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EPILOGUE

As we step back to reflect on the mass of material we have surveyed in the chapters of this book, one conclusion is inescapable: religion is through and through a *human* preoccupation. This is not to say, of course, that religion's transcendent referents are unreal, for that judgment lies beyond the competence of the psychologist. But what cannot be denied is how comprehensively religion reflects ordinary human experience: of the body and other aspects of the self; of other human beings and a person's relation to them; and of the many facets of the natural world. Religion makes little sense considered apart from this human context, although the word "religion," because it so easily suggests an abstracted essence, tempts us to overlook how pervasively influential this context is. Thus it is that we have preferred the terms *religious faith* and *religious tradition,* in order to remind ourselves that religion cannot be separated from its personal and cultural expressions. Instead of saying that *religion* does this or that, we should remember that *human beings* do what is done, out of perceptions and motives that we have come to call religious.

A corollary of this fundamental insight is religion's *diversity,* which appears limited only by the structure and capacities of the human body and by the outer boundaries of human inventiveness. Various specialists in the study of religion have brought home for us the multiformity of the world's religious traditions. What psychologists of religion are peculiarly competent to demonstrate is the reign of diversity among *individuals,* even within a single tradition. Indeed, we might say that documenting and accounting for these individual differences is the task that has most engaged psychologists of religion.

Diversity is characteristic of these researchers as well, as the dizzying array of psychological perspectives composing this book well testifies. The biographical emphasis of this work is intended to demonstrate how our perspective in psychology emerges from our personal disposition and life experience. These pervasive factors influence the presuppositions we adopt, the questions we ask, the methods we employ. More particularly, they shape what we take religion to be and how we go about studying it. Just as with religious faith, so with psychological perspectives: tracing out their origins does not invalidate them. At the same time, such an

exercise should sensitize us to the thoroughgoing relativity of any point of view, religious or psychological, including our own.

Our most immediate response to the diverse perspectives of this book is thus likely to be deeply personal. Greenberg and Mitchell (1983, p. 407) say that a "Theory stands or falls on how compelling it appears to be, on its underlying vision of human life. Does the theory speak to you? Does it seem to account for your deepest needs, longings, fears?" At the very least, Hocking (1912, p. xiii) suggests, any theory claiming to be true ought to be *interesting*: "A proposition that falls on the mind so dully as to excite no enthusiasm has not attained the level of truth." Furthermore, "If a theory has no consequences or bad ones; if it makes no difference to men, or else undesirable differences; if it lowers the capacity of men to meet the stress of existence, or diminishes the worth to them of what existence they have; such a theory is somehow false." The test is not mere agreeableness, Hocking quickly adds, but conservation of the creative power that comes with the deepening of consciousness and the sensing of possibilities and risks in human existence.

Beyond these pragmatic and highly individual criteria are the more general principles of evaluation we have employed at various points throughout this book. Most important is the perspective's phenomenological adequacy. How large a range of religious experience and practice does it take into account? How faithfully does it represent these phenomena as they actually occur in human lives? The range is regrettably narrow in many instances, and in their enthusiasm for reduction, some of our commentators have neglected to reconstruct the complexity of religion as it is lived. Thus their generalizations about religion are often ill founded or too sweeping. Nevertheless, there is something to be learned from each of the approaches, and collectively, they touch on an impressive array of religious manifestations. If no one of these perspectives is adequate in itself, together they illuminate a large portion of the landscape of human piety.

A SUMMARY SCHEMA

In Chapter 2, as a way of orienting ourselves within the psychology of religion, we identified two fundamental trends: the descriptive and the explanatory. Now that we are better acquainted with the various theories or perspectives that constitute this field, as well as with certain fundamental principles, we are prepared to consider a more technical schema for ordering the contents of this book. This schema, it will become apparent, can serve to classify both individuals and psychological approaches. Although our chief interest here is in clarifying the formal perspectives, a framework that links them to personal views will serve once again to underscore the role of the personal equation. This framework will also direct our attention to some perennial problems encountered by this field.

The various approaches can be roughly located in a two-dimensional space defined in terms of two fundamental variables (see Table E.1). The vertical axis specifies the degree to which the objects of religious interest are explicitly granted participation in a transcendent reality or, to the contrary, are limited to processes immanent within the mundane world.[1] The horizontal axis indicates how consis-

[1] We might be tempted to use Piaget's (1930) typology of religious attitudes—transcendence versus immanence—to define this dimension, but as Wilfred Smith (1988) cogently argues, the two terms are not mutually exclusive. Beauty, for example, transcends any particular instance of it while yet being immanent within the beautiful object (p. 11).

