

# MODERN AGE

*A Quarterly Review*



*The unique nature of man*

## *Things and Persons*

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AT THE MOMENT, a discussion of man's nature must begin with an observation I have already made elsewhere: that it is not only one of the most important and urgent theoretical questions that confront us but one of the most baffling. And it is baffling, not because we lack factual information, or because we are suffering from a dearth of hypotheses that claim to interpret the facts, or because we are at a loss for methods of obtaining more facts, but precisely for the very opposite reason: because we are swamped by too many facts, by too many interpretations of these facts, and by too many methods. Taking all of these, we find them to be incompatible with one another or, to put it minimally, we find that they do not appear to be susceptible of effective integration.

This is to say that we are faced with a *problem*. That the problem of man is tan-

gled and that it is urgent is obvious enough. That we do not as yet have a solution I hope to show in the following pages.

Let me begin the discussion by reminding the reader that man has always been a problem to us men. He is a problem because we cannot do without some sort of notion of ourselves. Because we cannot act on pure instinct or mere custom we require a theory of man on which to act. Without it, we cannot organize our expectations, define our goals, nor criticize them when we cannot reach them; or, reaching our goals, if they turn out to be unsatisfactory, we cannot formulate our demands, or judge our achievements and our failures. We need a theory of man, then, for purely practical reasons. The choice is not between acting on a theory and acting on no theory at all; it is between acting on a theory that is adequate to the facts as known and open

to correction and one which, although fully operative, is not accessible to criticism because it is deeply implicit and difficult to formulate.

But we need a theory for another, no less pressing reason, although it is not a reason to which all men respond. We need a theory because in our culture we have given primacy to truth for its own sake; we naturally make what is closest at hand the object of reflection, and that is ourselves.

There was a time in our culture, and not so long ago as such things go, when man did not constitute the kind of problem he constitutes today. There was a time, say, to pick an arbitrary date, before the days of Montaigne, when there was a broad agreement among men about man's nature; an agreement among scholars, statesmen, divines, men of affairs, the leaders of armies and, perhaps, in their own inarticulate, vague way, peasants and serfs.

Men agreed then that man had a soul, that his soul was immortal, that he was a creature, that because he was a creature he had a destiny given him and not a destiny that was his to devise out of his own conception of his needs and hopes; and that he had means of discovering what that destiny was and means of realizing it. Further, men agreed, broadly of course and, as we would expect, disagreeing about details, that because man was the kind of creature he was, he had a worth that set him above the rest of his fellow creatures and, at the sublunary level, above the rest of creation, animate and inanimate. And further, and just as important if not more, that his conduct had to be ruled by precepts which were not of his own devising and which he could disregard at the awesome risk of being called to account for his conduct somewhere at some time, if not here and now, then later.

These articles and others had one con-

trolling principle on which the greatest majority of men agreed, namely that man was subordinate to his Maker. Somewhere in Volume I of his *Short History of Free-thought*, John M. Robertson tells us that in the medieval universities there were a large number of unbelievers who were not persecuted. I am in no position to challenge this statement but it is safe to assume that however many atheists there were, the great majority of Europeans, and the educated no less than the ignorant, accepted in substance if not in specific formulation, such articles of belief as I have enumerated. Furthermore, the consensus transcended religious affiliation. Mohammedans as well as Jews and Christians came together broadly on these articles. There was then a unity of belief that was genuinely catholic. Furthermore that belief was effective in controlling conduct—within limits of course. As late as the sixteenth century, the *conquistadores* of Central America could be, and were, thrown into a panic when they were denied access to the sacraments. These were not soft men nor were they cowards. They sought danger and exulted in overcoming it. But on several occasions when the Bishop of Chiapas, Father Las Casas, denied them access to the sacraments they submitted to what they took to be the unjust demands and abuses of the Bishop. And I am putting forth this instance as typical. Henry IV doing penance at Canossa is an earlier and a better known and more dramatic episode. But these two instances are not unique in the history of Christendom.

