

## THE USES OF MYTH IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE

*by John F. Hayward*

A basic theme of this paper is that the Western tradition has simultaneously encouraged and discouraged the use of mythical narratives and symbols. The method of the paper seeks to reveal some of the historical strands of this peculiarly Western ambivalence. The purpose of the paper is to point out certain implications for science and religion that might accrue from a clearer vision and freer appropriation of our mythological heritage.

David Bidney has stated the ambivalent role of myth in the modern world by reference to Bergson and to the later thoughts of Ernst Cassirer.<sup>1</sup> Bergson observes in his "two-sources" theory of religion and morality that "religion is a defensive reaction of nature against the dissolvent power of intelligence." This, Bidney argues, appears to support a truth theory of myth as a process in which the Cosmos or the Society of Life projects into human consciousness images of its own power and value via the medium of myth. Bidney finds a similar point of view in Cassirer's notion that the mythical consciousness is a distinct and creditable medium through which human experience expresses its own depths, ultimate values, and basic dependencies. On the other side of the coin, however, Bergson notes that rational and critical intelligence drives toward dissolving mythical images and loyalties into their component parts via empirical analysis. Critical intelligence stands outside the beliefs it examines and seeks to reduce them to the common coinage of non-mythical observation. In a like fashion, Cassirer, as Bidney observes, was attracted to a sociological theory of myth. According to this theory, myth expresses not the impact of cosmic process on human sensibilities but the effort of a given society to constitute itself as a unit. Myth is what society uses to symbolize its own center and the organization of its energies. The reality behind myth is social ritual and social behavior. The implication is that sooner or later societies will analyze their own forms consciously and critically; they will decide

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rationally for this or that structure or action; and they will gradually relegate into the background of history all mythical expression.

As a modern rationalist, Bidney favors this latter approach. He writes:

My conclusion is that while in times of crisis the "noble fiction" may have its immediate, pragmatic utility in promoting social faith and solidarity, faith in reason and in the ability of democratic man to govern himself rationally requires a minimum of reliance upon myth. . . . Myth must be taken seriously precisely in order that it may be gradually superseded in the interests of the advancement of truth and the growth of human intelligence. Normative, critical, and scientific thought provides the only self-correcting means of combatting the diffusion of myth, but it may do so only on condition that we retain a firm and uncompromising faith in the integrity of reason and in the transcultural validity of the scientific enterprise.<sup>2</sup>

### TRANSCENDENCE MODEL

It is worthy of note that Bidney presents his hope of the transition from myth to reason as a product of faith involving at least "a minimum reliance upon myth." It may be inaccurate to designate as myth this faith assumption in the essential value and triumph of reason. But there is a dimension to it which is not strictly empirical. It seems that Bidney will not compromise his faith in rational man—he will honor the hope of its ultimate validity. In theological language, this kind of faith decision could be called a *transcendence model*. It refers to a situation which transcends evidence, especially counter evidence in favor of rival systems. It transcends assurance, substituting hope and faith. It transcends time, for it is a program still to be fulfilled and yet treasured as being even now in process of fulfilment. It transcends verification, for it is a faith continually being tested and yet extending in principle beyond all verifying activity. It could be falsified and eventually might lose its imperial position. But falsification would never occur by virtue of a single exception. Quite the contrary, only a deadly flood of exceptions protracted over a long period of time without the occasional refreshment of a single verifying event would drive the faithful person to admit falsification. As long as a few verifying instances could be experienced from time to time, the faith would persist.

By the phrase "transcendence model" I do not mean to refer to a mystical reality understood by esoteric means. Rather, I wish to connote a certain sense of reality serving as both the container and the contrasting foil into which and against which all the relativities and partial realizations of human perception and knowledge are projected. For an Einstein, the transcendence model would be the Ultimate Or-

der toward which all our scientific and humanistic probabilities approach. For Tillich, it would be the Unconditional, "the God beyond the God of theism."<sup>3</sup> For a phenomenologist, it would be that point of contact where the creating mind and its environing structures occur as one identity. For a total skeptic or solipsist, the transcendence model would be no more than his own stream of consciousness. In each case, we would be dealing with what Schelling called "*das Unvordenkliche*," "that before which thought cannot penetrate." Transcendence models are models in the sense of being selections of certain loci and forms out of the whole arsenal of human awareness and symbolism. They are transcendent in that they are not justified in terms of any prior reasons or realities but are affirmed, in their own right, as the ultimate ground and reach of human understanding.