Table E.1 **SUMMARY SCHEMA OF VIEWS IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION**

	Literal	Symbolic
Inclusion of Transcendence	**Literal Affirmation** (religious fundamentalism) correlational psychology 1	**Restorative Interpretation** (conjunctive faith) phenomenology interpretive psychology analytical psychology 4
Exclusion of Transcendence	2 sociobiology medical materialism theoretical behaviorism (rational fundamentalism) **Literal Disaffirmation**	3 Erikson's ego psychology humanistic psychologies object-relations theories orthodox psychoanalysis **Reductive Interpretation**

tently the expressions of religion faith—whether beliefs, images, or rituals—are interpreted either literally or symbolically. It is not accidental that the objective approaches in psychology are grouped together at the literal end, for in denying itself direct access to human subjectivity, the objective attitude sharply limits its capacity to comprehend metaphoric or symbolic meaning.

Four Fundamental Attitudes

Literal Affirmation: The two dimensions define four basic attitudes toward religion. The upper left quadrant represents affirmation of the literal existence of the religious objects, a position most clearly embodied by religious fundamentalism. Elements of this posture also appear among those who are not particularly conservative. As James Barr (1978) observes, many mainstream Christians, though not requiring that all the events and sayings in the Bible be literally true, "just want so much to be told that at least this one really happened, that at least this one saying was really uttered by Jesus. . . . They do not want to hear that stories are legends, or that they emerged from the consciousness of the primitive church." This "conservatism of the committed," though not fundamentalist, still shares in "the basic cultural structures upon which fundamentalism also devéloped" (p. 334). Of the psychological approaches we have studied, only the correlational one might be thought to belong in this first quadrant, both because its questionnaires have tended to define religion in literalistic terms and because much research of this type has been carried out in defense of more or less conservative views. It is nev-

ertheless placed near the other quadrants in recognition of important exceptions to these trends, such as Batson's Quest scale, Hood's Mysticism Scale, and above all, the questionnaire that Hutsebaut (1996a) designed to operationalize the attitudes represented by this schema.

The research and reflections of many contributors to this book form a virtual consensus that, however sincere and high-minded religious fundamentalists may be, their position does not fare well under psychological scrutiny. It is the literal believers who tend to score higher on measures of prejudice, we may recall, and to be rated lower on level of cognitive development. Pratt and Pruyser, among others, consider such literal belief a fundamental error. Although the posture of "naive credulity" may reflect intellectual immaturity, as in the instance of the child, if not enduring personal incapacity, the milieu frequently sets limits beyond which only an exceptionally courageous, independent, and capable mind can see. The personal costs of the fundamentalist outlook may be considerable, judging from the reports of those who have joined Fundamentalists Anonymous. "The harm that has been done to souls," writes Paul Ricoeur (1960), "during the centuries of Christianity, first by the literal interpretation of the story of Adam, and then by the confusion of this myth, treated as history, with later speculations, principally Augustinian, about original sin, will never be adequately told" (p. 239). The interpersonal costs are considerable, too, for as Barr (1978) points out, the fundamentalist ideology can be sustained only by rejecting, as thinkers and as religious persons, all those who doubt the validity of the conservative view (p. 315). What orthodox believers forget, remarks Sabatier (1897), are the historical and psychological factors that condition *all* doctrines. As a field dedicated to the clarification of such factors, the psychology of religion has naturally not been well received among the conservatively religious.

Literal Disaffirmation: Like persons in the first quadrant, those in the second one assume that religious language is to be understood in a literal way. They differ by rejecting rather than affirming what is written or said. Religious fundamentalists may seem themselves to fall into Quadrant 2 in relation to any religious system other than their own. But they do not really belong here, for the permanent residents of this quadrant are distinguished by their resolute rejection of all claims of revealed truth. Speaking as a proponent of this position, which he calls "rational fundamentalism," anthropologist Ernest Gellner (1992) says that it desacralizes everything and excludes the miraculous along with all other privileged facts, individuals, and institutions. If anything is absolutized, he says, it is rational fundamentalism's formal principles of knowledge, or scientific method.

