words themselves. And yet we should also be attentive to Fr. Armand's proviso, his warning. ~~Yet,~~ I would like to ~~say~~ add that the life of words cannot be put into a computer, and my example here is the rainbow (as well as the example of the masculine/feminine). Certainly I know what green is, and what violet is, but there are very many things in between which produce perhaps the most beautiful colors... and then I don't know if it is green or violet or blue-green or both at the same time.

So, having stretched the words, I shall not stretch the time unduly.

* * *

A ~~Foot~~Note on Thinking and Speaking

Ed tells me I have three and a half minutes for a footnote on Teilhard, in connection with Ewert's question.

~~First,~~ Allow me then a couple of overstatements. The last 26 centuries of Western self-understanding, culturally speaking, are based on that dogma -- assumed and accepted dogma from Parmenides to Husserl, the only exception and suspicion being Heidegger (hence our friendship) -- that paradigm first formulated by Parmenides, that the two ultimate pillars on which we have to rely in order to be human beings, i.e. to have a human orientation in the world, are thinking and being, nous and on. The whole history of Western thinking is founded on this assumption that the nous, the mind, is the guardian shepherd of the on, ~~of~~ the being, and that being can only be expressed as what the mind tells us that being is. We have, of course, all the possible variations: they are two, they are one, they are related, etcetera. The whole of modern science implies that it is precisely the nous, the thinking attitude, the mathematics, the calculation, that will tell us how being is, how being will behave. By utilizing Riemannian geometry and minus-1 and negative squares and all the rest, we think, and with our thinking we construct the framework, the bridge, the Arcosanti... and it really stands.

In short, thinking discovers but also conditions being. Now such thinking exacts a great price. Thinking which leads to intelligibility cannot violate the principle of non-contradiction. If I think being, if I think this, then this has to be the case as long as my thinking activity lasts. Otherwise, if the this does not remain the same, I don't know what I am thinking about. If you think "two tulips and two roses are four flowers", then after five minutes, two tulips and two

roses must still be tulips and roses in order to be four flowers. Thinking -- to say it briefly -- freezes being. The tulips, about which I may think anything at all, must remain tulips. Thinking assumes being to be what it thinks it is. And all the 'oughts' and 'shoulds' follow, precisely because thinking tells me what being is, and what truth is. Being is really molded and in a certain sense fixed by thinking. If being is not the prisoner of thinking, because it may be 'thought' to be prior to being, it yet has to abide by the rules of thinking, which become the rules of being. The rules of being are postulated by the rules of thinking. And most of the philosophies, East and West, proceed from this assumption.

But this paradigm is not universal. It is not assumed or taken for granted in India, for instance. In India, the ultimate polarity, the yin/yang so to speak of the Indian effort at human orientation in reality, is not thinking and being, but being and wording. Or rather, being and speaking; being and letting being be; being and letting being escape. It is being and letting being express itself, without the reflexion of self-consciousness, without the going back to the being from which you have departed. It is a kind of total spontaneity. Being explodes itself into being, into word, into the expression of that being, into something which goes its own way, like an expanding universe which nothing and nobody -- and certainly no being, no thinking, no lack of contradiction, (no logic or logistics, no anything --) can control and guide Blissful spontaneity, yes, because what is most important is the process, the dance, the whole thing expanding... Who could control it? And who would control the controller? Who would think the thinker? Who could know the knower? You cannot know the knower. There is no way to control the flow of reality. — as the Upanishad says.

Thinking is not the ultimate parameter. Being is just... explosion! And this would explain the monastic concentration on purifying the heart, the source of our being, and allowing the Spirit, which is Freedom, to direct, to in-spire us --.

* * *

RP/se

4) The Challenge of Secularity

Life does not need to be logical, but it destroys itself if it is anti-logical. The two paradigms of Simplicity and ~~Harmony~~ Complexity that we have encountered seem (to be,) in the long run, mutually incompatible. Meanwhile, i.e. in between, while life lasts, they create a healthy polarity, if maintained within limits. Furthermore, blessed simplicity will not allow real fragments of reality, of human life to be stripped away on the pretext of helping somebody to reach perfection. The remedy would be worse than the malady. Complexity as such is not necessarily positive either. It has to be a harmonious complexity, which takes into account the cum of the folded (plexus) things in order to reach a true embrace (~~cum~~ amplexus).

Can there be a marriage between Simplicity and Complexity? Is the archetype of the monk lost if simplicity is given up? Here we have not really dedicated equal time to the archetype of secularity. This was not our direct topic. But a few observations may be pertinent at this juncture. First, a sociological observation; second, an anthropological remark; and third, a metaphysical one.

a) Sociologically speaking, in a world menaced by increasing technological complications, to have people stressing simplicity is more than an outlet for freedom, health and humanness. Even if we are condemned to complexity, not everybody can adapt ~~themselves~~ to it. We need respites, exceptions. There is also the fact that the beginning of every new technological 'progress' creates innumerable victims due, as previously mentioned, to the fact that there are different human rhythms and varying degrees of adaptability, but also because the first technological essays in any given field are imperfect and often demand a high

price of human substance. There is something very appealing in seeing monasteries as high places of human relaxation and temples of simplicity.

Moreover, besides complexity there is complication. People tend to complicate their lives. Industrialization may well mean consumerism, and many today are becoming aware of the dangers and anti-natural effects of the technological world. A call for blessed simplicity is urgent and needed. If the old monks give up, new monks will emerge and perform this vital function of reminding the world by their example that only a very few things are necessary for a full and happy human life, much less to reach 'eternal life' -- which does not, of course, need to be postponed into the future.

But simplification of a complicated life and life-style is one thing, and utter simplicity taken to its final consequences quite another. Total simplicity, i.e. a specialization in simplicity, may lead to inhuman practicies or fall into the most traditional 'monastic' temptation of 'acosmism' or *vita angelica* (angelic life).

This means that blessed simplicity cannot be the only principle governing human life, and if it does, it destroys that very life. If this is the case, either Blessed Simplicity cannot any longer be the monastic principle, or Monkhood cannot be the total paradigm for human life, but only a dimension of it which must be combined with the principle of Harmonious Complexity. Here is the ultimate locus for my statement about the impossibility of totally institutionalizing monkhood. It would amount to absolutizing that which is only one single dimension of human life.

This leads to a delicate sociological remark. We witness today a certain questionable relationship between monastic institutions all over the world and the larger religious bodies to which they are attached. I am referring to the tendency, be it organized as in the Roman Catholic Canonical Laws, be it in the minds of the people and directives of the authorities concerned, of keeping the old monastic institutions as museum-pieces and preventing their evolution -- which by the same token is considered a betrayal of their ancient and authentic calling. I am referring to the 'desire', mainly on the part of outsiders, to see the monks preserve the badly needed old values. You have to live in Rome, Bangkok, Rishikesh or the Kangra Valley to realize this trend of 'authorities' wanting to preserve the old institutions in their pristine 'purity', uncontaminated by the air of modernity. There is a valid point to this, but it becomes problematic and ultimately defeats its own purpose if it is done from the exterior, as a result of more or less subtle pressures. "People expect you to be like this. You are supposed to behave this way and to say these things" are sentences we hear all too often. And this brings us immediately to the second observation.

b) Anthropologically speaking, the question is how to integrate those two principles in our lives. Specifically for our purposes, how can the modern monk handle the tradition al pull toward simplicity and his or her own (not just societal) push toward a harmonious integration of one's being? The "quid hoc ad aeternitatem?" (what use is this for eternity?) can have devastating effects if eternity is seen as just the salvation of the pure soul in an after-life. The obsession with the sarva dukha (all is suffering), can equally lead to a real castration of the human personality.