One feature of the intellectual history of the West is that it has gradually "demythologized" its discourse by converting mythical transcendence models (concrete narratives of gods and men) into abstract transcendence models (general principles underlying systems of thought). In this process, scraps of myth continue to remain, even in modern discourse. I shall argue that in many respects a more concrete, narrative-style transcendence model may be better suited to modern sensibilities than the abstract transcendence models we habitually use. In short, demythologizing has proceeded far enough. It may now be time, even while guarding the critical intelligence, to consider re-mythologizing.

Let us observe a few points important for the history of myth and demythologization. In primitive society, as Mircea Eliade has pointed out, the principal function of religion and its myths is to transcend the "terror of time."<sup>4</sup> Time is the measure of decay, and the whole world is caught in time's irresistible drive toward non-being. Parallel to and transcendent over the expected tragedies of history and the decay of all things through time, the archaic mind envisions an eternal realm of perfection and fulfillment. This is the realm of the gods, the immortals, and their prototypical dramas of eternal goodness and value. The aim of ritual is for the people to achieve periodic identification with the divine realm leading to periodic refreshment of the temporal realm. The aim of myth is to remember and retell the archetypical events which the ritual re-enacts and by which, through mystical participation of the people, the earth and the tribe are renewed and the terror of time is overcome. Thus, myth and ritual, with their guardian priesthood, constitute the link between time and eternity. And the effect of a tribal experiencing of the link is not simply reinvigoration or the

transcendence of defeat; it is also paradigmatic, giving to the tribe renewed instruction in the divine prototypes for the conduct of every significant aspect of life. Thus, myth and ritual confirm a primal history, enunciate a crucial religious vision and faith, and declare the foundations for an extensive law, art, and technology.

The key point I wish to emphasize is that primitive culture is not perceived as complete in itself, but rather as established, informed, and guided by a transcendent realm and reality which it is supposed to imitate. This process is largely inherited, dogmatic, resistant to criticism and change, conservative. By the very rigidity of its character, the archaic mind raises the question of its own reformation.

#### FROM MYTHOS TO LOGOS—THE GREEK TRANSCENDENCE MODEL

Werner Jaeger has documented in impressive detail the gradual shift from the mythological to the philosophic mind in his *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*.<sup>5</sup> In places and periods of social change and intersocietal communication were born the beginnings of autonomous philosophical reasoning, still heavily dependent on mythical images but beginning to reconstruct these images into abstract and universal principles. After the several generations of gradual demythologizing among the pre-Socratics, Plato emerged as a highly sophisticated rationalist who had gone a long way from mythos to logos. Plato sought to rule mythological tales out of the ideal state and its education and to substitute a thoroughgoing deductive reasoning proceeding from the archetypes of reason to a judgment over the relative validity of all phenomena. Yet he was not able to cleanse the thought world he inhabited of all myth, nor could he bring to completion the anti-mythical trend begun by his predecessors. I refer not only to his use of specific myths at the climax points of certain dialogues, but also to the essential transcendence model in his thinking. Having been influenced by Pythagoras (as well as the Orphic myths which are woven into Pythagorean culture), he proceeded to affirm the reality of a realm of divine and immortal perfection expressed in terms of Unity or the One. This is the true source and ultimate destiny of man's immortal soul. True reasoning leads toward this destiny by preparing man for it; but the ultimate fulfilment waits upon death and the release of the soul from the corporeal realm. Even in the late dialogues, the image of a realm of transcendent and unchanging perfection is dominant.