Fundamentalism, Wilfred Smith (1988) suggests, is the religious response to a waning sense of transcendence. "It is the disastrously mistaken supposition that the mundane forms are themselves the transcending reality" (p. 14). Still more calamitous, some would argue, is the position of literal disaffirmation, which in its literalness, utterly cuts itself off from the resources of religious metaphor. Although Stanley Hall (1917), for example, placed belief in a "literal flesh and blood Jesus" low on the pedagogic scale, he nevertheless considered such "objectivizations . . . vastly better than aloofness or negation" (p. viii). "It is better to believe with men who have a childish conception of God," agrees Raymond Cattell (1938) in his book on the religious quest, "than to make the greater error of not believing at all" (p. 185).

Behavioral and social scientists seem particularly prone to this error. As Donald

T. Campbell (1975) observes, they often match the fundamentalist's scriptural literalism with an opposing literalism of their own. "Because such behavioral scientists no longer believe in what they assume to be the literal referents of religious words, they lose sight of the possibility that these words refer to truths for which there is no literal language," truths that "must be metaphorically or figuratively expressed if to be communicated at all." The modern philosopher's humble and relativistic understanding of human knowing, says Campbell, could help these scientists be more open to truths that are expressed through metaphor or other nonscientific language (pp. 196–197).

Most clearly exemplifying literal disaffirmation are such theoretical behaviorists as Vetter and Skinner. Belonging in Quadrant 2 as well are the "medical materialists," who conclude from the findings of neuropsychology that religion is nothing but a matter of disordered physiology. Although sociobiologists such as Edward Wilson show a similar inclination toward literal disaffirmation, Campbell's sociobiologically based argument for the adaptive value of traditional religious teachings wins sociobiology a somewhat higher position in this quadrant.

In Chapters 6 and 7 we reviewed some of the psychological correlates of the position of literal disaffirmation, identified in the literature variously as the indiscriminately antireligious orientation or simply atheism. We saw, for example, that persons who score low on both Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religious Orientation scales tend to be less dogmatic and more intellectual than many of the religious subjects. We also learned that the atheistic position is often motivated by a loss or other deep disappointment early in life. Many of Vetter and Green's (1932) atheists, it may be recalled, reported parental loss or unhappy childhoods. Among the 50 alumnae of a women's college whom Frank Barron (1963) assessed 25 years after they graduated, the seven atheists stood out not only for their devotion to thinking and extremely high scores on intelligence tests, but also for the "sharp disillusionment" and "terrible sense of loss" that marked an adolescent religious crisis recurringly associated with death or desertion by the father. At least for this group of women, says Barron, "Atheism seemed to represent disappointment in the father, anger against him, repudiation of a need for his love, and affirmation of the self alone as sufficiently potent to carry on in life" (p. 155). Indeed, compared to the rest of the sample, a larger proportion of them lived alone—six of the seven—and claimed to like it.

For another phase of his research, Barron used the Inventory of Personal Philosophy, which contains four religious belief scales: Fundamentalist Belief and Fundamentalist Disbelief—equivalent to Quadrants 1 and 2—as well as Enlightened Belief and Enlightened Disbelief. In a group of 100 military officers, high scorers on *either* fundamentalism scale tended to be rated as rigid and low in ability to adapt. In addition, the Fundamentalist Disbelief scale, with items highly reminiscent of the antireligious prose of Watson and Vetter, was negatively correlated with capacity to evaluate ideas, intelligence ratings (based on handwriting), and fair-mindedness. The switch in direction of disbelief's relation to intellectual capacity or interests, when disbelief takes the extreme and angry form measured by this scale, suggests the likely possibility of alternative paths to literal disaffirmation.

Reductive Interpretation: The designations of Quadrants 3 and 4 are derived from the work of Paul Ricoeur (1965), who proposes that modern hermeneutics faces two opposing though potentially complementary tasks: on the one hand, *reduction* or demystification, in order to clear away from religious symbols the excrescence of idolatry and illusion; and on the other hand, *restoration* or recollec-

tion of meaning, so that the object of suspicion may once again become an object of understanding and faith. This is a "rational faith," to be sure, because it interprets, yet it is a faith nevertheless because "it seeks, through interpretation, a second naïveté" (p. 28). In isolation and in its most resolute form, reductive interpretation stands with literal disaffirmation in denying reality to the transcendent referent of religious language and practice. It then goes beyond this merely negative stance to claim a privileged perspective on what it considers to be the true, hidden, and wholly mundane meaning of religion's myths and rituals. The clearest and most aggressive example of this reductionistic approach is represented by Freud and his orthodox followers (though Ricoeur finds even in Freud the makings of a hermeneutics of restoration, as we noted in Chapter 7).