And then came Montaigne. But I use the name eponymically, to stand as a symbol for much that he had very little to do with as well as to refer to his well-known interest in man, because he found man, by looking into himself, an object of interest. With Montaigne came a new attitude. He was born in 1533 and died in 1592, a

period when strong intellectual currents were beginning to flow. Montaigne was not what European scholars today would call a philosophical anthropologist. But he gives evidence of a capacity to discern features of man that had not been noticed before. I could have taken a later figure and could have said, "And then came Hobbes, or Descartes, or even Spinoza." Or I could have chosen an earlier thinker, placing the beginning of the new attitude toward man before the middle of the sixteenth century. But because he is so well known, no one would have served my purpose any better than Montaigne. So I say, "And then came Montaigne." And with him came trouble. For in the isolation of his tower, among his books, he expressed boldly a number of attitudes—or perhaps I should change the phrasing and say that he was one of the fountain-heads of a number of intellectual currents that were shortly to become torrential floods, bringing about what for us, today, constitutes the problem of man.

I shall offer further evidence of my claim in a minute. But before doing so let us consider an important assumption that will be the basis for judging the facts I shall adduce. For unless it is granted, the animadversions I shall offer about our knowledge of man will be rejected altogether. I take it to be true and to be generally agreed that we have no reliable knowledge of a given subject matter when all we are able to produce about that subject are conflicting opinions among which it is not possible to choose, and when we are not able to integrate the various domains or sub-disciplines. *Knowledge is systemic*. If it is not systemic it is not knowledge, it is mere opinion—in the most dyslogistic sense of the term and with heavy emphasis on the "mere." The only bit of knowledge about man that we can hold with con-

fidence is that all our alleged knowledge about him is mere opinion.

The evidence I have in mind regarding our lack of solid knowledge of man is furnished us in the first instance by the condition of the so-called behavioral sciences. If we examine critically their alleged scientific but conflicting results, we find there is no means of choosing among them.

One frequently hears it said that the reason for this undesirable state of affairs is that the social sciences are young. But all that shabby apology does is remind us of what Oscar Wilde said about the United States: "America's youth is its oldest tradition." The youth of the social sciences . . . etc.

In point of fact the social sciences are not young at all. Remember, by contrast, that Galileo died the year Newton was born and that between the life span of these two men, the years of 1564 to 1642 to 1727, classical mechanics was born, came to full maturity and, we may say, achieved perfection. And if anyone should remind me that mechanics was not born with Galileo, that he had predecessors, I shall gladly accept the correction, for I too heard Morris Cohen on the subject and read Gilson, A. C. Crombie, and D. F. Sharp. But whether mechanics was born with Galileo or whether the Italian taught it to walk and brought it out of its diaper stage, its rapid development cannot be denied. Nothing like the same thing can be credited to any of the so-called behavioral sciences. All we find among them is schools, putting forth mere opinion under the fancy wrappings of a scientific method that is impotent to integrate the warring schools and control the growth of the research effort.

The same thing holds, only all the more so, for the *soit-disant* Queen of the Sciences, Divine Philosophy. She was once a truly royal queen. Today, old as she is, she still produces schools of philosophy

with the fertility of her young years. After two and a half millennia opinion still reigns in her Halls. Knowledge is something philosophers have been dreaming about since Thales but they are as close to it today as De Soto ever was to the fountain of youth.

It should be observed that to acknowledge our need for the integration of our knowledge of man is not to express the conviction that it is going to be achieved in the near or even distant future. No such hope can at present be entertained. In matters of this nature prediction is of course foolish but all available signs point today in the opposite direction. What must be expected is an increasing fragmentation of knowledge, a compartmentalization of disciplines. And hovering on the horizon like the streaks of a false dawn and brought about by the integration that is continuously taking place in the physical sciences, is the romantic dream of the unity of science—of knowledge. In any case, at present and for some time to come we must learn to live in Babel.

And here our discussion of the search for a notion of man that ranks as knowledge would end, and with it this paper, were it not for the fact that the urgency of the problem forces us to devise a theory of man although it is granted that the best we can offer is not as good as we need and would like to have.

Having given you warning as to what you may expect from me or, for that matter, from anyone, however learned and powerful a thinker, who advances views of man, let me turn to the substantive question and ask, What is, for one student of philosophy, the problem of man?