We are not discussing here which anthropology is the more

valid, i.e. that which sees human perfection in an eschatological life on a higher nirvānic or paramārthic plane, or that which believes that the harmony of the human personality requires one to integrate all the possible human values in one single being. We are not forgetting a warning that to want to achieve a too higher or inappropriate ideal, leads to total deception and fiasco. Nor am I pleading for sheer humanism. I am simply stating the fact of the personal belief of a concerned person and how this person sees ~~his or~~ her perfection and the meaning of ~~his or~~ her life. I am concerned with the anthropological image that Man has of himself.

It probably comes to this: Has the humanum only one dimension, or is it pluridimensional? To avoid this question would cheapen traditional monastic spirituality. The monk does not want to be everything. He has renounced many things, ——— eventually everything. But one ideal or aim he sticks to: the Absolute, nirvāna, moksa, sotēria, salvation. He stakes everything on that, and not necessarily in an exclusively individualistic way. On the contrary, the ideal of the boddhisattva is a monastic one, the ideal of being a living victim for the salvation of the whole world and the vocation of the vicarious representation of the entire humankind is central to monasticism. The question is how this goal is reached -- by attaining that simple core of everything, by simplicity at the end of a thorough process of utter simplification, or by attempting the harmonious complexity and integration of all the possible values in the ——— crucible of the particular person?

To overlook this double underlying anthropology would do an injustice not only to the theoretical problem of the New Monk, but much more so to that particular person who is now, as it were, under two fires, which we may call Simplicity and Complexity. The monk

here suffers in this particular form the more general tension between Tradition and ~~Modernity~~ Secularity. If the second paradigm is found more valid than the first one of Simplicity, the structural changes in traditional monasticism will have to be radical. And there is no point in blurring the dichotomy, although the conduct of practical affairs may demand prudence, patience and great discernment of spirit. But the individual monk may be caught in the dilemma and have to face the practical problem of whether he will better serve the cause of 'monkhood' by transforming the old structures or beginning new ones. Do we really have here the case of the new wine and the old wineskins? I cannot push the question much further right now. We may briefly consider the last dilemma.

c) Metaphysically speaking, we detect immediately two radically different conceptions of reality. The problematic has already emerged from time to time as we have been speaking.

The ideal of Simplicity assumes that the entire reality in its ultimate ~~symbol~~ character is simple. Now, neither space nor time, nor history, nor the body are simple, nor even simplifiable past certain limits. Only the 'soul', consciousness, ~~jñāna~~, cit, is reducible to a point without dimensions. ~~It follows from all this that the monk at least neglects the former and concentrates his interest on the latter.~~ (quite spontaneously) For the purpose of these considerations, I would ~~also~~ like to bring the different cosmological assumptions under this same heading of metaphysics also.

The ideal of Complexity, on the other hand, assumes that reality is ultimately pluralistic, not reducible to any single principle, and thus that realization is not a jump into ~~the~~ a simple Absolute, but rather a process by which the complexity of our being is brought harmoniously to completion.

consciousness in its only has this remarkable power of embracing multiplicity in the simplicity of one single intuition. So that the monk is more interested in interiority of consciousness than in the exteriority of the plurality of things.

No monk needs to be a metaphysician, but the ultimate metaphysical paradigm is ever present in any of the moves he will make. Ultimately, the hypothesis of an Absolute is at stake here. We might even ~~have~~ say: monotheism versus polytheism. But we should not linger much longer over this chasm that seems to be obvious, despite the fact that words do not convey the whole issue, and much less so as we try to articulate the problem in a cross-cultural context.

I may now attempt to formulate a Synthesis from a trinitarian perspective, first, and in an advaitic language immediately thereafter. It is all related to what I have called the cosmotheandric intuition and sacred secularity.

In the final analysis, Simplicity and Complexity are not dialectically opposed, because the ultimate structure of the universe does not need to be conceived as dialectical. Their relation is dialogical. They have meaning not in opposing and contradicting each other so as to allow for a higher synthesis, but qua mutually constitutive relation, so that the one does not make sense without the other and both mutually support each other. Simplicity is more than the absence of complexity. It is merely 'monoplexity', I would say, if the word were allowed. The folds have ~~merely~~ been unfolded again, but not obliterated or destroyed -- although, qua folds, they no longer exist. A certain transformation, as we have seen, is certainly required. Complexity is not just the accumulation of folds, of layers of reality one upon the other, but the display of the many folds in one coherent, i.e. joined, pattern -- which is one in its manifoldness. Now this oneness is not plurality, but is certainly pluralistic, i.e. it forms a ~~plural~~ manifold pattern, ~~that is beyond the reach of the word and of thought and which thus remains only a matter of 'belief', or 'hope'~~,

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although I strongly object to the common use of this last word in this sense. No poly-Theist has ever said that what the mono-Theist affirms to be one is many. But also many Theists would be unhappy of sticking the monos before their Theism as their God is neither one nor many. What is at stake is rather monism versus pluralism.

→ 122

~~or 'hypothesis' or of 'realization', if we give due credit to the mystical tradition of humankind~~ want to.

The oneness, we said, is pluralistic, because there is only the oneness of the manifold which nobody can encompass, as nobody can be outside reality. If the color green could see the colored world, it would see all the other colors as green or as the result of their composition with green. It could not speak of a plurality of colors, but only of a pluralism which could be expressed by the generic name 'color' without really seeing each color in its own light. ~~precise content — for green~~. Plurality is only grasped from 128,1

The Trinitarian language would go like this: The Trinity, ~~to begin with,~~ is neither a monopoly of Christianity nor, for our purposes, of the Divinity. Every bit of reality has this trinitarian imprint. And thus human perfection does not consist in becoming one with the Son, or with the Father or the Spirit, but in fully entering into the life of that very Trinity without eliminating any of its constituents.

128,1 → we have to clarify from the outset,

The Trinity is neither one nor three, i.e. neither simplicity nor complexity. Seen from the interior, as it were, it looks like simplicity: each 'person' voids itself totally in order that the other 'be'. Personhood is pure relationship. There is nothing outside the relationships. If there were a kind of substantial 'knot' independent from the 'net' we would have tritheism or, in the universe, plurality. The law of the Cross, i.e. of Sacrifice as pure immolation, I would say, reigns also in the Trinity. This voiding of each person is complete. Seen from the interior each person is totally void, empty. If we were to look at that person we would not see her, as the person has already totally given herself up to the other. In point of fact, person is neither singular nor plural. The Father 'gives' everything he is and

Father only sees the Son. He does not see the Father, not only the Son (who is what the Father is). He does not see his seeing (the Spirit), but only the Son. Likewise I could elaborate with the other two persons — utilizing here Christian nomenclature.

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The exterior. Only a mind above and outside the world of color can embrace the plurality of colors. ~~Pluralism~~ Monism is the view from the interior. Although the green-mind may perceive some differences, if it is powerful enough and concentrates on itself, will affirm that ultimately all is green. Pluralism is ~~the~~ not a view as it should see from the inside and the outside at the same time. It sees all predominantly green, but hears other witnesses speaking of other colors and believes that reality is many-colored. In as much as it sees it is monistic; in as much as it hears, it is ~~a~~ defends plurality; in as much as it ~~has a~~ believes it is pluralistic. Pluralism does not reduce everything to intelligibility.