A less strident and more humble approach to demystification is possible, as demonstrated by Ricoeur as well as many of the psychologists of religion we have encountered in this survey. Although the other psychoanalytic approaches and even the humanistic psychologies, taken as a whole, are assigned to Quadrant 3, they are placed high enough to suggest that their unveiling of religion's neuroticisms and immaturities and their delineation of more mature forms are ultimately aimed at restoring to religion some fundamental, positive meaning. The distinctions favored by the correlationists are in their own way directed toward the same end, and thus they too are located near Quadrant 4.

Restorative Interpretation: The task of the hermeneutics of restoration is to reengage with the objects of religious faith in a way that allows them to speak of the transcendent reality toward which they point. Like literal affirmation, this interpretive posture posits the transcendent realm as real, though not in the same, absolute sense. Furthermore, it scrupulously avoids identifying religious ideas or objects with that realm, as literal affirmation tends to do, but searches instead for the symbolic meaning that resides within and ultimately points beyond these objects. Moreover, this meaning is not reducible to merely cognitive terms, but engages the inner life as a whole. We are concerned here with "non-objective symbols," writes Robert Bellah (1970a), "which express the feelings, values, and hopes of subjects, or which organize and regulate the flow of interaction between subjects and objects, or which attempt to sum up the whole subject–object complex, or even point to the context or ground of that whole" (p. 93). We may consider ourselves to have attained to the meaning of such a symbol, according to Sabatier (1897), only when it "has produced in us the emotions, the transport, the enthusiasm, the faith" that inspired its creator to engender it in the first place (p. 324).

Bellah, who advocates this interpretive approach under the name of "symbolic realism," urges his fellow social scientists to abandon reductionism altogether and to allow religious symbols to speak to them directly. Of those we have studied, the phenomenologists and interpretive psychologists most nearly approximate this position. In many respects, the analytical psychology of C. G. Jung belongs in Quadrant 4 as well, though a somewhat lower position will serve to acknowledge the reductive tendencies pointed out by his critics. As we have already observed, the restorative intention is in some measure present in virtually all the perspectives in Quadrant 3—though in widely varying degrees, as Freud and Pfister illustrate for the psychoanalytic perspective—as well as in the correlational approach, in Quadrant 1.

Characterizing persons who occupy the positions of Quadrants 3 and 4 is somewhat more difficult, for until recently they have been largely neglected in the empirical research literature. The postures themselves, in the forms they might

take in individual lives, are represented by James Fowler's stages 4 and 5, individuative reflective faith (Quadrant 3) and conjunctive faith (Quadrant 4). Thus research with scales designed to operationalize Fowler's stages may be thought to cast light on these two positions. More obviously relevant is the ongoing research of Dirk Hutsebaut (1996a, 1996b), who has developed scales specifically designed to measure the attitudes represented by this summary schema.

To fill out our portrait of persons in Quadrant 3, Reductive Interpretation, we need also to draw on findings from several other, closely related scales, including Hunt's Mythological scale, Batson's Quest scale, and Barron's Enlightenment Disbelief scale. Taken together, the correlates of these various scales suggest that persons in this stage of "disillusion" may be described as complex, socially sensitive and insightful, relatively unprejudiced, original, but also *anxious.* On scales that Hutsebaut (1996b) used to measure Erikson's various dimensions of ego development, persons scoring high on External Critique—Hutsebaut's equivalent of Quadrant 3—show a tendency toward identity diffusion and negative ego integrity, or despair. For many individuals, as we noted in Chapter 6, this stage is a temporary one.

