

MORDECAI M. KAPLAN'S THEORY OF
SOTERICS

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The serious critics of Mordecai Kaplan's philosophic efforts have been persistent in their accusations of his purported neglect of metaphysics. Of what value, it is argued, is "an account of the psychological and ethical consequences" of affirming a theology without the metaphysical substructure which deals with "things as a whole," without the belief that there is "something ontological, some affirmation . . . concerning the ultimate nature of things."¹ A theology which does not offer God as "the only tenable explanation of the universe,"² which does not deal with the problems of theodicy, sin, resurrection, and proofs for the existence and attributes of the Deity cannot be considered a theology at all.

It remains the task of this article to analyze and expound Dr. Kaplan's philosophy of "Soterics" precisely as a metaphysical approach and the crux of his theology. Not that this metaphysical analysis concerns itself with Being qua Being, or with speculation over ultimate or first principles which are disclosed trans-experientially by methods differing from those employed by the empirical sciences. Nor does his position involve the traditional schoolman's preoccupation with the transcendental nature of God, freedom and immortality.

Rather we are confronted with an "empirical metaphysics", a philosophic anthropology, which employs concepts of maximum generality in searching for the pervasive traits of the natural world and of human nature upon which may be constructed a defensible ethics and theology. Its root metaphors will be biological and organic, not mechanistic or discrete; its method, scientific; its conclusions, probabilistic, heuristic,

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in principle verifiable. It may be expected, therefore, that this metaphysics will stress growth, creativity, process, and that the theology so intimately connected with it will be naturalistically, humanistically oriented.

Before analyzing the soterical approach itself, it must be set in its historical perspective; for it arose as a contemporary response to the insolubility of the traditional problem inherent in positing the existence and character of a supernatural God. This problem may be stated thus: if there exists an antecedent Being, wholly independent of man, of whom no spatio-temporal attributes may be legitimately predicated, and whose nature lies therefore outside the realm of human experience, in what sense can such a Reality be said to be known by men, in what sense meaningful to men? The very incomprehensibility in human terms of such a supernatural God denies the conditions both for its confirmation and its rejection, and renders the concept logically meaningless as well. Thus the supernaturalist's claim becomes impregnable, by virtue not of its inherent, irresistible logic but of its "logically meaningless" formulation. That equally arbitrary alternate and even contradictory claims to a supernatural Being, each irreconcilable, yet each enjoying the same irrefutability because of their "in principle" unverifiable status, have co-existed in the same epochs, is well-known. The troublesome and often violent history of theological controversy testifies to the dubious victory of such inviolability.

At this point the religious naturalist enters the scene. He cannot accept the belief in a supernatural God on "faith", though he himself, if he is like Dr. Kaplan, may hold at least one unverifiable presupposition. The difference is that, while his assumptions will simply be heuristic principles or hypotheses, subject at all times to question and rejection should they prove unworkable or fruitless, the propositions of orthodox theologians have actual ontological referents, in which the Being referred to is given absolute existential status not subject to doubt.

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Rather the religious naturalist is convinced that the source of all the meaningful attributes of God is nowhere but in the experiences man has with his fellow men and with the rest of the natural world, these experiences differing in content from group to group, from society to society, from place to place. Thus in the very search of mankind for God, because it involves the articulation of the most treasured values in human endeavor and aspiration, the religious naturalist will seek his clues as to the nature of the divine itself.

He may know that when men claim to have experienced a revelation of a supernatural Being, they are unconsciously confusing the reality of the experience with the experience of Reality. He may know that "the Ethiopians make their gods black and snub-nosed, while the Thracians give theirs red hair and blue eyes" (Xenophanes); but he dismisses none of it. For the religious naturalist also knows that the process of reifying man's characteristics, values and ideals, captures and zealously guards for each society its *sancta*, its aspiration levels, its success criteria, its ethical rationale.

It is through this type of naturalistic quest that Dr. Kaplan found a more fruitful and acceptable approach. His theological position is based on the conviction that "by shifting the orientation from the God-concept, a point intended to be outside human experience, to the idea of man, we are likely to make more headway with the problem of salvation"³ and speak more intelligently of the meaning of God. He has decided to take Feuerbach seriously: "If we are to understand religion, we must take as subject what has been taken for predicate and vice-versa."⁴ Man as an *animal symbolicum* speaks of God and thereby enters the world of possibility, oughts and should-be. In worship he extols those elements which better his life and he seeks strength to eliminate the evils which plague it. In his struggle to find himself in this symbolic dimension, man can become more truly human and, thereby, more divine.