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has to the Son; he begets a Son identical to him. The Son is equally exhausted in his Gift (the Spirit) to the Father -- which precisely the Father has 'inspired' through the Son. The Spirit in 'itself' is nothing, no-thing (the 'thing', res, word is the Son, the Logos); it is pure gift, which is only such in the actual giving. Now from the exterior, as it were, in and by the very act of speaking about all this and trying to unfold it for our minds, it is complexity. It is even the maximum of complexity, since all the riches of reality are encompassed in the trinitarian dynamism. This is the meaning of the Incarnation: that the world shares in the ultimate trinitarian adventure, although it unfolds in the strictures of space and time. Seen from the outside, the whole process is the com-plexity of the entire reality: Father, Christ and Spirit in Christian nomenclature.

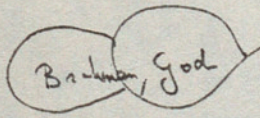
We can speak about the ineffable, because the very unspeakable is an attribute of the speakable; as everybody realizes in and through the experience that no word of ours says all that it 'wants', 'desires' or 'purports' to say. We speak then about the ineffable by opening up, pointing out, letting ourselves be somehow aware of the silent component of the word, of the unspeakable side of the spoken. Without words, there would be no silence -- just as there is no real word without silence. All is trinitarian relation.

In advaitic parlance I could say that reality is neither one nor two, and so neither we nor the world can be brought under ~~the sway~~ sway of the one or the two. God and the World are equally so ~~not~~ neither one (it goes against common sense) nor two (two what? -- it would contradict the very conception of God). ~~Now~~ Advaita -- non dualism -- is not monism. It would be monism if the God had so absorbed the world (since they cannot be two) as to rob it of its ultimate reality. It is not dualism either. The world is not another reality facing the God, or the One, or Brahman. There are not two

'aspects' of one and the same reality, because they are not 'aspects', i.e. perspectives, epistemological devices or facets of a monolithic reality. Reality is not to be encompassed by the mind: cit, buddhi, jnāna. Reality is also sat and ānanda, being and bliss. And if we can speak of it it is not because they are reducible to vāc, to the word, to intelligibility, but because they are inseparable and yet not the 'same'. There is ultimately nothing that is the same, because the mind for which the 'sameness' is 'same' is not outside of it. This non-dualistic conception also ~~for~~ demands the maximum complexity. If there would be only one thing, there would be no complexity at all; monism would be quite sufficient and advaita not required ~~at all~~. But if simplicity were not also a dimension of the real, dualism would in its turn be a plausible enough hypothesis. Complexity and Simplicity embrace in advaita, as well as in the Trinity.

Where is the monk in all this? I may venture now my hypothesis -- and epekstasis in the sense of hope, perhaps, I shall expose it in its bare essentials.

Let us call the humanum the symbol for human perfection over and ~~above~~ beside the distinctions between the natural and the supernatural. The belief that this humanum is utterly simple would constitute the archetype of monkhood. The humanum has thus a center, simple without dimensions, a core that in an eminent and for us rather incomprehensible way encompasses all of what really is. This humanum is not only invisible, it is also not realized here on Earth. It needs a transcendent existence, be it in time (the future), in space (paradise) or altogether beyond (nirvāna). The realization of the humanum is an eschatological task. You have to discover it, either in hope or with an intuition (anubhava) that transcends space and time, by realizing that you are 'already there'. This is the way of Simplicity, and traditional monks have followed this path.



The belief that this humanum is complex and that it can be realized only if the different elements are integrated could still be accepted by some monks. Where the divergence arises is when this integration is considered not reducible to one single 'thing', when the ultimate 'stuff' of the real is in itself manifold, complex. This archetype I would call secularity. The humanum has no single center. It has two or more centers. Space and time are definitive and not to be whisked away as something alien to the humanum. Even if they are ephemeral, it is this very provisionality that gives them reality for Man in his ~~or her~~ ultimate concern. Realization is a personal task that cannot be postponed, and cannot be gained by eliminating elements of reality as if they were not there, or were not real.

Is there any way of bringing these two archetypes together? The very manner of putting the question is obviously biased. Simplicity cannot tolerate a second at its side. Is there but the possibility of a Oneness without a Second which still does not fall into a simplistic monism? Or, from the other perspective, is it possible to give all due credit to all the ingredients of reality without falling into an indiscriminate atomistic anarchy of sheer plurality? Let me give another stroke at my sketch → 132

137 Perhaps It may be said that this is ultimately what not only the best monks, but also the most profound secularists, have always been seeking. This could be the case -- and then it would only confirm my hypothesis. But perhaps one was not sufficiently aware of the radical and ultimate divergences in the conception of reality. My assumption ~~The prize~~ here is ~~would~~ not be that we have lost the key to open the puzzle of the universe, but that there is no key, neither epistemological or ontological, because the logos is not all that there is and even being is 'only' all that there is. But this only may not exhaust 'reality'! → 139

-7

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Holyoke

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131 →

While the aretheism of interiority or the monastic ideal of simplicity works on the perfection of ~~the~~ Man ~~person~~; the aretheism of ~~real~~ action or secular ideal of complexity works on the perfection of the World. The synthesis ~~could~~ can be approached if these two activities are seen — and performed — as two aspects of one and the same ontological dynamism of the ~~Person~~, as it were.

The aretheism of interiority consists in that our first and primordial task is to be engaged in the perfection, fulfilment or liberation of that aspect of reality ~~that~~ which is ourselves. Be it a jīva or soul that one has to extricate from all the entanglements of matter and karman as in many spiritual traditions; be it the ātman or self that one has to realize in its ~~fullness~~ perfect Oneness, as other schools will defend; be it the person that has to be fully integrated into the Whole (passively and actively) where it

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ultimate adventure ~~of reality~~. The ideal of
secularity reminds us that to work for the
betterment of the world and the transfor-
tion of the external structures of reality is
as delicate, subtle, ~~and~~ and even difficult
and long as the inner striving for perfection.
The Scientific spirit is precisely this.
To be engaged in the perfection of the common
is not vanity, but the fullest realization
of the person.

The crisis of our contemporary human period
time and at
the same time its great chance and vocation
is the realization that the '
and the material macrocosm are not two
world
separate ~~realities~~, but one and the same
cosmotheandric reality in which precisely
the Third 'divine' dimension element is the
unifying link between the other two
dimensions of reality. Otherwise to

belongs; be it the blowing up of all particularities, individualities or even of all being in order to transcend all contingency or illusion; be it the performing of the allotted task for the time being because we are only being in time; be it as it may, This human aspiration to work within oneself and with oneself is as delicate, subtle and even difficult and long as the other asceticism of externality. To be engaged in one's self perfection in this sense is not egoism, but the fullest realization of the human being.

At the same time the asceticism of exteriority reminds us that we are not isolated monads or pure spiritual substances, but part of a higher and wider reality in which not only other fellow-beings are conditioning, shaping and influencing our destiny, but also other dimensions of reality are involved in the same

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existence and converting the new religions of maxism, humanism, secularism, scientism and the like into life-denying ideologies.