The "second naïveté" of Quadrant 4, given its profoundly individual character, is the most difficult of the four attitudes to operationalize with standardized questionnaires. Hutsebaut's initial findings with his Historical Relativism scale do suggest, however, that the task is not impossible. Persons scoring high on this scale, he reports, reveal a distinct tendency toward metaphorical thinking and tend to show positive ego integrity. Further qualities are suggested in Barron's summary of interviews with the 27 women in his sample of 50 who possessed a deep and personally evolved religious faith. These women were similar to the atheists and agnostics in their relatively high intellectual orientation and the absence of authoritarian or ethnocentric attitudes. They were distinguished from them, however, by high ratings on ego strength, richness of personality, and psychological health; on inner-directedness, genuine autonomy, and growth orientation; and on desire for community status and leadership. This religious orientation, it is interesting to note, is positively correlated with affection toward parents and happiness in childhood. From his findings, Barron concludes that religious belief

> is not dogma, not a set of forever-prescribed particularities, not static abstraction at all, but a formative process with faith as its foundation and vision as its goal—faith in the intelligibility and order of the universe, leading through necessary difficulties of interpretation and changing meanings to moments of spiritual integration which are themselves transient. (p. 169)

Reflections on the Summary Schema

Research in the psychology of religion, we may infer from this schema, inevitably entails taking some fundamental stance in relation to religious content. With the exception of the correlational approach, the most fully developed perspectives are strongly inclined to interpret religion as a system of symbols whose meanings are multilayered, richly complex, and deeply embedded in human experience. To many scholars today this understanding of symbols is so commonplace that it requires no justification. Others, however, are disposed to interpret religious content more or less literally. Some also affirm this content as the revelations of a supernatural agency. Confronted by research findings that challenge such a view, these religious literalists argue that the measures and developmental frameworks

from which such findings are derived are the biased products of naturalism and empiricism. They seem less able to recognize the contingent character of their own position.

A more subtle and difficult issue is presented by the factor of transcendence. According to Flournoy's first principle, the psychology of religion must exclude the transcendent, in the sense that it may neither affirm nor deny the reality of the religious object. It is not the intent of this principle, however, to exclude acknowledgment of the importance of transcendence to faith or to prohibit study of the variations in its conception and observance.

In the abstract, this principle sounds reasonably easy to follow. In practice, however, a person's success would seem to depend on how transcendence is conceived. If we identify a tradition's tangible symbols with the transcendent reality itself, then naturally *any* interpretation of these symbols as human constructs will be viewed as a violation of Flournoy's principle. On the other hand, if we think of religious symbols as historically conditioned expressions of the human imagination that point to an otherwise incomprehensible transcendent realm beyond themselves, only a "nothing-but" interpretation that denies the very existence of this realm will count as a violation. The majority of the subjective psychologies of religion seem to incorporate the second of these two interpretive standpoints, and even those, like Freud's, that include the "nothing-but" clause could be used without it, as Oskar Pfister demonstrates.

Exclusion in the limited sense intended by Flournoy could be said to be represented by the middle third of the vertical axis in Table E.1, where most of the subjective psychologies are found. Those in this middle third that fall in the upper quadrant more explicitly *include* transcendence, yet they do so only in a "neutralized mode." They believe with the believers but "without positing absolutely" the objects of their belief (Ricoeur, 1965, p. 29). Conjunctive faith, unconstrained by the bracketing of absolute reality required of the scientist, is free to affirm it wholeheartedly even while recognizing the relativity and insufficiency of the various symbols that refer to it. Psychoanalysis is positioned at the opposite pole to represent Freud's frank denial of the reality of the transcendent and his reduction of religious myths and rituals to the most mundane reality.

Table E.1 is offered as a heuristic device for thinking about these issues, not as a precise representation of the structure of the field. In truth, the positioning of these perspectives is only approximate, for most entries represent the views of more than one contributor, and few address these issues explicitly and consistently, especially the matter of transcendence. Furthermore, some contributors are not easily located in it. James is a singularly instructive example. His disdain for religious symbols invites placement in Quadrant 2; his theory of the subconscious self and his emphasis on faith's consequences, in Quadrant 3; and his sensitivity to others' transcendent experiences, in Quadrant 4. James is an exception, no doubt, but so important an exception does remind us of the limits of this schema.

This framework will have served its purpose, however, if it alerts the reader to these fundamental issues, especially the daunting problem of including transcendence in a psychology of religion without at the same time implying something about its ultimate nature and the adequacy of its representations. Scholars from the early twentieth century onward have debated the possibility of a genuine psychology of religion, in the light of this dilemma and others as well. Even today there is still no consensus on what the objects and goals of its study should be, or on what methods it can meaningfully employ. Ulrich Mann (1973, p. 39) concludes

that this "crisis situation" is in fact a permanent heritage of the field. Rather than despairing over it, he recommends that we incorporate the insights that exist in every psychology of religion but remain cautiously alert to the limitations and prejudices of each. The present work was designed to invite its readers to undertake just such a task.