The truly revolutionary character of Dr. Kaplan's soterical approach, however, is not in this general application of his

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humanistic focus but, more precisely, in his interpretation of what constitutes personal salvation for every individual. For any man to play at all a significant part in this quest for Divinity in the world at large, he must seek out within himself that which will better his own personal life. Only to the extent to which he consciously realizes every humanizing potentiality in himself, will he attain a measure of personal salvation. Soterics is the study of the nature and method of achieving this end.

Soterics and the Growth Imperative

It is Dr. Kaplan's belief that Soterics can be a framework for salvation for all people regardless of varying personal viewpoints, because it is based on two elemental and compulsive factors in human nature itself on which all can agree: the will to live, which is the more basic, generalized concept, and its corollary, the will to maximum life, understood more specifically as the principle of self-realization. This latter principle is centered in the development of the productive personality of the self on every level:

- a. On the level of the vitalities, the self is an organism of biogenic needs (hunger, sex, etc.) and socio-genic needs (the socially acquired needs like belonging to a group, status etc.), which demand gratification. Those ascetic, celibate, other-worldly philosophies which entirely deny these primary and secondary needs are, from the point of view of Soterics, factors inimical to healthful growth and salvation.
- b. On the level of reason and intelligence, the self functions as the mediator of conflicting interests in the effort to harmonize and channelize the variety of experiences impinging on it. Like the Aristotelian "mean" and the Platonic "sense of justice," the rational exercise allows each impulse the measure of gratification consistent with

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the total welfare. It is the crucial instrument in exploiting the innate potentialities of the self and in its enlargement.

- c. On the level of morale, the self is said to "harbor the values of the spirit or holiness," "the kingdom of ends."⁶ On this level, morale and courage are furnished, supplying that emotive charge which transforms man's ethical, intellectual commitments into action. Here the dramatization of the search for self-actualization is celebrated through ritual and prayer; here the realm of purposes is recognized, articulated and made conscious.

Soterics is thus to be considered a this-worldly "normative science of human life in all its aspects, from the standpoint of verifiable experience."⁶ It is a form of Art in which the diverse levels of human living, as above described, are integrated and each dimension given weight in accordance with the desired goal of the total health, happiness and creativity of the individual. The religious personality is therefore conceived of as an artist molding his self into the highest form, impelled by the soteric imperative to: "Withdraw into your Self and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful yet, act as does the creator of a statue that is to be made beautiful; he cuts away here, he smooths there, he makes this line lighter, this other purer, until a lovely face has grown upon his work. So do you also: cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is overcast, labor to make all one glow of beauty, and never cease carving your statue until there shall shine out on you from it the godlike splendor of virtue, until you shall see the perfect goodness established in the stainless shrine."⁷

In this conception of salvation in terms of the attainment of the maximum good, primarily through the development of the inherent possibilities or potentialities of the organism, Dr. Kaplan has been more influenced by the contributions of recent psychiatry than by the romantic, idealistic metaphysics of self-realization. An increasing number of philosophically oriented

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psychiatrists like Fromm, Horney, Sullivan, Goldstein, have leaned heavily on the self-realization urge in man, in many instances to justify the goal and direction of their therapy and, in their writing, appear to be more concerned with the re-education of the individual personality towards this end than with treatment aimed at simple adjustment to existing conditions.

Kurt Goldstein, a psychiatric pathologist, refers throughout his books to the observation that "an organism is governed by the tendency to actualize as much as possible the individual capacities," and argues that this tendency is "the only drive by which the life of the organism is determined."⁸ Karen Horney, concurring, writes: "Man, by his very nature and of his own accord, strives toward self-realization, and his set of values evolves from such striving." And in other words Erich Fromm articulates the same concept when he states the aim of psychiatric therapy to be "the optimal development of a person's potentialities and the realization of his individuality,"¹⁰ his justification being the belief that "all organisms have an inherent tendency to actualize their specific potentialities."¹¹

This relationship between health and salvation (i. e. self-realization) is not peculiarly new in religious philosophy. It is perhaps no etymological accident that the term salvation in so many languages is integrally related to the idea of "healing."¹² The central idea of salvation as "making whole" or a "re-establishment of a whole thing that was broken, disrupted, disintegrated"¹³ has, however, been given a naturalistic cast in Soterics. The integrated development of the self-productive personality is now understood in religious terms as the quintessential ingredient in spiritual growth and the realization of the divine principle in man.