I emphasize "one student of philosophy," for it would be folly after the preceding remarks to assert that there is only one problem and not many disparate problems. But among the many, there is one

that seems to me most pressing at the moment because many issues of a practical nature depend on the answer we give it. Let me introduce it by means of a brief quotation. In the November, 1963, issue of *Teachers College Record*, in an article by Dean Edward C. Moore, of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, we find the following statement:

In addition to recognizing that, in a democracy, education belongs to all the people, we must in the second place come to a recognition in depth of the intrinsic worth of each individual. Although this is one of the most universal dogmas in our democratic educational philosophy, it is one to which we give less and less support throughout education.

What is of interest in this statement for our problem is the assertion about the intrinsic worth of the individual. Whether it is true that it is a universal dogma in democratic educational philosophy I am in no position to know. But my guess and my hope is that it is. And this, it seems to me, ought to approach self-evidence. For democracy means nothing unless it means that men are worthy of governing themselves because they are ends, because they are autotelic and not instruments. Deny this hypothesis and you cut the ground from under a democratic commitment seriously espoused. The "dogma," then, as Dean Moore calls it, is not in question. What may be in question is its meaning and its ground.

First its meaning. What must be meant by the intrinsic worth of the individual? It is a worth no one can give him except his Maker. The intrinsic worth of a person cannot be imputed or ascribed to him. He has it whether others or himself acknowledge it. This is the golden thread that runs through the whole length of the fabric of our civilization, the principle of The

Kingdom of Ends, the heritage of Rousseau and Kant, a patrimony that these men inherited from the Judeo-Hellenic tradition, from the Stoic philosophers and the prophets through Jesus. It justifies the Golden Rule. But ancient as it is, its full meaning did not become clear to us until yesterday, as such things go. The worth of a means or instrument depends, not on itself intrinsically but on something external to itself. To be intrinsic, worth must reside in man irrespective of who recognizes it, irrespective of his utility, of his status, his role or rank, the state of his health, the perfection of his body, his mental powers, or any other quality or faculty with which external relations endow him. If a man has intrinsic worth your recognition or denial of it can neither increase it nor diminish it. You cannot add to it by anything you do to him nor take away from it. You may indeed add to his external or extrinsic worth. Heap honors on him and you have added to it. Or increase his wealth or his power or his influence or his popularity. Pin a medal on his chest and you may have enlarged his social worth. But not his intrinsic worth. For his intrinsic worth is something he has by virtue of the fact that he is what he is—a person. And indeed, as I would recommend usage of the word, this is how the word “person” ought to be used, as a normative and not as a descriptive term. And being intrinsic the worth of a person is undefeasible, ineradicable, irrefragable, and inviolable. And this holds for humiliation as well as for honor. No humiliation can erase a man’s intrinsic worth, no dishonor uproot it. It speaks worlds for the Oriental that he puts as much value on face as he is said to do and it speaks worlds for our muddled notion of our true dignity that we put such desperate effort into keeping up with the Jones’s; as if my neighbor next door, who owns three idiot boxes, could

diminish my dignity because I do not own one.

But this is not all, and to bring out what more there is to it let me put it in concrete terms. Consider the angry debate, sometimes the violent struggle, now going on in the United States regarding the equality or inequality of some of our fellow citizens. It is held by some that for biological or psychological reasons Negroes are not the equals of whites. To counter this allegation argument is advanced to prove that the claim of the inequality of the Negro has no factual leg to stand on. The issue, it needs hardly be pointed out, is as to a question of fact. It is not one, therefore, to be disputed on the basis of prejudice or passion in disregard of the fact that the evidence is insufficient to arrive at a categorical conclusion one way or the other, in disregard of rules of inquiry and concern for objective truth. But one would be naïve indeed who expected an argument on this subject to be rationally conducted. In any case, what needs be stated with emphasis is that for the man who asserts the intrinsic worth of the individual the whole question of the *factual* equality or inequality of men or of peoples is utterly irrelevant. Such equality or inequality has nothing whatever to do with the question of the intrinsic worth of the individual. For a man’s or a people’s intrinsic worth cannot be augmented or diminished by the fluctuations of human competence or incompetence. Innate intellectual competence or talent may have relevance to the status and role society assigns to an individual. But if it does, the correlation between intellectual competence and the color of the skin or the slant of the eye will have to be objectively established as it has not yet been. In a society in which equity prevailed, many a well-born yellow-haired child would be put to collecting garbage and many a black-skinned man would be provided with the

opportunities to do research in philosophy or in physics.