A SITUATION OF CRISIS

For some contributors to this field, the situation of crisis that looms largest is not the internal one that has troubled the field from its beginnings. Rather, it is the contemporary ecological, political, and social crisis confronting the whole of humanity. From its beginnings the psychology of religion has had an applied orientation, chiefly to religious education and pastoral care. Now these still-vital interests are framed by a much larger concern. Pruyser (1971) identifies the ecological crisis as the single most important challenge to contemporary religion. It has roots, he says, in the theological misconstruction that has given humankind dominion over the rest of nature.

Pruyser's allusion is to Genesis 1:26, which enjoins human beings to have "dominion over . . . every living thing." In a highly influential article published in *Science*, historian Lynn White (1967) argues that today's ecological crisis has its roots in this biblical teaching. In sanctioning an exploitative ethic toward the earth's resources, this outlook has fostered, he says, the fateful growth of science and technology. Thoroughly permeated as they are with "orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature" (p. 1207), science and technology cannot alone provide a solution. Because the crisis of environmental degradation has roots that are mainly religious, White concludes, the remedy must also be essentially religious.

Thomas Merton (1968) likewise traces to the Hebrew Bible a "certain kind of Christian culture" that is actively hostile toward nature and promotes wilderness-destroying values. The Puritans, he points out, regarded the desolate wilderness of America "as though it were filled with conscious malevolence against them. They hated it as a *person*, an extension of the Evil One, the Enemy opposed to the spread of the Kingdom of God." Because nature was conceived of as "fallen" and "corrupt," it became the Christian's duty "to combat, reduce, destroy, and transform the wilderness." The earthly reward for carrying out "God's work" was "prosperity, real estate, money, and ultimately the peaceful 'order' of civil and urban life" (pp. 38–39).

While others, too, have declared that the Christian tradition is to some degree responsible for the ecological crisis, it is mainly White's provocative essay to which religious leaders and social scientists alike have responded. At the time of its publication, there were already stirrings of a Christian environmentalist movement. White's critical judgments proved to be a powerful stimulant to this movement and shaped much of its discussion. By now, every mainline Protestant denomination has taken a stand in support of ecological concerns, and many of the mainline presses have published books proclaiming the new environmental gospel. Conservative Protestant groups have been much slower in addressing environmental issues, but many of them, too, have now joined the cause (Fowler, 1995).

Social scientists, meanwhile, have set about to test White's thesis, along with related propositions regarding the connection between religiousness and environmentalism. Some data do support White's claims. In one study, for example, professed Christians more often affirmed the human mastery of nature and showed

less concern for the environment than agnostics, atheists, and others with no religious preference (Hand and Van Liere, 1984). In other studies, biblical literalism and disbelief in evolution predicted less support for environmental action (Eckberg and Blocker, 1993, 1996; Greeley, 1993). Yet the findings are not entirely consistent. Eric Woodrum and Thomas Hoban (1994), for example, found no relation between their measure of dominion belief and either biblical literalism or environmental attitudes.[2] Moreover, when researchers control for demographic variables—age, education, social class, and so on—the already modest relationships are sometimes reduced to insignificance. There are also studies that report a *positive* relationship between environmental concern and religious participation, though the latter may be more a measure of organizational involvement than of religiosity (Eckberg and Blocker, 1996).

One finding nevertheless remains consistent: the more theologically conservative people are, the less likely they are to be environmentally concerned. Political conservatism is itself a strong predictor of lower levels of environmental concern, but the combined direct and indirect effects of Fundamentalism were even more striking in a study by James Guth and his associates (1993). Among their subjects classified as members of the Christian Left—mainline Protestants and liberal Catholics—47 percent listed the environment as the most important problem facing America; of those associated with the Christian Right—evangelical, charismatic, and Fundamentalist Protestants—only 3 percent gave the environment such priority.

What remains unclear is the source of this "fundamentalism effect" (Eckberg and Blocker, 1996). Altogether, the findings do seem to provide at least partial support for White's argument that biblical teachings dispose people to exploit the natural world. Yet for many Fundamentalists, the more obvious source of their indifference to the fate of the environment is end-times thinking. If the world is soon to reach its apocalyptic conclusion, as many believe, then the important thing is accepting Jesus and encouraging others to embrace him as well. The world itself may be left to the care of God. When Fundamentalists prove to be hostile toward the environmentalist movement, it is often because they associate it with liberal and secular values (Fowler, 1995). This hostility is reflected in the consistent and substantial negative correlation between environmental concern and Altemeyer's Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale (Peterson, Doty, and Winter, 1993; Schultz and Stone, 1994).