At this point, certain questions with respect to this approach have perhaps begun to be raised:

a. If to try to realize the maximum life is inherent in the nature of man, why Dr. Kaplan's soterical imperative to bring it about? There should appear to be no special need

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to recommend any action in accordance with human nature, since it is something which apparently no one can avoid doing.

The answer lies in the understanding that the drive for "maximum life" or self-realization is a generalized one inherent in human nature, and comprises many specific levels of activity on the part of the self which may require mediation. As for all specific impulses, self-consciousness and the use of reason are necessary for two reasons: to learn the best and surest way to satisfy them, and to learn how to integrate the demands of any one impulse to the total welfare of the organism at any given time. Thus, for Dr. Kaplan, the degree to which the individual can succeed in attaining his salvation depends upon the extent to which he has both sensitivity and self-awareness. The need to possess these two traits is what persuades Dr. Kaplan to call for the "artistic dimension" in man to achieve his measure of the divine.

b. Is not the concept of self-realization too vague and ambiguous to be of value as a basis for Soterics? It would seem that, whether one acts one way or the other, some natural capacity will be realized; and to actualize all the latent capacities of man offers no methodological directive whereby to judge conflicting directions of fulfillment. As Henry Sidgwick, commenting on the self-realization theories of Green and Spencer put it: "The sinner realizes capabilities, in this broad sense (of self-realization) as much as the saint."¹⁴

It should be said in answer that the concept of maximum life or self-realization is not meant to be the sole characteristic of man, but represents rather that which is essentially human in man's nature. Salvation, therefore, does not depend on the fulfillment of any and every impulse indiscriminately, but the fulfillment of the potential of the organism in such a healthful fashion as will aid the individual in achieving the maximum good. How

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this maximum good is defined will depend on the individual's culture and its institutions at any given stage.

However, in a complex society such as ours, where differing criteria may co-exist, the problem of choosing from particular modes of behavior is aggravated. Horney, Fromm and the others previously mentioned frequently invoke "creativity," "spontaneity" or "productivity" as standards to distinguish between behavior leading to healthy development and that leading to stagnant or self-destructive conditions. Unfortunately, these terms (creativity, etc.) themselves seem to be defined as that which is self-fulfilling or that which leads to further growth and development. Clearly this is circular, and the need for clearly defined criteria is not therewith obviated.

Nevertheless, the proponents of the self-realization theory seem to have a pragmatic solution to this problem, implying experimentation and trial and error. While the positive characterization and criteria of self-realization remain ambiguous, the negative aspects (ill-health, anxiety phenomena etc.) are more precise. Significantly, they appear to make a presupposition which can be detected underlying their analyses, namely, that where self-realization is not in the direction of general health and well-being, the organism will manifest symptoms of disorder. Be it a subjective report of unhappiness, or a specialist's diagnosis of neurotic traits, or the appearance of psychosomatic ills, something will manifest itself. Thus, whether growth is healthful or inimical is not a matter of caprice, but is rooted in the constitutive demands of the organism.

Moreover, there is the further implication that there are such curative powers in the organism that when the proper corrective directives are applied, either by oneself or through a specialist, the organism will respond with well-being. Karen Horney expresses this belief that there are "curative forces inherent in the mind as well

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as the body, and that in cases of disorder of body or mind, the physician merely gives a helping hand to remove the harmful and to support the healing forces."¹⁵ In the language of Dr. Kaplan, the "psychoanalyst and the artist have in common the giving of new form to what is by identifying in what is and eliciting from it that which can and ought to be."¹⁶

However, even if we establish a degree of internal consistency within the theory of self-realization, there is one further, crucial problem to be faced: the existence of an urge to self-realization is far from being accepted as a verified datum by the entire scientific world. The consequences of this doubtful status for Soterics will be more completely discussed (along with other problems held in common) in dealing with the more fundamental principle, the will to live.