Is the synthesis possible? Ontology, once upon a time, was the encompassing field of anthropology, cosmology and theology as the system of theories regarding man, the world, and the Divine. In our contemporary time we do not have such an ontology and many doubt whether it can ever fulfil this task. What is certain is that anthropocentrism is as insufficient as cosmocentrism or theocentrism. A new awareness is called for. But this awareness can only come out of an experience [illegible] praxis. A new orthodoxism is here also required: a new praxis of plunging into the depths of the human psyche much as soaring into the heights of the cosmic spaces and sensing the immanent-transcendent Thoublessings of the Divine.

→ 131

withdraw into the business of saving one's soul is sheer egoism or cowardice and to jump into the task of saving the world sheer vanity or presumption.

Now, in order to realize the synthesis we have to become increasingly aware not only of the correlation between the inner and outer, human and cosmic aspects of reality, but of their <u>in-relatedness</u> so that ultimately it is one and the same concern. ~~as so many sages of all time [illegible] and latitudes have been saying.~~ → 138

If the ~~[illegible]~~ over-institutionalization of monasticism has produced world-denying specialists which have had a harmful influence upon people converting often religion into an alienating factor in human life, the over-institutionalization of secularization has produced, and is still in alarming proportions producing, a deleterious impact upon the peoples of the earth converting them in quasi-robots, mechanizing human

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From the pre-vocation speaking about harmony Through the Rg Veda, whose last word is concord, to Sri Aurobindo affirming that "all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony" there is a constant Thread in the human quest for sacred sensibility.

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41, 1

Will the new monk integrate these two dimensions of human life? ~~I may end by saying that~~ intellectuals experiment with ideas, but monks experiment with their lives. It is an experience of life and death.

41, 1

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RP/se

TAPE #3
SIDE #2

(Thanks be for that).

We may say together, Amen. (Amen).

The Lord be with you (And also with you). Lift up your hearts (We lift them up unto the Lord). Let us give thanks to the Lord our God (It is right to give Him thanks and praise). It is proper and right to give thanks to everything and to everybody, to be thankful because we can say wholeheartedly: {Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God our Father in light, heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest}.

All of you are invited to repeat along with me the second Eucharistic prayer: {Lord, You are holy indeed, the fountain of all holyness. Let Your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy, so that they may become for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Before He was given up to death, a death He freely accepted, He took bread and gave thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to His Disciples and said, "Take this, all of you, and eat it. This is My body which will be given up for you." When Supper was ended [illegible] gave the cup to His Disciples and said, "Take this, all of you, and drink from it. This is the cup of My blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all men so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of Me"}.

Father's sheer grace, in darkness and concealment, my house being now all stilled. Oh that _____ night in secret, for no one saw me, nor did I look at anything, with no other light or guide than the one that burned in my heart. This guided me more surely than the light of moon to where he waited for me, him I knew so well, in a place where no one else appeared. Oh guiding light, oh night more lovely than the dawn. Oh night that has united the lover with his beloved, transforming the beloved into _____ .

that the meaning of my life is the meaning God intends for it? Does God impose a meaning on my life from the outside through event, custom, routine, law, system, impact with others in society, or am I called to create from within, with Him, with His grace, a meaning which reflects His truth and makes me His word, spoken freely in my personal situation. My true identity lies hidden in God's call to my freedom and my response to Him.

I rose up at night with my question. I went to the city gate, sat myself there. In the morning when the people came, silently I put my question to each one, "Do you love me?" All morning long I put my question. In the afternoon I walked through the streets silently putting my question to each one, "Do you love me?" In the evening I stood in the center of the town. I shouted at them a curse on anyone who does not love me. I left the town, went back to my bed and slept. An angel came to me and said, "You cursed?" and I answered, "Cursed."

Consummatum est. I have brought forth Him whom my soul loves, ready to be concerned in a manger by a world that receives Him not. Consummatum est. His soul surrendered to love's embrace. His body fell gently into the virgin earth consummating her marriage with God on the third day.

They call me Jesero.

One dark night, fired with love's urgent longing, out of sheer grace I went out unseen, my house being now all stilled in darkness and secure, by the secret ladder, disguised.

The Word was made flesh.

Oh Lord of us all, beginning this morning, not only are you the archetypal priest Who offers up all creation, but You are like He Who at the same time is offered. Oh Lord of us all, archetype of matter itself, not only are You that offering of material creation given out to the people to be _____ but You are also he or she who receives and consumes in estrangement. Oh, never broken yet continually renewed. May this continued process never cease for You, Who are the ceaseless One _____ .

I do not pray for these only but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that Thou sent Him. The glory which Thou hast given Him I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one. I in them and Thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that Thou hast sent me and hast loved them, even as thou hast loved me.

We don't possess the truth but the truth possesses us, so let us seek for it, let us recognize it wherever it is hidden.

I have come to cast fire upon the earth and _____ .

God is love. He who abides, Oh God, he who abides in love abides in God and God in him.

What am I? I am myself the word spoken by God. Can God speak a word that does not have any meaning? Yet am I sure

possession forever.

There was once a woman who was filled with child, and when the fullness of time came she gave birth to two sons, or was one of the sons a woman? and the two sons grew up. One was a fiery, hairy fellow, fond of hunting, who roamed the forest in search of prey. The other was a gentle man who nurtured the earth and loved the warmth of the hearth. And the two brothers were at enmity one with the other, until one day they met and, moved by urgent longing said, "Let this no longer be. Let us return to our mother's womb and rediscover our common nature, that we may be born again unto newness of life." And so it was.

Many have spoken the Word. The message of the truth, in psalms or in songs. I want to participate with them. Sings:

"Raghupati raghava raja Ram,

Patita pavana Sita Ram.

Ishwara, Allah, tera nam,

Saba ko sunmati devo gavan.

Raghupati raghava raja Ram

Patita pavana Sita Ram."

You are My People, I am your God. Sings:

Adonai _____

Adora _____

(Speaks in Hebrew and translates): Hear, Oh Israel, the Lord our God. The Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with all your soul, with all your might.

monk to the world." The monk belongs to the world, but the world belongs to the monk insofar as the monk is totally dedicated to liberation from the world in order to liberate the world. You can't just immerse yourself in the world and get carried away with it; that is no salvation. If you want to pull a drowning person out of the water you have to have some support yourself. There is nothing to be gained by simply jumping into the water; both of you will drown together. You must be liberated from the world in order to liberate the world."

Unless the seed that is put into the ground dies it cannot bear fruit.

The mystery is also the small stone in your shoe which causes you pain. I see how you are trying to get rid of it. Well, throw it away, yet with full attention.

Whenever you hear the word 'problem' think, and say inwardly the word 'mystery.' Life is not only emptiness to be filled but also a fullness to be discovered. How can we live Christ unless we die to Christ. In your worship you constantly call Me "Almighty Lord, King, Father" why can't you call me also "Embracing Presence," "Heart of our Hearts," and "Mother." The Word is a thunderbolt, it clears the skies. We all need to be baptized in the waters of other religions. We have no right to anything, only a duty of thanksgiving to everyone and everything, and at the crossroads we are the cross.

What is there in heaven for me, or what do I desire on earth but You, who are the God of my heart, the God Who is my

is in the Word in its entirety. The word is word when it has a speaker; the word is word when it has a spoken to; the word is word when it speaks about something; the word is word when it speaks with something. Give us, Lord, this depth, this awareness and this tremendous joy to discover in ourselves that creative power that we can speak, emit and receive living words, words of eternal life, words that come of the peace, of the silence, of the transparency of everything. And then we may be able more and more to understand the language of many other speaking beings which may not articulate as we do. Help us, Lord, to perform this morning the liturgy, the word.