It should be clearly noted, however, that from the principle of the intrinsic worth of the individual we cannot deduce, without the aid of additional premises, the belief in the exclusive rightfulness of an egalitarian society. But these additional premises cannot themselves be drawn from the principle of intrinsic worth. This is to say that the intrinsic worth of the individual is compatible with many of the diverse arrangements that men have devised or will in the future devise for the pursuit of their political ends. Social, political, and economic egalitarianism may or may not provide the basis for the best government. However that be, the intrinsic worth of the individual can be as fully recognized in a hierarchical society as in one that seeks to deny the many differences that exist among human beings. Some of these differences can be done away with, some cannot. Further some, whether eradicable or not, are essential to the good life and some add to its quality. Nor does it seem likely that differences in status, roles, and rank will be successfully done away with by men aiming at a complete egalitarianism. True, in our own society we pretend to ignore many of these differences and find a good many of them, when forced to notice them, embarrassing. But while the Western democracies may be aiming at a greater equality than we have already achieved, in the nature of the case total equality cannot be realized. Give each man one vote and what you do is to give the political boss, a Richard Daley or an Adam Clayton Powell, full control over the mass. Nor would the achievement of total social, political, and economic equality, were it possible, insure recognition of the principle of the intrinsic worth of man. The recognition of the intrinsic worth demands respect of each man for the other and men have many means of

humiliating their fellows. What a complete egalitarianism would do is to add to the intolerable strain that the less gifted suffer from, for demands would be made of them that they could not satisfy. It would also add a frustrating restraint on those possessing unusual capacities. To the degree that egalitarianism were successful, it would add up to a universal increase in the political defects under which we already labor.

But if it is the case that belief in the intrinsic worth of the individual is compatible with quite a variety of social and political arrangements, you will ask, why is it important? It is, because of the conduct it prescribes for each toward himself and his fellows. It calls for the institution of the Kantian Kingdom of Ends, it commands that at the moral plane each man treat himself and others as if each were an end and not a means. And what this adds up to in terms of conduct, is the vigilant recognition, on the part of each, of the dignity of the others and of himself.

This, then, is the meaning of belief in the intrinsic worth of the person when we take it seriously. And it is a difficult belief and a burdensome one. For it commits us to the principle that a person's worth is not affected by the judgment we or he himself may pass on his character. It follows from belief in the intrinsic worth of the person that members of Murder, Inc. have intrinsic worth as individuals the equal of the intrinsic worth of the holiest saint in your hagiography; and the same holds for Hitler, Goebels, and the "bitch of Buchenwald," Ilse Koch, no less than for Stalin. Deny this seriously, push the denial to its logical extreme, as it is often done in theory, and you end up, at least in theory, by condoning the systematic elimination of those whom your doctrine holds to be inferior. Fortunately for man such denial seldom finds the means of realizing itself practi-

cally in a wholesale manner. It did in Southern France in the thirteenth century, when under the name of the True Faith it exterminated the Albigensians; it did in Germany in our generation; and it did in the United States in the nineteenth century, under a definition of a good indian which oozed Christian charity. But either my knowledge of history is much more exiguous than I take it to be or the instances are as few as I believe they are.

If this is what must be meant by the intrinsic worth of the individual, it is of the utmost urgency to disclose the grounds on which we must believe such a notion, for if we look at the facts we must conclude that the belief is no part of our animal faith. The religious literalist has no trouble stating his grounds. He asserts that we are the children of God and are therefore of equal worth, or that being God's creatures we all carry a spark of divinity in us. But these grounds are inadmissible to many of us, and I am one of those to whom they are inadmissible. They are inadmissible for two reasons. The first is that I cannot take the language in which they are expressed literally, and when I ask for the literal rendition of the metaphorical language its apparent meaning dissolves in pseudo-factual assertions. The second reason is for me the strongest. The answer assumes that God is an explanatory hypothesis, an assumption I radically reject. God is not a term in an explanation. If God functions in explanations at all, he functions as the end term, the point at which explanations stop once and for all because we have run into the impenetrable darkness, into the ultimate mystery. If we are to find grounds for our beliefs we cannot expect to find them among theological metaphors. And if they cannot be found, the responsible student of philosophy ought to give up his belief. Other men can believe what they please for no reason

whatever. But he cannot assert so prodigious a proposition on the basis of his arbitrary preference.