The nature of Plato's Ultimate Unity (the One) is critical for understanding much of Western thinking, including scientific thinking. Its key characteristic is the image of changelessness. "Everything which is

good, whether made by art or nature or both, is least liable to suffer change from without" (*Republic*, 381<sup>b</sup>). This is a true transcendence over what Eliade refers to in primitive society as "the terror of time." Nothing qualifies the perfection of the One. Nor is it qualified by any inner tensions, needs, or dynamics. It is all in all, being beyond every particular and being the primordial fulfilment of every potentiality. Aristotle's Unmoved Mover is completely compatible with Plato's One. In both instances, there is a purposeless Reality (purposeless because it has nothing unfulfilled within it), a Reality absolutely dependable in its constancy and undifferentiated in its quality. It transcends all phenomena, even as all phenomena are subtly moved to try to approach its perfection. Only in the highest rationality does any temporal reality approach this vision of true perfection. Even then, for all of its accessibility to reason, the One remains a mystical fullness to which a man can only briefly and never constantly attain.

I suggest that the key transcendence model of Hellenic rationalism is a mixture of myth and abstraction: the abstract part is the perfection of changelessness; the mythical part, which is both concrete and dramatic, is the depiction of changelessness as a realm from which the immortal soul is primordially derived and to which the rationally purified soul may aspire, above the flux of events and the terror of time. Although Aristotle gave birth to a non-Platonic empiricism, to a fresh interest in the realm of concrete phenomena, his basic world view was more nearly Platonic in the fashion we have been describing. For Aristotle, the examination of details was for the sake of confirming eternal essences arranged in an ascending hierarchy of degrees of changelessness.

What is the connection between Plato's and Aristotle's rationalism and modern scientific rationality? It must be granted that Aristotle's bias in behalf of deductive reason stands in sharp contrast to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century origins of science, where empirical facts were given the chance to alter rather than merely confirm rational principles. But even here, certain elements of the transcendence model of changeless unity remained. Right through the time of Newton and beyond, the Greek image of a single, rationally co-ordinated world unity persisted. It was no longer seen as pure, undifferentiated, or unaffected by phenomena. But it represented an eternal framework of cosmic law and order, the internal dynamics of which caused no ultimate fracture in its outer boundaries. Even Einstein, the father of the theory of relativity, retained a faith in the ultimately rational orderliness of all process, seeing disjunctions in scientific explanation as a function of human ignorance rather than of ontological paradox.

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This Hellenism is antimythical in the sense that it rules out all the drama of primitive Greek myths. The caprice of the gods, the darkness of fate, the mysteries of divine judgment, the tragic suffering of human men and heroes, the strange combinations of order and chaos in all events—all this became anathema. The myth of a fulfilled and perfect realm, of the soul's high destiny and reason's noble struggle, took the place of all the darker myths of an earlier time. In order thus to demythologize their culture, these rationalists had to discover new foundations in a broad and subtle myth far less vulnerable, in their eyes, to question or challenge than the myths they had overthrown. There was no question to them that the scheme they believed in was *logos*, not *mythos*. They believed they had transcended all myth. From our vantage point, we see them substituting one myth for a whole variety of other myths.

### FROM MANY GODS TO ONE—THE JUDAIC TRANSCENDENCE MODEL

The same critical disavowal of myth (even while holding to a normative and dominant myth) seems to have occurred in the other mainstream of Western history, in biblical thought. Against the myths of many gods, the ancient Jews defended their faith in one God. Against the pagan tendency to humanize the deeds of divinity, Jahweh looms as infinitely distant, invisible, mysterious, unanalyzable, and unassailable. Against the claims of rival tribes for their own magic and magical ritual, claims with which the Jews were surrounded, the Bible simplifies the relationship to Jahweh in terms of obedience to his law and petition for his mercy. Against the tendency to equate human and divine values characteristic of the mythical mind, the Jews saw the possibility of unexplainable suffering (as in the Book of Job) and the possibility of God's controversy even with his chosen ones. Their covenant between God and man was not presumed to be a magical instrument for the compelling of divine favor. It was held in faith, and the rewards of its faithful keeping were finally ascribed to God's judgment, not to man's.

In short, the Jews' rejection of idolatry and their exaltation of the one God bound to man not through the subtleties of high reasoning but through the keeping of a covenant of righteousness combined to produce a critical attitude toward the welter of mythology in the pagan world. But obviously the Jews did not escape myth; they advanced it and, from the point of view of our own world view, they purified it.