~~Who's reading?~~ First Reading:

The prophet Jeremiah said, "My word is like fire. It is like a hammer shattering rocks." Franz ~~Koffger~~ said, "The Word is like an axe to shatter the frozen seed that is within us." Thomas Merton wrote, "Basically the ... Christian freedom which is the freedom of the cross. It is the freedom that comes for one who has completely given himself with Christ on the Cross; has risen with Christ and has His freedom. Not simply in ordinary human spontaneity but in the spontaneity of the Spirit of God, Who is given to us in exchange for our own spirit when and if we ... with Christ."

Second reading:

This is also by Thomas Merton, from his last talk in Bangkok shortly before his death, "The relationship of the

prayer, every word contains the universe. The seed of everything. One of the traditional names of God is the Lord of the Word, the Protector of the Word, the Creator of the Word, the Father of the Logos. Sometimes we have enshrined your word, Lord, in particular places, or particular utterances, and this is good but not enough. You have the knowledge of every word; you are the first and the last Word and know all that is in between. Show us, Lord, how to hear the Word, the word that comes from a sincere heart, the word that is spontaneous and reveals the world and shows the person. Teach us how to listen, how to be attentive to those innumerable words that are around us, and give us that discernment which is not judging according to our standards but which is discovering when the word is word, or simply a sound, a term with no roots, with no speaker behind, with no heart throbbing at the origin. Old traditions used to say that wisdom consists in the knowledge of the Word. Give us this wisdom to be able to listen, to accept, to receive, to practice the hospitality of the words, paying attention, reacting consequently, being struck, touched or caressed by the words that come to us. And let us also learn in turn to speak the right words, to reprofit people who speak in the right way, to recreate us with our own words, because each of them sprouts out of the same dynamism from which the plants grow, life unfolds, the universe comes into being. The power of a promise, the power of a word, the might of an oath. We would like to worship today the Holy Word, and this holyness

EAST WEST MONASTIC SYMPOSIUM - November 21, 1980

6:30-8:00 a.m.
Meditation
Liturgy of the word

In the name of the Mystery which has no name, and yet which can be named in any authentic name, and which is the origin and the end and in-between of everything. Let us pray. That is, let us become aware of the precariousness of all our words, and this is what the word 'prayer' means. Of the imperfection of every word we utter because does not say what it would like to say, and often does not even mean what it says. Let us pray because we have to pray, we have to utter, to speak, to beg, to ask, to praise. Aware ~~on the other hand~~ of the power, ~~of the might~~ inherent in every sincere word, because every authentic word is a sacrament, is a part of that Mystery, is perhaps the highest treasure that we have, and which we so often prostitute not only with insincerity and untruth, but also with verbosity and banality, with gossip and words which are empty and, worst, which are destructive. Every word is a revelation. Every word is a sacrament. Every word has power. Every word is [illegible] only word when it is spoken, that is, when it is created, not when it is repeated or aped. A cry is much more of a prayer, is much more of a word than just something repeated by hearsay. Your Disciples once asked you to be taught how to pray. We ask you, Lord, to teach us how to speak. Every speech is a

the peace, the love and the joy of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit may we go forth to serve and love one another. (Amen).

Say with me alleluia. (Alleluia).

Life to your neighbor.

The Lord is with you. (And also with you). Let us pray. We have gathered here, Lord, for an important venture. Important not because we figure out the solutions of the world, not because we ~~price~~ value ourselves ~~to be~~ as very important, but just because we are committed to follow your Voices, we are ready to obey your will, we are putting no obstacles to the winds of your Spirit. We are ready to follow your footsteps, combining the old things with the new. Of not fearing novelty and not shunning tradition. Of not having human respects so that they prevent ~~us~~ to do the next step. Of being disposed to be true to ourselves so that through ~~ourselves~~ us you do your work. We come from different traditional and perspective religious families ~~of all types~~, very loose or very tight, but that common desire brings us here together. Do not allow ~~that we~~ become cynical under the pretext of respect. Give us of your Spirit which is old and new, and may the strength and grace of the Sacrament nourish us and give us that life and that joy which you came to bring on earth. These we ask through Jesus Christ, your Son, our brother, Who in the presence of the Spirit, with you and us, lives and reigns for ever and ever. (Amen).

And before we disperse we ask God's blessings through human voices and human hands.

Even as the arrow becomes one with its mark, so may we be one in Him in Whom we live and move and have our being. In

on the faith and goodwill of your people, and grant us the peace and unity of that kingdom of yours which is neither within, alone, nor among us externally, but between us, that every one of us is a fundamental link of that peace and beauty, of that kingdom where you live for ever and ever. (Amen). The peace of the Lord be with you once again and always. (Also with you).

And let's offer, not one another (we have tried to do it) but the entire world a sign of peace. ~~And~~ I know to give a sign is always difficult. It is either too much, we exaggerate, or, as in this case, too little. What sign of peace can we give to the world? And that's why we remain so often paralyzed. Interiorization is a great thing but sometimes also an excuse. A resolve of working for the peace in the world is again a novel resolve, but often remains only in our good intention. It is an impossible task. As for me, I can only feel -- humiliate myself and say "I don't know how it is possible."

"_____ when I came to your house you didn't sing or eat, you didn't dance a dance, you didn't offer Me water, you didn't perfume My head, you didn't have imagination. Only a so-called despicable woman had the daring." That I wish to you. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Will every one of you give the Holy Bread, the Bread of

Aum. (Aum Aum Aum).

(Can we sing the Our Father? We may try, standing, and making a circle. Somebody will begin? We know the tune?)

Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. (For those who have already forgotten it, I will ask you to kneel down.)

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil. We are kneeling before you so that we may be forgiven. Give us peace in our lives. Keep us freed from selfishness. Protect us from all fear and let us have the joyful hope of discovering the constant presense of our Saviour Jesus Christ. (For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever). You may sit down.

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles and you repeated unto us, "I leave you peace, but it is My peace I give you." Peace which is not selfish withdrawing into our own selves and not a hectic moving around in creating utopian conditions which do not exist, but the peace which is not less [illegible] The peace which exists in the very effort of peace-making. A peace which is really peaceful because the external distresses do not draw us from that center where we are, and do not make us numb either to the very reality of the lack of peace in us and around us. Look not on our bafflement that we do not know how to make it, but

injustices. Reconcile us with one another. Give us imagination to overcome all the difficulties ~~that~~ into which this tiny planet seems to have fallen. ~~into.~~ Grant that we who are nourished by His body and blood may have the strength and daring, the creative spirit of the Holy One and become one body, one spirit in this total transformation, in the greatest adventure of your creation. ~~who said, "Is Jesus the Christ?"~~

May He make us an everlasting gift to you, enable us to share in the inheritance of your saints, with Mary, the Apostles, the Martyrs and all the Saints visible and invisible, recognized and unknown, in all the riches of all the traditions of our race. Lord, may the sacrifice which makes our peace with you advance the peace and salvation of all the world. Strengthen in faith and love your pilgrim church on earth. Give to your servant John Paul the right leadership and the good example you expect from the successor of your Apostles. ~~H~~ all those people who are in positions of religious responsibility, who are looking for new ways to have the humility, the daring, and also the fantasy and imagination to follow your footsteps, Who created everything new and ~~yet~~ continued the very adventure since the very beginning. Father, hear the prayers of the family you have gathered here before you.