The full exposition of the grounds on which I hold this belief cannot be undertaken in a paper and much less in the remainder of this paper. They involve explorations that would demand space no editor, however generous, could afford to grant me. Here we have to be content with a very inadequate sketch of the argument. The sketch runs something like this: Man is more than an animal, which is to say, more than a thing. He is a *person*. And the category "person," as I use it, let me iterate, is not a descriptive category, not a scientific category, but a normative one. Which is to say that if we call an animal a person we ascribe to him a special kind of value. And we gather that we do, from our examination of some of the responses of man to himself and to some of his fellow beings. More often than not, perhaps, we place the objects of our response, even though they may be human beings, in the class of things. But some of our social intercourse takes place between ourselves and human beings whom we treat as persons. The difference can easily be seen by observing the treatment accorded his fellow beings by a power maniac and a man who has regard for the dignity of his fellow beings: Between, say, to cite a contrast with which we are all familiar, a teacher who takes his role to be that of a pressgang sergeant and his task to ram his dogmas down his students' throats, and the true teacher, the man who strives to let the student develop from inside outwards. The pressgang sergeant uses others for his own purposes. He often justifies his conduct with elaborate rationalizations that never hide successfully his ugly character. But some of our responses to our fellow beings and to ourselves are of a totally different nature. Or, to put it

more precisely, one of the components of some of our responses to our fellow beings and to ourselves is an ambivalent response of love and hatred. If this is the case, it would only be the basis for claiming, not that persons differ from things but that we respond as if they did. And at this juncture I am confronted with two tasks. I have to show that it is indeed the case that our response to things and our response to persons differ from each other; and since it is the case, I have to account also for the difference by locating the ground of each in the different natures of the objects of our responses.

Strictly speaking we can only respect, or love, or hate, or have contempt for persons, not things. But note that I use the terms "love" and "respect" arbitrarily, as nearly synonymous. Of course it is not improper in English to speak of loving or hating things. It is not improper to say that an undergraduate loves his Jaguar, a rural postman hates an icy road, a hunter loves his rifle. The almost legendary fur trappers and mountain men of the West became so strongly attached to their rifles that they talked to them in the presence of others and, like medieval knights, gave them proper names. Old Bill Williams called his rifle "Old Fetchem" and Davy Crockett named his "Betsy." But the man I get my information from speaks of this phenomenon as "rifle fetishism," thus diagnosing it more or less properly.<sup>1</sup> If we examine with care what we call our love for persons when our human intercourse is not spoiled by neurotic malformations, and compare it with what we call our love of things, we find that the two responses are quite different from each other. When the latter apes our love for human beings it is distinctly neurotic. Whether fetishism or something else, this neurotic condition is fairly common. Items on old dowagers who leave their money to parrots or pug-

nosed pekingese appear frequently in newspapers. They probably do not know it, these sad ladies, but they are sick. In a recent number of *Encounter*, in a paper entitled "The Age of Androids," Mr. G. Rattray Taylor refers to a criterion laid down by Paul Weiss to distinguish a computer which simulates perfectly human behavior from a human being. The difference, said Weiss, is that human beings can love and be loved, whereas androids cannot. It is a pity that Weiss did not add respect to love. Anyway the author of the article refutes Weiss by pointing out that the android could be made to simulate love, and that we all know how easily men treat cars, for instance, or boats, as if they were human; he adds that a child only learns slowly to separate the inanimate from the animate. And for good measure he adds that androids could give behavioral evidence of free will—an expression which he harnesses with quotes.

In Mr. Rattray Taylor's argument we have a new variant of the old problem first proposed, if I am not mistaken, by William James, about the perfect mechanical sweet-heart. The difference is that today's computers come so close to simulating human behavior that the substantive questions that they pose can no longer be shrugged off as if they were "mere academic puzzles." I do not know how Paul Weiss would answer Rattray Taylor; but anyone who knows him knows of his quick and thorough way with bad arguments. And I do not here propose to discuss the problem of free will—a term I do not harness in quotation marks. But to Mr. Rattray Taylor's first two arguments the answers are easy and have already been suggested. Only on a very loose use of the word "love," based on a very coarse conception of the response, can we confuse the love a man may develop for a computer, or car, or boat, or rifle with that

which some men develop for some of their fellow-beings.