The Will to Live

If the self-realization principle of Soterics is characteristic of the distinctively human species, it may be said that the will to live is common to all living forms. It must be noted at the outset, however, that the nature of this Spinozistic "endeavor to preserve one's own being" is not quite clear. The examples of its manifestations offered by Dr. Kaplan lead one to assume that it is intended by him to be an empirical datum; for example: "The healing of a wound, whether in a tree or in a living being, is a manifestation of an organic urge."¹⁷ Moreover, since it is innate and, in its original form, "not meant to be conceived of as a conscious purpose of living beings,"¹⁸ it would appear to take the form in human beings of a generalized instinct, understood as a complex, purposeful, motivating force, "a faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends without previous education in their performance."¹⁹

It is of the essence for Dr. Kaplan to ground both the will to live as well as the will to maximum life (self-realization) in

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human nature, in the organism itself, for these data are intended to serve as the reliable, generic base for a normative universe of discourse among all mankind, regardless of the differing forms of specific societies. Thus, while given societies would supply varying norms in the achievement of salvation, the entire world would still be in a position to judge their efficacy.

However, as for the self-realization principle, agreement as to the existence of a general self-preservative urge in organisms is far from settled in psychological literature. Erich Fromm may state that "the desire to live is inherent in every organism and man cannot help wanting to live regardless of what he would like to think about."²⁰ But another eminent psychiatrist, Menninger, argues that "the best theory to account for all the presently known facts is Freud's hypothesis of a death instinct."²¹ And Muzafer Sherif writes what might apply to both the preceding: "Such dramatic-sounding instincts as the instincts of death and destruction cannot be subjected to the check of controlled investigation."²² It is clear therefore that, from an empirical point of view, considerable doubt is also cast upon the urge to self-preservation as the grounds for normative unity.

The difficulty with this latter "urge" seems to lie in making it a generalized designation of reactions to specifically bodily demands or deficits which, in fact, may only coincidentally have self-preservative value. To reify as motive that which may well be a contingent by-product is as unwarranted here as in the claim of a purposeful perpetuation of the species on the basis of a mating or sex instinct.

Further, the will to live, unqualified, may easily be perverted into a pathological drive, an unfettered egoism destructive of the nobler social values. It is in this respect that Kurt Goldstein views the self-preservative drive as "essentially characteristic of sick people," as symptomatic of "anomalous life, of the decay of life." While it may be that "sometimes the normal organism also tends primarily to avoid catastrophe . . . this takes place under inadequate conditions and is not at all usual behavior."²³

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Anticipating such difficulties, Dr. Kaplan has sought to argue that the self which is being preserved includes the higher "ideal self" of social values as well as the self of the vitalities. "The truth is," he writes, "that the will to live is bi-polar. It is as given to self-spending as to self-preservation."²⁴ By thus subsuming the socially imposed nature of the self under the single category of the preservation of the self, Dr. Kaplan intends to avoid the embarrassment which confronted those Idealistic philosophers who formulated reasonably similar self-realization theories (Bosanquet, Green, Bradley, Royce). But at the same time, some strength is sapped from the effort to make self-preservation stem out of the original nature of the organism itself. There is undeniably a significant measure of truth in Mill's statement that "every respectable attribute of humanity is the result not of instinct but of the victory over instinct."²⁵

However, even were there to be no question whatsoever as to the empirical status of these "urges," a serious gap in the position would exist all the same. For the mere universal agreement as to the empirically verified character of human nature in no way entails or guarantees universal agreement that human nature ought be fulfilled. It appears to be the case that in any normative system there is a logical priority of value to fact. Thus, even were it to be established that a death instinct does in fact operate, it is doubtful whether Dr. Kaplan would legitimate it as a normative base. That Dr. Kaplan assigns a telic significance to these two factors, (i. e. will to live and will to self-realization) namely, that their purpose lies in their fulfillment, does not make the leap from the descriptive to the normative any the less unwarranted.

Presuppositions of Soterics

Nevertheless, it would truly be regrettable were our difficulties with both the will to live and the will to maximum life to cause us to overlook the genuine contributions which Soterics can make as a "common hypothetical method of

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achieving salvation," as Dr. Kaplan puts it. Recognizing the problems, it appears reasonable to suggest the abandonment of these "wills" treated as verified data, and their acceptance as hypothetical outgrowths of a metaphysical substructure, the basic presuppositions of Dr. Kaplan's ethics and theology. This metaphysical substructure would contain at least three major presuppositions:

- a. There exist certain universal biological, psychological and social needs and interests in man.
- b. The integrated gratification of these needs and interests is a value;
- c. The world is so salvation-conditioned as to enable their gratification.