Will you say with me? (Through Him, with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all glory and honor is yours Almighty Father for ever and ever). Amen. ~~(May some of you who has a better voice than me intone three times the collective~~ one)

Lord you are holy indeed. All creation rightly gives you praise. All life, all holyness, all beauty, all truth, all form, all shape comes from you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Brother, by the working of the Holy Spirit. From age to age you gather people to yourself so that from East to West a perfect offering may be made to the glory of your Name. And so, Father, we bring you these gifts. We ask you to make them holy by the power of your Spirit so that they may become the body and blood of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ at whose example we celebrate this Eucharist.

On the night He was betrayed He took bread and gave you thanks and praise. He broke the bread and gave it to His Disciples and said, "Take this, all of you, and eat it. This is my body which will be given up for you." When supper was ended He took the Cup. Again He gave you thanks and praise, gave the Cup to His Disciples and said, "Take this, all of you and drink from it. This is the cup of My blood, of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all people and sins will be brought away. Do this in memory of Me."

Father, calling to mind the death of your Son, His resurrection and [illegible], and [illegible] again and again in the most unexpected and humble way, we offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice. Look with favor on your church's offering. See the cry for justice of your humanity that feels the plight of man-made

better way. ~~You are accustomed that the~~ Our Fall is a constant event in the entire creation, and ~~that's why~~ yet all the more is the Redemption ~~is~~ ~~that~~ a stupendous daily miracle that redeems, redresses, ~~makes better~~ heals everything, because ~~nothing of what there~~ the is ~~is complete but simply, like~~ all things, like ourselves, are incomplete and as pilgrims on the way. May this Eucharist give us strength to ~~go on on that way~~ make pilgrimage, ~~every one of us in their own~~ way, every one of us in a new, creative, joyful way so that we, with all the creatures in heaven, on earth, with all the angels and spirits of all the universes may sing and live the hymn of your praise, the glory of your creation, which we symbolize by saying now, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of light. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

which may not be so good into better instruments and let those instruments which are good be utilized for the glory of your name, for the enhancement of creation, for the betterment of everything, instruments of beauty, of justice, of love. Pray, friends, that this sacrifice that we would like to offer this morning may be, because of our sincerity, acceptable to God, our Almighty Father. (A short prayer is recited by all present). Amen.

The Lord be with you. (And also with you). Lift up your hearts. (We lift them up to the Lord). And our bodies. Let us thank the Lord our God. (It is right to give Him thanks and praise). It is right, Lord, to give you thanks and praise because you are in everything, you are everywhere, you are in everybody. Because more and more we begin to become aware of your sanctifying, transforming and sometimes disturbing presence in everything that there is. We thank you today because you have ~~got~~ us here together to celebrate that mystery which no words can explain, which no gesture can symbolize because the very reality is that mystery in itself and does not need to be interpreted, not even understood. We thank you today for bread and wine, for flute and mandolin, for tambour and pictures, for images and flowers, for everything that there is, for everything that we are, ~~so that~~ we may reintegrate ourselves in a better harmony with this world ~~that sometimes~~ we feel that we have somewhat disharmonized, but which is mighty enough to put our small, chaotic disharmonies into a bigger concern ~~of a~~ for a

reality. ~~They~~ our bodies are call~~ing~~ed to be totally divinized ~~like any~~ with the rest ~~other~~ of ~~entire~~ your creation.

We have heard and we believe that every one of us is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Let us begin this liturgy by expressing this bond of communion, by greeting each other, by recognizing the Trinity indwelling in our bodies in silence but in the form that we may find more appropriate. You may remain seated or you may stand. Let us greet and salute the light. Will you lift up your hands?

Accept, Lord, these offerings which we would like to offer you today. Simple, not very rich, beautiful but sincere. Accept it as a token, knowing that we would like ~~that~~ our Eucharist~~ic~~ celebrations be not reduced to a small, ~~little~~ corner of our lives and of the world. ~~That~~ When we celebrate the Eucharist, may we become more aware that we are collaborating ~~to~~ in the transformation, to the metamorphosis of the entire world. That the instruments of music, that the works of art, that the results of human ingen~~iosity~~uity, that the fruits of the earth, that those instruments that help in one way or another in spite of their ambiguity, that everything that ~~there~~ is be transformed, be sanctified, be purified ~~it may be~~. Accept, Lord, this Eucharist today _____ like to integrate not only [illegible] but ~~entire~~ reality and especially our bodies and all the things which we, with our different ways, have also fabricated and constructed and made, the arts and crafts of human ingen~~iosity~~uity on different scales with different values. Transform that

We are here not to learn, not to do something for later. We are here because we believe that worship is essential in our lives. ~~and~~ We are here at the heart of a tradition which, in one line is two thousand years old, but which in its self understanding claims to have a pre-history not only in the Judaic tradition, in the Abrahamic line of the family of Man, but also in that line ~~which had nothing to do with Abraham, which in that very tradition is~~ symbolized by _____ a priest who was not circumcised, who did not worship _____, who was cursed in his days by that very God, and yet who was priest of the Most High, ~~and~~ He who was superior to Abraham, who paid to him ~~the~~ tribute, and ~~the~~ honor, and ~~the~~ tithes. The King of Peace without pedigree, with no history, no chronicles, no father, no mother; Melchizedek. In that line we rejoin the human traditions which we would like in our own way to assimilate. And it is in the same line that that very Christian tradition, ~~not satisfied with that, wants to go~~ to the first ~~normal~~ human being, ~~like any one of us.~~ Abel, who did sacrifice in the most material, external, ecological way. When we offer today the sacrifice of our bodies, of Your Body, when we celebrate the whole Eucharist, help us to realize that we are also integrating the entire creation and that [illegible] is precisely the human being in its wholeness, and that we have neglected our bodies in integrating them in our worship. Teach us Lord, today, to worship you, to worship reality with our own bodies and help us to feel their presence, ~~their~~ and

all our inhibitions, in what we call sophistication and which ultimately is ~~self-~~ self-conscious pride of falling into ridicule; lack of spontaneity of allowing the molecules of our body ~~to~~ to respond to the movements of ~~what we call~~ wind & breath of the spirit, ~~and which traditions call the wind~~. ~~You have spiritualized~~ so many things ~~but now~~ we ~~feel~~ sometimes ~~prey of a kind of dichotomy~~. We would like to recover all the physical values, beginning with the material ones, and yet we feel still estrangement. Help us, Lord, to realize that you are ~~Spirit~~ Matter as much as ~~matter~~ Spirit and that we are your image, not only in the _____ called soul, but in the entirety of our beings. If often at the beginning of a liturgy we have asked you to inspire our minds, to open our hearts, today we ask you to make our bodies more agile and our minds less of a passive weight. How often we have thought that ~~it was~~ the body was the obstacle and that the mind could fly high. Perhaps we begin also to realize that our inhibitions, fears, reflections and after-thoughts are also great burden, that becomes a hindrance to the beauty of your creation, to the spontaneity of our movement, to the full participation of our beings in that worship of entire reality ~~of you~~ and of all your bounty images spread everywhere. True, Christian tradition has called it the body of Christ and the first fourteen centuries understood it commonly 'the body of the believers.' ~~Then we refined a little more and reduced it to the sacramental species and began to forget~~ May we remember that not only does Christ becomes bread, but that also bread becomes Christ.