A man who loves an android is as much of a fetishist as a man who loves women's shoes, even though he may be a highly paid engineer or a distinguished theoretical physicist. And a man who can only love his fellow-beings as he loves his car or his rifle has failed to develop an important capacity we humans are endowed with. As to the child's slow development of the ability to discriminate animate from inanimate objects, Leibniz's answer in the *New Essays* to one of Locke's arguments against innate ideas, when the transpositions and translations are performed, adequately takes care of this objection. How early or late we learn to make the distinction between the animate and the inanimate, either philogenetically or ontogenetically, is of no relevance so long as we learn to make it, since the distinction is a real distinction between classes of entities that are existents and not merely a verbal distinction. Nor need we deny that biologists may have difficulty in drawing the line between the animate and the inanimate and in some cases may not be able to draw it satisfactorily. Nor do I intend to assert that when once we learn to distinguish between persons and things we include all our fellow beings among the former. The preceding remarks are evidence that I am under no illusion in this respect.

A somewhat similar comment may be made on the notions of man that we find in some central passages of the novels of D. H. Lawrence and Ayn Rand, and in the philosophies of Leibniz and Sartre. Did we have time to consider these views I would have to enter a number of qualifications to the statements I have just made but I would not have to withdraw them or alter them substantially. Nor do these remarks about Lawrence and Ayn Rand and about Leibniz and Sartre refer to hypothetical psychographs of these writers as the

genetic sources of the pictures they give of man; they refer to the fact that the pictures themselves are pictures of malformed, incomplete human beings. When we respond to man *qua* person, our response involves a more or less explicit acknowledgement of his intrinsic worth, whereas when we love things we love them as means. For the purposes of illustrating the point, permit me the solecism of taking an old quip in a stuffy literal manner. The woman who said that diamonds are a girl's best friend did not know what a friend is.

I make this suggestion although, again, I am fully aware that it is not a misuse of the English language to say that diamonds have intrinsic worth, in the sense that they are desirable not for what they bring in exchange but for the sake of their own paradoxical, fascinating, luminous depth. If it were not the case that in a defensible sense things can be said to have intrinsic worth, we would have to accept the sensitive acuity of the then greatest of contemporary critics—communist version—former Premier Nikita Khrushchev. For it is precisely this thesis he denied, when he pressed upon us with the urbanity of a courtier of the *ancien régime* the superiority of socialist realism over the decadent capitalist monstrosities that could have been smeared on the canvas by the tail of an ass. Nor have I quoted, let me say in passing, the choicest morsels from his urbane criticism. But once again, when we examine what is meant by saying that a thing has intrinsic worth, we find that we ascribe to it a value in a complex way. For things satisfy us reflexively or in a self-centered manner. They meet needs of our own. So that the intention of the judgment, so to speak, is directed both toward them as satisfying and toward us as being satisfied by them. But when we respond to a human being as a person we recognize a

value in him that is not related to any reflexive need that may have been afoot preceding our recognition of his value; the value is recognized by the attitude he elicits, an attitude of admiration and respect because he is there irrespective of any prospective use we may have for him.

That this attitude may have a genetic source in biology, as some writers have argued and that it no doubt has a source in the development of the human infant, with his unique endowments, his long dependence, and the perilous stages of his development, need not be denied in order to be able to assert the difference in kind between our responses to persons and to things. It may be retorted, in contradiction to these assertions, that when we ascribe value to a person, it is we who do the ascribing and therefore our response to the person is no less reflexive than our response to things. It must be acknowledged in reply that of course we are the source of the judgment. But the retort is similar in structure to the argument offered in favor of egoism that Bishop Butler exposed and the fallacy it contains is susceptible of identical treatment.