Such metaphysical presuppositions are, of course, not even subjects for verification in the scientific sense, not by virtue of their meaninglessness, but because the nature of these presuppositions has nothing to do with truth or falsity but rather with pragmatic efficacy. It must be carefully noted that these principles are unlike the unverifiable propositions of supernaturalism, for they make no claim whatsoever to existential or ontological status. Their use is regulative and heuristic, not substantive and constitutive; and they are themselves subject to rejection should they not prove fruitful.

Soterical presuppositions are vindicated on the same grounds as are, let us say, the principles of induction or of the uniformity of nature made by science itself. It has more than once been pointed out that "all knowledge which on a basis of experience tells us something about what is not experienced is based upon a belief (inductive principle) which experience cannot confirm or confute, yet which . . . appears to be as firmly rooted in us as many facts of experience."²⁸

The presuppositions themselves ought now to be more closely examined:

- a. Requisite to the construction of a universal ethics, "a kind of valuational Esperanto," is the recognition of

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certain universal needs (innate) and interests (acquired). This might well direct the attention of Soterics to such well-accepted but simpler biological drives as hunger, sex, thirst, among others, and to such social-psychological interests as status and role-taking. The generalized formulations of the will to live and the will to maximum life would be considered hypotheses subject to further study, and not so critically necessary to Soterics should they prove untenable.

Investigation in this direction should also lead to a clearer understanding of the nature of the self, a basic category in the Soterics of Dr. Kaplan; for the essence of value appears to be judged in terms of the activities and behavior contributory to the actualization of the self's natural tendencies. It is the self which experiences desires and impulses and seeks their satisfaction, and it is the self which, in a manner of speaking, is also experienced, becoming an object unto itself, in that it evaluates the consequences of its behavior and organizes its value system. The self might be said, then, to contain the material, formal, final and efficient causes of its being. This is a distinctively humanistic element in Soterics, portraying as it does the self as an active agent, an artist creating its salvation, in proper contrast with the quietistic, passive role of the self which merely awaits other-worldly salvation.

However, much study into this vital category is made necessary by Soterics, since the self is so complex and multifunctional in nature. A central problem remains as to the proper balance in the assignment of value to the varying aspects of the self as both an egoistic and a social entity.

- b. The presupposition that the balanced and integrated gratification of human needs and interests is valuable appears as central to many naturalist theories of value. Certainly merely descriptive, inductively confirmable

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knowledge concerning means and ends never in itself entails normative conclusions. Taken together, however, the first and the second presuppositions make it sensible to argue on the basis of the predicted consequences of a given action in terms of the total health picture by assuring a common response from all rational men. Thus, the utilitarian's argument about pleasurable or painful consequences could not affect the agent who neither experiences nor sets a value on pleasure or pain. Nor could a contemporary argument against behavior leading to human destruction be successful against those who deny the desirability of the maintenance of the life of species *homo sapiens*.

Moreover, in stating that the source of value lies in the integrated satisfaction of the needs and interests of the organism, Dr. Kaplan, among other naturalists, is proposing an indissoluble relationship between salvation and health. Physical and mental hygiene and the religious ethics of Soterics are not related simply by analogy. What is healthful and what is moral are one and the same questions, employing the same criteria.

With the successful advent of psychiatric therapy, the relationship between mental and moral hygiene has been reinforced. Many an unethical act is understood as a manifestation of illness. We have begun to recognize this in our evaluation of compulsive gamblers, sadists, alcoholics, psychopathic murderers, kleptomaniacs and so on. The psychological names given to these "vices" have taken them out of the category of simple sin and put them into the psychiatric laboratories. Murder and theft certainly still are evil, but now understood not vaguely in terms of theology but in terms of the consequences for the total functioning of the organism.