THE CHRISTIAN SYNTHESIS—THE TRANSCENDENCE MODEL THAT  
GAVE BIRTH TO SCIENCE

The blending of Hellenic and biblical mythological themes is possible because of the demythologizing tendencies of each. The Jews believed in the ultimate lordship of the one God, in power and wisdom. It was not difficult for the Alexandrian church fathers to graft this vast image onto the Hellenic vision of the One. The suffering of men of faith, epitomized in the homelessness of the Jews, in the Passion of Christ, and in the death of the martyrs, found ready compensation in the Hellenic vision of a pure realm, transcendent over all and the eternal home of all faithful and purified souls. Although this doctrinal system looks highly complex from our vantage point, it is a common theme from Tertullian, through Augustine, to Luther that Christian doctrine is extremely simple, direct, and comprehensible, that it is a truth thoroughly cleansed of all the speculations and bizarre imaginations of pagan myth. What classical and biblical culture held in common was the vision of an orderly and reasonable cosmos and of a rightful and exalted place for man in the midst of it.

Upon the firm foundations of this comprehensive transcendence model, modern science was founded. But in the process of the development of science, the Platonic influence strikes me as dominant even though it has been considerably modified. Against the flux of time, science, in its early and classical stages, sought to find quasi-permanent structures which it calls laws. Against the diversity of phenomena, science sought to push its researches back to the ultimate building blocks, the atoms or uncuttable elements of reality. Against the vagaries of human free will and man's wandering or unfulfilled purposes, science sought to construe reality as ordered rather than capricious and as determined rather than spontaneous. The picture of an ordered cosmos having its own being freed from anthropomorphic purposes is quite akin to Plato's vision of the One, which has no purposes because it needs none. From this vantage point, the anthropomorphisms of the biblical Jahweh look excessively mythical. It is not surprising that biblical theology was made more abstract and impersonal and qualified in an Aristotelian direction by such diverse thinkers as Maimonides, Aquinas, and Spinoza.

Is there anything left of this largely Hellenic and partially biblical vision in science today? I should say a good deal, although one must take care to note the differences. One must lop off the old Platonic hope for an ecstatic vision of the One. But we keep the image of a co-ordinated and purposeless system, details of which are available to

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our partial and never perfect understanding. We lop off the biblical image of God the Judge and Redeemer, but we keep the notion that in the course of time natural selection "decides" what is capable of survival and what must cease to perpetuate its kind. In a Platonic fashion, we argue that the way to acquaintance with and use of the stable orders of the cosmos is the way of knowledge, although we lop off the idea of a direct connection between mind and the Ideal and we substitute the necessity to invent and test models drawn from empirical observation. We keep the biblical sense of a linear history, of an evolution in time moving toward higher forms, but we lop off the idea that God foresees and plans this drama in advance. Instead, we substitute the idea of random variation and natural selection in place of human purpose and divine judgment. Finally, if we are asked what is the meaning of the whole process as far as man is concerned, some may give a quasi-Socratic answer—insight; others may give a quasi-biblical answer—survival; still others may give no answer and avow that none can be found.

The foregoing transcendence model of science has or had mythical elements going back to original Greek and biblical habits of perception and symbolism. Surviving fragments of myth may be noted (1) in the conception of the laws of nature, implying the drama of a governing agency promulgating its decrees; (2) in the conception of natural selection, implying the drama of a cosmic editing or judging or deciding of relative survival powers; and (3) in the concept of evolution toward a higher, more complex structure of reality, implying the drama of a history moving *toward* (if not directly to) a climax point.

### CAN WE AVOID MYTH AND TRANSCENDENCE?

It is clear that portions of biblical and/or Hellenic myth remain in the modern mind and color its understanding. However, just as the Greeks, the Jews, and the Christians, each in their way, tried to purify the myths of previous ages, let us now ask whether the remnants of so-called purified mythology among us may not finally be expunged. Such a process would in effect end forever any doctrine of transcendence. We would cease to say that there is a process indirectly revealed to us through mythological symbols selected from, but transcending, the phenomenal world. Can this be done?