EAST WEST MONASTIC SYMPOSIUM - November 20, 1980

6:30-8:00 a.m.
Meditation
Liturgy —— of the body

Let us pray. We come today, Lord, at the beginning of the new creation which we earthlings call a new day, to worship you. Many of us, if not most of us, have worshipped you time and again and have specially stressed our mind, our ideas, and relied on our beliefs, followed given patterns of worship, and that has been and is, Lord, very good. But also we have heard that in you we are a new creation every moment, that your Spirit makes anew everything, that you are without age because the past and the future coalesce in your, in our ~~presence and~~ present. All too often ___ have tried to subdue our bodies, or let them loose in their own ways, ~~just~~ looking for independent comfort. Some, ~~or most~~ of us have lost ~~a little~~ the awareness that we do not only have a body but also are body. In the Christian tradition we have relegated ~~perhaps~~ the central dogma ~~as a~~ kind of ~~an~~ appendix, and speak later of the resurrection of the flesh. In spite of the [illegible]

these bones and sinews, in all its physiological reality and temporal structures ~~that~~ are called upon the new life, transformed but not annihilated physical existence. Today we would like to worship you with our bodies, but we are clumsy, not only in our physical movements but perhaps much more in

us ~~to allow~~ with our lives, to do the same) This is ~~This~~ Many, and yet it is One. The Body of Christ. Amen.

There is no human life without blood. There is no Redemption without the shedding of blood. The Blood of Christ. Amen.

The Lord is with you, "And also with you." The Mass never comes to an end but this liturgy will be closed. In a more traditional setting I would have liked to ask the elders to give us ~~His~~ Christ's blessing but, as we are a little untraditional, I shall ask one of the youngest to give us ~~God's~~ His blessing.

God, we believe that when you bless your children live. You have already blessed us with so many gifts. As we begin this day, this new life, this new creation, fructify with your blessings all these gifts and bring them to completion as the evening comes, by keeping us joyful, simple and merciful. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. We disperse in peace and joy.

from evil."

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil. Grant us peace in our day. Keep us free from sin. Protect us from all anxiety and help us to discover in joyful hope the constant presence of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. "For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, now and forever." // Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your Apostles, "I leave you peace, My peace I give you." Look not on our sins but on the faith of your church ~~judge~~, and grant us the peace and unity of your Kingdom, where you live for ever and ever. Amen. // The peace of the Lord be with you. "And also with you."

~~And~~ As we have not yet greet each other ~~some, as we would~~ like to say with our own effusion; let's give in praise of peace to each other and not make ~~sometimes~~ of the Christian liturgy ~~looking~~, because of the seriousness of the thing, sometimes like a funeral! So let's greet...

Slowly, slowly, slowly. Lay down, rest a little, rest a little, relax.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

We shall pass on the bread and receive Communion at the same time.

The Body of Christ ~~allows to be~~ is broken, to be handled, to be mishandled, ~~and~~ to give us strength and life, and asks from

emotions of love or of hatred, of greed or of friendship; our friends and our enemies. ~~Lord,~~ We ask you, "Lord hear our prayer."// For all of us, who are weak and are made only of dust, let us pray to the Lord, "Lord hear our prayer."/ _____. Let truth prevail. Let us pray to the Lord, "Lord hear our prayer."// Let us pray also for all those who are deprived of the goods of the earth, for the millions who die of hunger and thirst and especially for all of us who have so much, that we may be conscious of their difficulties and may learn to share. For this let us pray to the Lord, "Lord hear our prayer."/ That we may become a little more care-ful takers of the earth. That we may participate actively in cleansing of the waters and accept to be cleansed by them. That we may by imaginative sacrifices contribute to the cleansing of our air and that we may tend the fire of love. For this let us pray, "Lord hear our prayer." For our brothers and sisters, Christians who are persecuted for their faith in any part of the world, and particularly for those who are in prison. For all prisoners everywhere, particularly political and religious prisoners, let us pray the Lord, "Lord hear our prayer."/

And not to forget anybody, let's give hands and say that prayer which we usually say, "Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us

of problems we would like to solve. Here in your presence, in the presence of each other, in the presence of all the universe (because we are acting this not only on our own behalf but on behalf of all living beings,) we would like to share with You and with each other what we have in our hearts. The little ~~small~~ prayers ~~that we feel~~ that we have to speak out ~~in order that we ourselves~~ commit us to become more and more the very instruments of ~~those things which, being expressed in~~ prayer, ~~enhance our own commitment to be along~~ the lines of the very prayers we ~~utter~~. Hear ~~these~~ the prayers of this family that you have gathered here before you:

Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Ishmail and Jesus, we pray you for our Moslem brothers, and entire brethren for our ~~brothers~~ of all the Arab countries, who make their living from the fruit of the entrails of the Earth, that they may live in peace with the land, in peace with one another, and that we may live in peace with them. Lord hear our prayer. // Let us also pray for our brothers and sisters and the peoples of North and South America who in a sense are the spiritual ~~forefathers, and others~~ ancestors of this country in a (way very special, ~~and thus be~~ able to work with them and help them through prayer, _____. "Lord hear our prayer." // Oh Lord, we pray for our hostages, those who cannot enjoy the fruits of the earth, that one day they may enjoy ~~the~~ freedom and love, ~~you again~~. For this let us pray to the Lord. "Lord, hear our prayer." //

We bring before you all those who are affected by our

it was ~~at least partially~~ the ritual meal of the, ~~but~~ and yet to underscore at the same time novelty and change, He filled ~~for another time and probably for~~ the third time ~~the Cup~~ the cup with wine, and blessed it and thanked You once again and gave ~~it (~~the Cup~~)~~ to the Disciples and told them; "Drink. This is My blood. It will be shed for you and for all people and sins will be forgiven. Do this," He added, "in memory of Me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith. "Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ has come again."

In memory of His death and resurrection we offer you, Father, this life-giving Bread, this saving Cup. We thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence. May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit. Lord remember your creation throughout the universe. Remember the earth that sustains us ~~and that~~ which we have used and sometimes ill-treated. Remember all the elements that give you glory in their own way. Make us grow in love ~~to~~ for them, in understanding and deeper communion with everything that there is as the very foundation and condition ~~to have~~ of deeper communion ~~and understanding~~ among the family ~~of the human beings~~. Keep us together in love, in mutual patience and recognition of the diversity of the human beings. Give us a sense of courage so as to be able, ~~every one of us~~, to fulfil ~~their own way~~ in different ways. Our hearts are still full of things we would like to conquer, of realities we would like to reach, of situations we would like to ~~better~~ improve,

and we don't know, which we call also angels and Thrones and dominations, so that with the entire creation we may see and say with new heart: "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and Might, Heaven and Earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

(Would you not like to come closer, since we do more movement?)