There are, of course, certain ethical problems which, insofar as the individual is more remotely involved, are different from those previously mentioned; but the differ-

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ence is one of kind rather than of degree. There is, to be sure, less likelihood for a patient to argue against the physician prescribing treatment than there is for the moral agent to argue against the ethicist on the relative merits of democracy, peace or war, slum clearance or the extension of social security. This is because the patient's pain is intense, personal and pressing; the results of the prescription are relatively immediate and often known to produce the desired relief, and the problem is more readily isolable and less complex.

To argue, however, that democracy is superior because it is more productive than totalitarianism, or to condemn war because it destroys potential forces of creativity and stability, requires an evaluation of remote consequences. These consequences, from the moral viewpoint, are no less important than immediate ones; but it requires the wisdom of foresight and an understanding of the nature of social and individual welfare.

In situations where the factors of intensity and proximity are attenuated, education of the individual as to the inter-relatedness of events not directly affecting him and as to the far-reaching consequences of decision needs be planned more skillfully. The penetration of psychiatry, its methods and therapy into the field previously monopolized by abstract analyses or dogmatic theology is a good omen for Soterics. The soterical emphasis on total (mental, physical, and moral) health as the heart of personal salvation adumbrates the dominant theme of naturalist religion and theology.

- c. The soterical presupposition of a salvation-conditioned universe so patterned as to contain the means of satisfying man's craving for self-realization is fundamental to its religious emphasis. It points to the distinguishable events in the universe which, as men, we recognize as contributory to human growth and to which we owe natural allegiance.

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Appreciation of and natural piety towards such isolable powers for human salvation does not mean to eliminate the reality of evil. It serves to emphasize not that Reality is good, but that goodness is real.²⁷ The "given-ness" of societal and non-human environments which man "takes" as contributory to value is meant to deny as false the conviction of some that the universe is essentially hostile to human ends. In the same spirit as Dr. Kaplan, Van der Leeuw extols the universe experienced as good by pointing to "water and trees, the fruit of the fields and beasts in the forest (as) bringers of salvation; the force issuing from their power transforms the gloom of life into joy and happiness Culture too is 'salvation,' that is a deed which is willed or volitional."²⁸

This particular presupposition was referred to by Dr. Kaplan himself as a soterical "inference," an acknowledged "willed faith," pragmatically understood. As the purposes of adequacy, intersubjectivity and consistency serve to vindicate the inductive principle, so the purposes of salvation alone justify the sentiment that "man's cosmos is *en rapport* with the human will to salvation."²⁹ The moral optimism of such a salvation principle is, like the principle of induction, motivational and directive. It offers man a structure of expectancies creating belief in the possibilities of human experience which inspire men to achieve that end.

This morale is not even intended to make men good, but specifically to keep them strong. In the language of the pragmatic maxim, Dr. Kaplan asserts that "insofar as the belief in God makes a difference in a person's life or in the life of a group, it must have consequences in the domain of effectiveness."³⁰ What working principle, which sustains human endeavor whether in science or religion, is not inclined to interpret reality as somehow amenable to the aspirations of men?

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Morale in Reconstruction

John Stuart Mill stated unequivocally the problematic in the naturalist's reconstruction of traditional supernaturalism: "It needs be considered whether in order to obtain the effective morale resulting from supernaturalist faith, it is necessary to travel beyond the boundaries of the world which we inhabit; or whether the idealization of our earthly life, the cultivation of a high conception of what it may be made, is not capable of supplying a poetry, and in the best sense of the word a religion, equally fitted to exalt the feeling and, with the same aid from education, still better calculated to ennoble the conduct, than any belief respecting unseen powers."³¹

The problem is poignantly presented. Once a man is informed that faith in a salvational cosmos is an instrument which gains for us moral optimism and strengthens our hearts, does not his prayer become too self-conscious? Will anyone recite *geshem* (prayer for rain) knowing full well that no palpable favors will ensue, that it may only serve to direct his feelings of gratitude to an indispensable natural force?

The naturalist must recognize the problem as formidable. Still, it is too late for him to turn back and pretend that neither philosophy nor science has made its inroads. Those religious personalities committed to a naturalist position cannot afford the luxury of bemoaning the loss of a certain type of morale attendant on the supernaturalist's faith, the more since many other consequences of such belief are entirely dysfunctional.