Of the specific environmental attitudes that have been found to be related to piety, perhaps the most robust and consequential bears on overpopulation. When Carl Hand and Kent Van Liere (1984) controlled for the effects of age, education, and income on their five environmental concern scales, their Population Control Scale proved to have the most variance (11 percent) explained by religious affiliation. The negative correlation between religious attendance and concern for population control was most striking for Catholics (−.43) and Mormons (−.83), but other religious groups showed the trend as well. Similarly, of the several variables that Mark Harvey and Paul Bell (1995) correlated with their Population Concern

[2] It should be noted, however, that subjects who personally reject the attitude of dominion may nevertheless agree with the statement Woodrum and Hoban used to measure it, "[a]ccording to the Bible humans are supposed to use nature to their own advantage." The statements used to assess the other variables more clearly ask for the respondent's own attitudes.

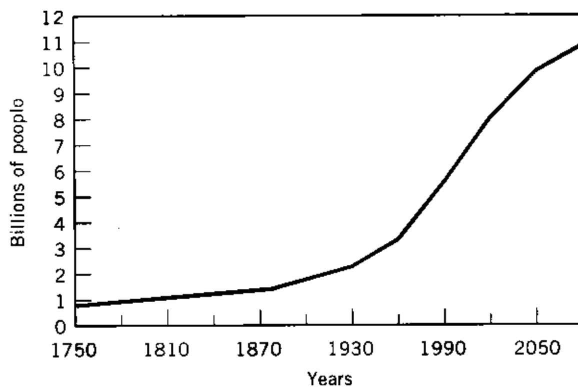

Figure E.1. World population estimates and projections. Source: Data obtained from the Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C.

Scale, only the religious one—church attendance—proved to have a significant relationship: as church attendance went up, population concern tended to go down.

The exponential growth in the world's population (see Figure E.1) is arguably the most serious of the problems we face today, for virtually every other problem grows as the number of the earth's inhabitants increases. As Pruyser (1971, p. 88) observes, the biblical injunction to "be fruitful and multiply"

> may have been constructive in an agrarian society with a high infant mortality rate, but it is becoming destructive in today's world. To take this text out of context and to turn it into an everlasting moral injunction is a pernicious form of fundamentalism—pernicious not only because of its disastrous consequences, but also because it fails to come to grips with the moral issue involved in self-reduplication. The issue is no longer whether *I* can survive in *my* offspring, whether *my* family or tribe or nation can survive, but whether mankind can survive.

In a study of a group of ministers in a South Texas town, Christian Buys and his associates (1977) found that the more conservative, or literalistic, the ministers were in their religious beliefs, the less likely they were to be concerned about overpopulation. A conservative outlook also inclined them to attribute the problem of overpopulation to sinful human nature and the work of Satan and to emphasize personal salvation and prayer as solutions, rather than social or political action. Reporting that only 38 percent had moderate to strong feelings that overpopulation was an appropriate topic for a sermon, and that only a small minority of *these* gave more than one sermon per year on the subject, Buys and his colleagues conclude that the ministers' strong otherworld orientation "holds little hope for large social movements aimed at ameliorating the overpopulation problem" (p. 569).

The environmental devastation that overpopulation can bring is already apparent in many parts of the world. For hundreds of millions of people in third-world countries especially, the catastrophe forecast by ecologists is an all-too-present reality. Judging from the silence about this problem in psychology textbooks, most psychologists see it as the concern of other specialists—biologists, sociologists, economists, political theorists, and so on. Yet some recognize that psychology and social psychiatry also have important roles to play, from basic attitude research to the shaping of implementation policies (Back, 1974; Carleton and Stentz, 1976; Cautley and Borgatta, 1973; Howard, 1993).