Let your Spirit come upon these gifts, to make them holy by the power of your Spirit so that in different ways, because everything is unique, everything may become for us the body and the blood of Christ. At a certain moment ~~in the commemoration~~ that is for us the central symbol, that young man Jesus, when everything was dark, when night ~~in all~~ senses ~~was there, when He just almost led by the force of the~~ _____ and ~~the power of inertia~~ gathered the handful of people who, without understanding Him very well, somewhat ~~stick~~ to him. One betrayed Him, the others ~~flew away~~ and none understood Him, and yet understanding seems to be not the most important thing; ~~that~~ in spite of that, ~~that~~ his action had ~~the~~ meaning _____. That moment He took the bread and gave You thanks and broke the bread and gave it to the Disciples and told them, "Eat, all of you. This is My body. It will be given up for you." He said that ultimately what counts is service and love and washing the feet and allowing things to happen, and at the very end of that Supper, so as to stress continuity, because

And now in this Eucharist, God above, accept this Bread, this Wine, this Earth, this Fire, this Water, this Air. Accept everything; transform everything along with us, together with you. Pray, friends, that the sacrifice this morning once again be acceptable to God, our Almighty Father and Mother. (A short prayer is recited by all present). Amen. The Lord be with you (And also with you). Lift up your hearts (We lift them up ~~un~~to the Lord). Let us give thanks to the Lord our God (It is right to give Him thanks and praise). It is right, Lord, to give you thanks and praise on every occasion, every moment, but perhaps in a new way when a new occasion arises today, that we will begin a week in which we would like to live with authenticity, to forget the weight of the past, not to care for the future as it may come, but to live with all ~~the~~ its intensity the message of the present. To be able to pierce through the appearances of that which is fleeting, and discovering in ~~every~~ each of these temporal moments the core which remains, which is eternal without ceasing to be temporal. To thank You for everything that there is, to thank ourselves, to thank each other, to thank the powers above, the realities below and everything that ~~there~~ is, so that we discover a new sense in singing, in praying, in saying that the rivers and the stars and the clouds and the waters and the snows and the rains and the fish and the animals and people, and all ~~t~~hat people make and are making, all the artifacts that human ingen~~iosity~~uity is producing, and everything that we know

~~says~~ expresses. To adore means to kiss, ~~means~~ to bring the thing to our mouth and ~~us~~ lips. Help us to kiss you, to adore you, & not to be afraid ~~that~~ the God above is not jealous of His ~~fivine~~ finite dimension below. ~~(And the supreme symbol of the Christian tradition, and I would say of almost all traditions, is not only material but is more, is drink and food.)~~ We cannot do without you; we adore you. You are drink and food.

has to be burned. Spirit, and wind which blows everywhere with sovereign freedom, give me aid in everything, in allowing everything to subsist. We could not live without you for a single moment. You are so discreet that we don't care to think, to thank, and are only scared when we have so polluted you that we only see the other side. Impregnate us with a sense of thanksgiving, of gratitude, of being able to eat you, to breathe life. Help us to regain that most fundamental consciousness. All the rest are superstructures, important as they are but which are built on the holyness of the fundamental elements of us, of Reality. We are a little estranged. Your power and your symbolism often escapes us. We are even shy to deal with you, we have shame sometimes to enter into contact with you. We protect ourselves with gloves and coverings of all types and are afraid to dirty our hands, to use our lips, to fill our lungs. We are celebrating that mystery which the common sense of the Christian tradition called Communion. Help us to reestablish first of all this communion with you, elementary pillars of all reality. We have sinned of human pride. We thought we were superior and even deemed to become independent; we thought we could manipulate you simply used you with almost tyrannical attitudes. Help us, in us, not just to go on now preaching to others beautiful thoughts about ecological realities, but teach us to deal with you in our own lives with that respect, with that love, with that adoration which the accumulated wisdom of the language already

ship with you. You are seventy percent or more of our bodies. ~~You put a challenge to us because even seventy percent of the waters of the earth by natural or artificial means cannot feed without harm our own organisms. We need to reestablish a living relation with you.~~ In one of the traditions of the world to give a glass of water entails eternal reward. You must be very important indeed, very life-giving. You are alive and primordial and we treat you with condescendence, neglect and a sense of superiority, ~~that~~ you can bear because you flow and run away. Holy water, purify us more and more. Mother earth, forgive us again and again.

Vivifying fire, the spirit of all that is alive, the life of all the gods, the necessary warmth of every living being, you are a mystery of transformation, of purification, and ~~at the same time of test~~. You can give light and warmth, but also if that which burns is not pure, smoke and suffocation. ~~In that process that~~ our ancestors called divine alchemy, which is the purification and transformation of everything. In that cosmic and divine metabolims of all the things towards their perfection, you are the priest, the mediator, the indispensible factor. You are powerful, even dreadful. Fear and respect is what you command. Help us to regain all these elementary, primordial, fundamental attitudes which are not only human but of every living being, of every creature. We pray to you to burn what has still to be transformed and to give us the strength not to waver ~~to~~ put in the crucible what

you, ~~and Him~~ Lord who made you. We thank you for the gift that you are, we thank you for Him Who called us from darkness into light, even as you come to us this day. We hail you, ~~as you rise~~ rising from the ~~E~~earth once again in your course, going from east to west, from north to south, lighting, uniting, warming. Come into our hearts and grant us those gifts, that we may give to one another light and ~~light~~ life, ~~light~~ love and warmth.

Will you say one single time with me: Aum. Spirit of the ~~W~~winds, vivifying ~~E~~earth, come to us and give us life. Penetrate us, bless us; ~~and at~~ in this very elemental life make us bring joy.

All this is the word of God. Let us pray. Often our prayers go directed on high, above everything to you, Lord. Today our prayer would like to go in the opposite direction, below, underneath, to the abyss and death, to you birth. Awaken ~~our~~ awareness that we are also of your kith and kin, that we belong to you, that you belong to us. That we together are one body, one community, one reality. You are mother, ~~but~~ also sister and even daughter. Awaken in us the sense of being terrestial, earthly, material, corporeal, physical, and thus concrete and breakable and limited, and with shape and form and weight, and gravitation, and often also clumsiness. Our prayers in this our liturgy of the elements go to you, primordial waters, which have been from the very beginning and which even in the Biblical tradition ~~was~~ is so powerful, ~~so~~ primordial, that you were not created by God. ~~You are primordial, as the book of Genesis~~ Genesis says. Help us to reestablish a more living relation-

TAPE #1
SIDE #1

EAST WEST MONASTIC SYMPOSIUM - November 19, 1980

6:30-8:00 a.m.
Meditation
Liturgy — of the Elements.

...from now on is not on our own behalf. All what we think and ~~we~~ say is in the name of that ineffable mystery which is light, and life, and love.

God our Father, we offer ~~you and we~~ our consecrate to you our mother Earth. From her you have moulded us with your loving hands, but we have defiled her through our violence, our exploitation, our greed. May our reconciliation with her cleanse us from our sins and reconcile us with one another and with you. You are invited to ask mother earth for forgiveness.

This bread which has grown from the Earth contains the fruits of the Earth. This bread is life. It is the bread of life. It is energy. This bread makes us share in the power of the Earth. This bread may be blest. Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation; through your goodness we have this wine to offer, through the divine work of your own hands. It

Oh Father, we praise you for this, for sister Water, for she is pure and chaste and through her you have called us to life, cleansed us into new people. Oh Father, Great Spirit in the Wind we breathe, we ~~do~~ ask your forgiveness for we have defiled our sister. Oh sacred gift of Fire we salute and hail

Liturgies: So very beautiful. Should be published.

Liturgy of the Word:

pg 28 ff (28–32): someone will have to edit by consulting tape to determine which portions constitute separate readings.

p33: Don't know if you should include in print the invitation to all to join in the prayer of consecration, as this is not the present discipline of the Church, and except on such specially meaningful occasions as this Wording Liturgy, perhaps confuse the orders of celebration in the Common Book.

→ A note of preface might present this one Word of Thanksgiving in four foci, with an explanation of the fourth Liturgy of Silence. Or you may prefer to do this in an Afterword, rather than a Foreword.

Liturgie