One would have to give up any image of a stable and orderly reality transcending human consciousness. The only order would be the provisional order of human behavior, both active and symbolic. The co-ordination of symbol and act would refer to human impulses and



responses; no further than that. History, whether of groups or of individuals, would be stripped of all purpose and all progress. In other words, history would mean nothing beyond the transitory "meaning" fleetingly bestowed on selected moments by individuals. Each moment would thus be freed to mean whatever it might chance to mean. And each moment would mean different things to different people.

Such a world view would be so close to chaos that it would be very difficult to resist a counteracting intrusion of transcendence models in the form of covert mythical images. Thus, one would have to guard against the rise of the image of mankind as though mankind were a definable entity. One's ethics, law, and custom would need constantly to be defended from a priori categorization. One would need to depend for standards of value ultimately upon the impulse of each human agent and the degree to which that impulse were qualified by other agents and the environment. One would have to conclude that what one values is a function of (a) what one wants and (b) what one is enabled and permitted to have by his environment. One would have to chase away the remnants of a myth of the soul (which says that one's individuality is sacred or worthy *in se*); one would also have to chase away a myth of the neighbor (which claims that what one encourages or prevents in others is equally subject to sacred consideration).

Emerson's word that "man is a myth-bearing tree" is confirmed in the subtle prevalence and persistence, even in this scientific age, of transcendence models containing concrete and dramatic elements. The very rationalism that seeks to substitute a total logos for all mythos makes its appeal to a hidden transcendence model. In this model, the human brain is given some position of judgment over the flux of events out of which, as part of a living organism, it arises and operates. It asks for a self-contained transcendence over the rival conceptions of its own environmental involvement, claiming to judge the relative validity of rival transcendence models (e.g., Marxism, Freudianism, behaviorism, etc.). The brain presses ever steadily toward the goal of understanding its own processes, as though it were really two realities: (1) an objective thinking machine whose operations can be measured and predicted; (2) a subjective thinker who can make judgments about everything, including the objective thinking machine. This is a real transcendence model, namely, the picture of a brain transcending and knowing itself.

It may be objected that any world view or system of values which remains within the human sphere should hardly be called transcendent, especially in view of the fact that it maintains a modest reserve

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toward cosmic belief or universal speculation. Nonetheless, although it appears to be more modest than its predecessors, it is actually less so. It says that man is the true and sole author of his own destiny. Further, it exalts not man in general but rational, conscious, deliberate, scientific man; and it relegates to positions of lesser importance and authority all the other faces and facets of man which we have come to acknowledge within man's brief history. The devotees of scientific rationalism put their faith ultimately in man's conscious self rather than his unconscious self, in his decisive behavior rather than his unpremeditated behavior, in his reason rather than his instinct, in his observational and analytical skills rather than his artistic and synthetic skills. Finally, and perhaps most important of all, basic trust is lodged in a presupposed harmony of the brotherhood of all rational men. Such a model thus transcends a huge weight of counterevidence and a huge volume of despair, cynicism, and radical doubt in the minds of all who do not share the faith. Of all the transcendence models of our time, one of the least logical, least empirical, least credible is that of autonomous, scientific man providing successfully, over the passage of time, for his own well-being.

### A TRANSCENDENCE MODEL FOR OUR DAY

Our argument is arriving at two critical considerations. The first is that to deny a transcendence model one must bring forward another transcendence model. The second is that the particular transcendence model that has largely prevailed for a long time among the intelligentsia of the Western world is in need of radical criticism and renovation. Our choice is not whether we shall commit our allegiance to any transcendence model at all, but which model most nearly reflects the full range of our experience and is therefore most worthy of our loyalty.