The reconstructing naturalist needs rather invade new areas of morale and plan new interpretations of symbols and rites so as to compensate for the loss of comfort and ease afforded by facile conformity to convention. The observation of the sociologist, Robert Merton, is of interest in this respect: "Those functionalists who . . . attend only to the effects of such symbolic practices [rituals] upon the individual state of mind . . . neglect the fact that these very practices may on

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occasion take the place of more effective alternatives. And those theorists who refer to the indispensability of standardized practices or prevailing institutions because of their observed function in reinforcing common sentiments must look first to functional substitutes before arriving at a conclusion, more often premature than confirmed."³² It is in such a fruitful direction that Soterics impells us to explore.

In the midst of public religious apathy, in the sight of piece-meal emendations, false sentiments and half-truths, the religious naturalist needs base his morale on the wisdom of the past and the vision of a future. "The sun shines today also. There is more food and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship."³³

¹ Milton Steinberg, "Theological Problems of the Hour", *Rabbinical Assembly Proceedings*, Rabbinical Assembly of America, New York, 1949, p. 378.

² Milton Steinberg, *The Common Sense of Religious Faith*, (pamphlet), Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, Inc., New York, 1947, p. 12.

³ From a manuscript as yet unpublished, by M. M. Kaplan, tentatively entitled *The Art of Being Human*.

⁴ L. Feuerbach, quoted in H. Höffding, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Macmillan, London, 1915, vol. II, p. 277.

⁵ *The Art of Being Human*, manuscript, p. 60a.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁷ Plotinus, *The Essence of Plotinus*, MacKenna tr., Oxford University Press, New York, 1934, p. 49.

⁸ Kurt Goldstein, *The Organism*, American Book Co., New York, 1939, p. 196.

⁹ Karen Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, W. W. Norton, New York, 1950, p. 15.

¹⁰ Erich Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1950, p. 74.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹² *Saos* in Greek; *salvus* in Latin; *Heil* in German. Interestingly, too, soteriology, in the study of hygiene, refers to the laws of health.

¹³ Paul Tillich, *The Relation of Religion to Health*, paper presented at University Seminar on Religion, Columbia University, 1945-6, p. 349.

¹⁴ *Lectures on the Ethics of T. H. Green*, H. Spencer and J. Martineau, Macmillan, London, 1902, p. 64.

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¹⁵ Karen Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, p. 348.

¹⁶ M. M. Kaplan, *The Art of Being Human*, p. 112.

¹⁷ M. M. Kaplan, "Toward a Philosophy of Cultural Integration", in *Approaches to Group Understanding*, ed. Bryson et al., Harper & Bros., New York, 1947, p. 603.

¹⁸ M. M. Kaplan, "The Need for Normative Unity in Higher Education" in *Goals for American Education*, ed. Bryson et al., Harper & Bros., New York, 1950, p. 308.

¹⁹ William James, *Principles of Psychology*, Henry Holt, New York, 1931, vol. II, p. 383.

²⁰ E. Fromm, *Man For Himself*, Rinehart & Co., New York, 1947, p. 18.

²¹ Karl Menninger, *Man Against Himself*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York, 1938, p. 13.

²² Muzafer Sherif, *An Outline of Social Psychology*, Harper & Bros., New York, 1948, p. 20.

²³ Kurt Goldstein, *The Organism*, p. 197.

²⁴ M. M. Kaplan, *The Need for Normative Unity*, p. 312.

²⁵ John Stuart Mill, "Essay on Nature", in *Three Essays on Religion*, Henry Holt, New York, 1874, p. 46.

²⁶ Bertrand Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1948, p. 69.

²⁷ All the more puzzling is Henry Wieman's claim that Dr. Kaplan identifies the universe with God or goodness and is thus "forced to defend his belief in the goodness of the universe against the facts of evil." *Review of Religion*, XIV, no. 1. [Prof. Wieman has apparently revised his views. Compare above, pp. 263-281.—Eds.]

²⁸ G. Van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and in Manifestation*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1938, pp. 101, 104.

²⁹ M. M. Kaplan, *The Future of the American Jew*, Macmillan, New York, 1948, p. 193.

³⁰ M. M. Kaplan, *The Art of Being Human*, p. 75.

³¹ J. S. Mill, "The Utility of Religion", in *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 105.

³² Robert Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1949, p. 37.

³³ Ralph Waldo Emerson, quoted in Morris R. Cohen's *A Dreamer's Journey*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1949, p. 180.