Religion's contribution to the environmental crisis is noted by Roman Catholic

psychologist George Howard (1994), who urges the hierarchy within his own religious tradition to reconsider its position on birth control. Although the Vatican's stance against contraceptives is said to be responsible for incalculable suffering, especially in third-world countries, some of the lowest reproductive rates today are found in Catholic nations. Many Islamic nations, on the other hand, show high growth rates, in spite of the absence of official Muslim policy on contraceptives and a recent declaration, signed by representatives of 24 Muslim states, that acknowledges the threat of overpopulation and calls for accessible family planning, including contraceptives. The declaration also presses for the eradication of illiteracy among women, which would be a major step in increasing their status and giving them greater control over their own fertility (Ehrlich, Ehrlich, and Daily, 1995, pp. 125, 132). Maintaining control over women, including their sexuality and reproductive power, is a prominent item on the fundamentalist agenda, whatever the tradition (Hawley, 1994). Yet equity—between men and women, first of all, but among all the nations as well—is said to be crucial for a solution to our contemporary predicament (Ehrlich, Ehrlich, and Daily, 1995).

The solution will ultimately have to be a political one, as the nations struggle to reach a timely and workable accord. Yet White may be correct when he argues that the heart of the remedy must be in some sense religious, for it requires that we "rethink and refeel our nature and destiny" (White, 1967, p. 1207). It is this very task that many of the psychologists in this book are urging us to undertake. For some, particularly Hall, Jung, Spranger, and Fromm, an essential aspect of this undertaking is the recovery of a sense of intimate relatedness to nature, of the alchemical insight that the inner and outer worlds bear a reciprocal relation to each other. Other psychologists, particularly the psychoanalysts, emphasize the necessity of remediation in the interpersonal sphere, where pseudospeciation, projection, and other destructive processes now threaten the very survival of our planet. And still others, including the transpersonal psychologists (Walsh, 1984; Grof and Valier, 1988), accent the importance of an inner, conscious evolution, a transformation in self-awareness and self-identity that links us to the wisdom of the ages and promises a global spirituality.

The study of religious faith and tradition becomes a way, then, for psychologists to gain new insights into human nature and to seek solutions to the manifold problems we face. For some psychologists, such as Freud and Vetter, the remedy lies in the utter abandonment of religion and reliance instead on the constructions of science. Others, however, regard religion, not as something external to human beings that can be set aside and done without, but as individual faith, the fundamental way in which one perceives and responds to the totality of one's world in the light of a transcendent dimension.

Fundamenalism, it was earlier said, is the religious response to a diminishing sense of transcendence. In his study of what members of the clergy understand religion to be, Jack Shand (1961) found that the ratings for "has a feeling of security, at-homeness in the universe" were exceptionally high for the humanistic clergy but unusually low for the fundamentalists. The more recent research we have reviewed shows that fundamentalists are less concerned than others about the degradation of the biosphere and are sometimes even hostile to the environmental movement.

In those for whom the sense of transcendence is strong we find a rather different attitude. Among the predictable characteristics of mystical experience are a sense of the sacredness of all life and a desire to establish a new, more harmonious

relation with nature and with other human beings. There is a corresponding renunciation of the various expressions of self-seeking, including the ethos of manipulation and control. Mystical experience is manifest in a great many forms, some of which are of rather doubtful value. But only an empathic, self-forgetting mystical outlook, it could be argued, can restore to humankind the attitude toward life that will make possible its long-term survival.

Some psychologists of religion treat mystical experience as an optional element of religion, a potential correlate of one or another way of being religious. For others, however, the mystical attitude is *the* defining feature of religion, whatever traditional or individual forms it may take. Construed broadly enough to encompass James's "something more," Otto's *mysterium*, or Smith's sense of transcendence, mystical experience may be considered essential to any living religious faith or tradition. Some may prefer to call it something else, as Maslow does with his phrase "peak experience." What is crucial is not what we label this dimension of experience but that we take it into account. Perhaps we need today a new principle, the PRINCIPLE OF THE INCLUSION OF THE TRANSCENDENT, to balance Flournoy's classic principle of exclusion. Taken together, these principles might encourage psychologists of religion to give the experience of transcendence the prominence it deserves, but without reifying it or identifying it with any one tradition's symbols. Consistently applied throughout the literature, these principles might help to cast new light on a number of unsolved problems, perhaps giving the field a new coherence and sense of direction.

One likely outcome would be a new generation of religiosity measures that would serve to clarify the relation of the experience of transcendence to environmental and interpersonal attitudes. Another predictable result would be a reinterpretation and reappropriation of insights scattered throughout the existing literature. If we may expect a deeper sense of the complexities of the problems that confront us, we may also hope for a clearer understanding of effective ways in which to address them. Undertaken with caution and humility, the psychology of religion may well play a significant role in meeting the crisis of our age.