The major characteristic feature of the modern experience of reality is its dynamism. Therefore, any credible transcendence model in our day must point to a process rather than any allegedly eternal or static reality. Even if the new model retains the older abstract principle that the whole is one, its unity must be sharply qualified. It will be an associative or societal model of unity, having infinite internal divisions and partial disjunctions. The One may be eternal, but it does not exist as eternally the same. It will be envisaged as having a history with evolving potentialities moving toward fulfilment and with dying actualities moving toward extinction. Nothing in it is a finished perfection. There are no ultimate "building blocks," no invariant and

timeless "achievements." In developing novelty while remaining ultimately harmonious, it is value creating and value sustaining. Its "aim" is to endure while changing, to sustain unity while experimenting with new forms. Although it is co-ordinated with respect to broad limits of possibility, it is highly random and experimental within these limits.

It begins to appear that the cosmic process in which man dwells exhibits features parallel to man's features. Just as man experiments with novelty and waits to see "whether it will work"—that is, whether his novel action can make sense in co-ordination with wider ranges of action—so all life has its random experiments, its persistence in new styles, its governance within the surrounding ecologies, its judgments of success or failure, life or death. Furthermore, we can push this organic analogy from the living to the non-living on the assumption that the adjustment of inorganic environments is both co-ordinated and random, that such environments contain unrealized potentialities waiting for actualization, that life itself is an emergent out of non-life. Ultimately, life and non-life in this model are one, not by the degrading of life into something other than itself, but rather by the lodging of both the living and the non-living in a single creative and dynamic matrix.

To proceed in this direction calls up the image of the living God and requires that one use symbols that are in some respects anthropomorphic. The justification for such usage is partially phenomenological: that is, human beings will filter their realizations through essentially human media. This is to acknowledge that the process which produces and sustains man is at least as complex and rich in texture as man himself, plus much more which in its ultimate transcendence man knows nothing of. Beyond himself, man can only suppose an infinite complexity. Thus, the images in this transcendence model become more biblical and less Hellenic, more mythic and less abstract.

Once it is considered possible, as well as desirable, to construe the universe in quasi-human images as well as in impersonal terms, further basic principles emerge, this time in rather more mythical than abstract symbols: (1) The whole is ultimately worthy of being rather than unworthy or neutral. Its claim upon our respect and service requires us to accept our own being within the whole, however difficult its details may be. We are not free to be a law or value unto ourselves; we are not free to secede from the process out of which we come. (2) The whole is worth living for, in the sense that our contributions are preserved in their actual relevance beyond our lives and beyond our knowing. The imagery of struggle, triumph, reverse, disaster, and re-

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newal in man provides a model for the quasi-historical adventure of all of nature, in part and in the whole. The entire cosmos is cast in the form not of a system but of a drama, in which vast issues are slowly developing and undergoing crisis and renewal. A man's or a society's place in this drama is not a matter of indifference, but is portentous with consequences for good and for ill. The fact that the details of the drama are partially revealed and partially hidden is no excuse for withdrawal or irresponsibility. Just as the individual in each evolving species plays out its "role" to the utmost in the hope and faith that its individual vigor and persistence make sense in the over-all survival picture, so each man in his more complex role struggles both in darkness and in faith. Human consciousness being much broader than animal consciousness, man's role is correspondingly more complex than animal roles. Where the instincts of animals, derived from their genetic structure, are the final determinants of their success or failure to adapt and survive, man must depend upon observation, reason, and cultural pattern as well as upon biological instinct. His opportunities and adaptation problems are both broader and more difficult.

If, as it is supposed, there are beings in other planets which are at least different from and possibly more complex than any beings on this planet, including man, then their opportunities and adaptations will be correspondingly broad and complex. And they will contribute to the texture of the Whole in such a way as to increase its over-all complexity accordingly. To the denizens of some superior planet, our anthropomorphisms would appear inadequate in relation to the complexity of reality as they see it. Their "religion" would aim at imputing no less than the highest qualities of their own experience to their model of the Whole. All religious language seeks to be inclusive in this fashion.

The religious use of such a transcendence model is not for the sake of giving the believer a weapon with which to coerce his fellow believers, contrary believers, or non-believers. Quite the contrary, the aim of this model is to induce such a respect for the Whole and for oneself as part of the Whole that one's response to life is both vital and considerate, both reverential and rational, rather than careless, condescending, and destructively impulsive. Within such a framework science becomes a major cultural tool (in company with art and the humanities), a major tool with which to express the glory of phenomena and to respect the orders by which phenomena—including man—may most fruitfully coexist.