Since language is a potent source of error when dealing with substantive problems of this sort, it is desirable to dwell on this point for a few moments longer in order to suggest explicitly a matter not brought out with sufficient force in the preceding paragraphs. Of course all values give satisfaction to those who acknowledge them as values. Indeed a large number of American philosophers—perhaps the majority of those now living and of the preceding generation—define value as the object of desire or interest, which is to say, as an object or rather, that in an object, which gives satisfaction. But acknowledgement of the value of a person *qua* person is elicited, not by the satisfaction of a pre-existent need of ours—as the value of bread

or a cigarette is—nor even by the satisfaction of a need that is somehow aroused by the stimulus that satisfies it, as it satisfies it, but because the person exhibits a worth which has its source, its locus, and its completion, in himself. The satisfaction that the person gives us arises from the fact that, so to speak, he is there, he is what he is. He elicits our respect, so to put it, gratuitously. Whereas the satisfaction given us by a painting or a diamond when we value it intrinsically, while not exclusively centered in us is not entirely centered in the thing: it finds its resting point in both. It is not then the intrinsic quality of a value without qualification that distinguishes things from persons but the fact that a person has a value in himself and for himself which is acknowledged by us, whereas a thing has intrinsic value in itself but for us.

We have arrived at a point where it is possible to draw an important conclusion. It is this: strictly speaking a person cannot be valued instrumentally. So to try to value him is to value him as a thing and this is to deny his status as person. We can and often do value a man only instrumentally, but when we do we no longer take him to be a person. What we do constantly in human relations is to shift automatically, unaware of what we are doing, from our responses to the other as person to our interest in him as thing. But of course we do not always wrong an individual when we treat him as a thing. Often it cannot be helped. Imagine a burly subway packer during rush hours in Forty-Second Street treating each passenger who is trying to push his way into the car as a person. The flow of trains would grind to a stop, the crowds would overflow from the platform to the street above, the traffic in Times Square would jam to a halt, police whistles would blow in vain, women would scream and faint, and the whole insane congestion would burst into a murderous riot. The conditions of living,

and not merely in a technological society, simply force men to treat one another under some circumstances not as the persons they are but as the things they can easily be turned into. And often, too, we treat individuals as things in order to preserve them as persons. A surgeon who opens up an anaesthetized body and cuts out one of its organs is treating a human being as a thing for the sake of the person. In short, then, the important conclusion is this: We can treat a person as a thing and not diminish his worth as person; but a thing can only be treated as a person as the result of a confusion whose origin is probably some sort of psychological malformation.

Note that in preparing to reach this conclusion I have spoken of love and of hatred. The word "hatred" carries as large a load of disparate meanings as it is possible for a little word to carry. Among them one is of pre-eminent interest to us. I refer to a response to a fellow being when we seek to deny his status as person through humiliation, insult, bodily harm, or perhaps murder. But we would not seek to deny that a man was a person if he were not one. And thus the intensity of our hatred of our fellow beings is the measure of our acknowledgement of that which we would deny—that we cannot take a man's personality away from him. And this is why in human relations total indifference toward a man is more devastating in its effect on him than intense hatred.

Much more could and needs be said about our response to persons, and particularly about its pathology. But I must draw your attention to the second of my two tasks, as indicated above, that of giving reasons for the assertion that men are endowed with intrinsic worth. In the discussion of this problem I shall proceed by indirection. I shall first point out the consequences for our notion of the person of accepting the regnant philosophies of naturalism. But be-

fore doing so it is advisable to note that nothing but the most sketchy and dogmatic account of this difficult question can be undertaken in the remainder of this paper.

On the assumptions of naturalism it is sheer nonsense to claim that persons have intrinsic worth, since for the naturalist the universe is value free. For him all value must be extrinsic. The value we phenomenally find in objects—whether animate or inanimate—is somehow projected upon them by our needs—or desires, or interests, or hormic drives, or some such factor. We can therefore say of a thing or an animal that it has value when an interest in it is somehow projected on it or him because it is taken as an object of prospective satisfaction. I say "somehow," because the process by which the interaction between the interested animal and the interest-satisfying object brings about the appearance of value on the object has never been explained in detail by these philosophers. Thus the value of a man fluctuates with our interest in him or his interest in his own affairs or in his life. And if a man or a people are objects of hatred they have nothing but negative value or disvalue for those who hate them. On this theory a Negro has no value for a Klu-Kluxer or a Jew for a Nazi; or, more precisely put, it follows on these two paradigmatic cases that the objects of hatred have strong negative value for the haters. But if they do, how can we object to the logic of "The Final Solution"? We may not like lynching and may feel a strong revulsion at the thought of the gas chambers and ovens by means of which "The Final Solution" was pursued with great efficiency. But that merely means that we prefer a world in which men do not hate one another on racial grounds. As to the moral superiority of our preference to that of the racists, it is clear that since preferences are pre-conditions of morality one preference by itself cannot be said to be superior to another.