The very emphasis on transcendence does away with the illusion that a person or a nation can be a law unto itself. Every man, by virtue

of his emplacement in orders that are relatively fulfilling or destructive of his own and other energies, must study and understand, withdraw and refrain, cherish and sacrifice. In short, the love and respect of reality of which I am speaking is a more sure and comprehensive basis for the values of science, as we understand science, than any other I know.

Also, it is more in accord with common sense. Is it not more logical to trust the process out of which man comes, in spite of the vagaries, mischances, and misjudgments of individual men, than to trust man in general in spite of the alleged opacity, neutrality, or even hostility of the process? Since the part cannot be separated from the whole, the part cannot be loved or trusted separately. I am arguing that an exclusive humanism is essentially irrational but that a humanism in a theistic setting makes a good deal of sense. That is, the transcendence model that adequately supports any basic faith in the human venture must include more than the human venture per se.

A major problem in the credibility of this kind of transcendence model is the persistent mind-set in our day toward keeping a clear disjunction between the organic and inorganic. How can we move from a sense for an impersonal, machine-like system to a quasi-living history? The appeal I would make, beyond what has already been said about everyday human experience and its logic, is the experience of ecstasy. When one is grasped by an intense impression of value, whether concentrated in a sharply defined object or more generally diffused over the environment, one has the choice either of suppressing his response, thereby limiting the experience to his own insides, or of looking for means to celebrate communally and objectively the high voltage of value impact which he has undergone. The modern age tends to play it cool, attributing all deep enthusiasm or agony to the perceiver rather than the perceived. The transcendence model I am espousing does the opposite. It does not limit love or hate, union or disjunction, to the subjective pole of experience. It expresses and understands these hot interactions as real interactions, and it counts as honorable the poet or priest who gives voice to his intensity by metaphor and anthropomorphic image.

Obviously, there is something childlike in this kind of symbolic response to life. Furthermore, children do not always distinguish between reality and neurosis; many of their intense reactions are largely internal and objectively unfounded. Therefore, the mature person who remains childlike must also be more than childlike. He develops critical intelligence and strives to distinguish between inner and outer realities. In the maturity of any culture the sciences develop for the same reason.

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Some persons in particular are gifted in their ability to survey with passionate love and with dispassionate judgment certain defined areas of phenomena. Their intellectual acumen is civilization's vital hedge against tragedy. However, no such hedge is foolproof. Also, without the enthusiasm, without the worship and love of one's own and other childlike selves and the environment that gathers them in, the human world loses its dynamic participation with the world at large and is on its way to isolation and despair. I think it is possible and necessary to be simultaneously childlike and mature.

One's transcendence model and its mythical media should allow both for the reality of tragedy and for the persistence of renewal from tragedy. In this respect I prefer the Christian dying and rising imagery, strange though it may sound to the modern ear. This imagery involves paradox. But the paradox seems to be a part of our experience, whether we like it or not. That is, from a purely empirical point of view, there is nothing we see that does not in time come to an end; and yet this universal decline apparently can come to no absolute end, at least not in our imagination. Our transcendence model should include these tensioned polarities.

Our arguments in favor of enlarging the transcendence model of our thinking are not designed to conflict with scientific rationalism but rather to broaden the bases of its operation. We put no artificial boundary upon any kind of scientific procedure no matter how its conclusions may threaten to become reductionistic. Within the organic-inorganic matrix, many more specialized schemes of inquiry are possible than in a narrower inorganic model. The prospect of remythologization as I have outlined it is precisely designed to keep up with the more complex picture of reality which the sciences are developing. The world of science and religion as seen in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is already overpassed. Let us hope that science and religion may achieve a mutually supporting development in the new world that is upon us.

### NOTES

1. David Bidney, "Myth, Symbolism, and Truth," in *Myth: A Symposium*, ed. T. A. Sebeck (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1958).

2. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

3. See Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 76 and 300, for a discussion of this concept.

4. Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* ("Bollingen Series," Vol. XLVI [New York: Pantheon Press, 1954]), chap. iv.

5. W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947).