This, then, is for moral philosophy one of the consequences of accepting a naturalistic picture of the universe. Man is no different from his fellow animals and his claim to a privileged rank in the universe is a vestigial remainder of a theocentric picture of the universe that is simply no longer admissible.

But why is it no longer admissible? Because science has no need for notions of teleology, final causes, and values that have or, more precisely, allege to have, ontic status. But should we not add, "for its purposes?" Yes, of course, science, *for its purposes*, has no need for these notions. But it cannot mean that because science has no need for these notions there is no need for them in moral philosophy. It could, on the assumption that there is only one way of knowing, the scientific. This tenet can be defended if we interpret such knowledge as existed prior to the development of science and such knowledge as now exists outside its confines as a sort of embryonic science. And this theory presupposes in turn that pre-scientific knowledge consists of a homogenous body of cogent propositions arrived at by one method only, by a sort of a proto-scientific method. But this is a preposterous contention. Again, to dismiss these metaphysical notions because science has no need for them assumes that what science has no need for does not exist. But this is a philosophical tenet that cannot be proved scientifically. I have argued against it in some detail elsewhere.

This does not mean, of course, that one can set a priori boundaries to the domain of science, in the sense that one can define areas of experience which are closed to its investigation. All modes of experience are open to scientific inquiry—religion, morality, art; any and every conceivable mode of experience is open to scientific investigation. How far science will go is not a question for which prediction is possible. But

it does mean that because of methodological restrictions that are self-imposed and because of goals that are more or less clearly defined before it begins its inquiry, science chooses to disregard certain features of all domains of experience and to concentrate exclusively on others. If, therefore, there be such a thing as the unity of science—and the history of science points in the direction of the unity of the laws of science, and perhaps the unity of the methods, but not at all the unity of the language of science—the achieved unity is not congruous with the unity of knowledge. We need not, therefore, abandon our conviction that man has intrinsic worth on the ground that that conviction is inadmissible to a philosopher whose picture of the universe is drawn in terms of scientific exigencies.

But on what positive grounds, then shall we argue that men are endowed with intrinsic worth? Let me sketch the kind of answer I would give this question in a few lines. The argument runs something like this: Men give evidence of being endowed with capacities that put them ontically on a different plane from that which is occupied by the rest of their fellow creatures. It is these capacities that elicit from them towards their fellows love, or respect, or hatred, or contempt. And among these is the capacity creatively to discover value. Let me confine myself to this, for it is the most important. In all spheres of cultural activity men give evidence of creativity and it is in this creativity that their freedom comes to expression. But I intend the term rigorously. I do not mean to explain what appears to be novelty in terms of intricate shufflings of what already existed. There is genuine novelty in culture. The attempt to analogize freedom or creativity with the kind of choices that the most perfect android is capable of making is simply to underestimate the depth and complexity of the problems the philosopher of culture is up against. The kind

of mind capable of this type of oversimplification is the type that sees no difference between a man's love for his Jaguar or his rifle and for the persons he loves or respects. The android is preprogrammed, however complex be his acts. But was man preprogrammed? Before we can seriously argue this thesis we have to solve the problem of the genesis of man's faculty for the use of symbolic structures and with it his capacity to create culture. And as I have repeatedly pointed out, the word "emergence," which is frequently used to jump the gap, is simply a fig-leaf word.

The sketch would compel me to argue in detail that to do full justice to culture with its genuine novelties we have to posit the hypothesis of freedom or creativity. But all I am doing here is laying down a

hypothesis. Having laid it down we are forced to acknowledge that on its basis what we are actually asserting is an ontological difference between man, the person, and mere things. And it is fundamentally by virtue of this difference that we are able to assert man's intrinsic worth. But these are matters that I have dwelt on at some length and with such technical care as I was able to bring to bear on them in the last part of my *The Moral Life and The Ethical Life*. What is to be found in this third part is ultimately a statement of a position to which in substance I am still committed.

<sup>1</sup>John Meyers Meyers, *Pirate, Pawnee and Mountain Man. The Saga of Hugh Glass*. (Boston, Toronto, 1963) pp. 131-32.