

Paper 92 — The Later Evolution of Religion

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This chart is a revision of the August 8, 2011 and August 11, 2014 versions.
Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 92, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Lewis **Browne**, *This Believing World: A Simple Account of the Great Religions of Mankind* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926)
- (2) William Graham **Sumner** and Albert Galloway **Keller**, *The Science of Society, Volume II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)
- (3) E. Washburn **Hopkins**, Ph.D., LL.D., *Origin and Evolution of Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1923)
- (4) William Graham **Sumner**, Albert Galloway **Keller**, and Maurice Rea Davie, *The Science of Society, Volume IV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)
- (5) Robert Ernest **Hume**, Ph.D., *The World's Living Religions: An Historical Sketch* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924, revised edition)
- (6) Henry Nelson Wieman and Regina **Westcott-Wieman**, *Normative Psychology of Religion* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1935)

Note: The chapter used in this paper was written by Regina Westcott-Wieman.

- (7) Henry Nelson Wieman and Walter Marshall **Horton**, *The Growth of Religion* (Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company, 1938)

Note: The chapter used in this paper was written by Walter Marshall Horton.

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)
- (f) **Light green** indicates Bible passages or fragments thereof, which are not paralleled in the source text.

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PAPER 92 — THE LATER EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

92:0.1 Man possessed a religion of natural origin as a part of his evolutionary experience long before any systematic revelations were made on Urantia. But this religion of natural origin was, in itself, the product of man's superanimal endowments. Evolutionary religion arose slowly throughout the millenniums of mankind's experiential career through the ministry of the following influences operating within, and impinging upon, savage, barbarian, and civilized man:

92:0.2 1. *The adjutant of worship*—the appearance in animal consciousness of superanimal potentials for reality perception. This might be termed the primordial human instinct for Deity.

92:0.3 2. *The adjutant of wisdom*—the manifestation in a worshipful mind of the tendency to direct its adoration in higher channels of expression and toward ever-expanding concepts of Deity reality.

92:0.4 3. *The Holy Spirit*—this is the initial supermind bestowal, and it unfailingly appears in all bona fide human personalities. This ministry to a worship-craving and wisdom-desiring mind creates the capacity to self-realize the postulate of human survival, both in theologic concept and as an actual and factual personality experience.

92:0.5 The co-ordinate functioning of these three divine ministrations is quite sufficient to initiate and prosecute the growth of evolutionary religion. These influences are later augmented by Thought Adjusters, seraphim, and the Spirit of Truth, all of which accelerate the rate of religious development. These agencies have long functioned on Urantia, and they will continue here as long as this planet remains an inhabited sphere. Much of the potential of these divine agencies has never yet had opportunity for expression; much will be revealed in the ages to come as mortal religion ascends, level by level, toward the supernal heights of morontia value and spirit truth.

1. THE EVOLUTIONARY NATURE OF RELIGION

92:1.1 The evolution of religion has been traced from early fear and ghosts down through many successive stages of development,

I, II: RELIGION (Browne 27)

1. The attempt to coerce the spirits gives way to the attempt to cajole them—but magic does not disappear—sacrifices. (Browne 42)

including those efforts first to coerce and then to cajole the spirits.

3. How the great gods were created. (Browne 49)

[contd] Finally we come to the creation of the great gods. Just as the tribal chieftain in time became a king, so the tribal fetish in time became a god (B 49).

Tribal fetishes grew into totems and tribal gods;

magic formulas became modern prayers. Circumcision, at first a sacrifice, became a hygienic procedure.

92:1.2 Religion progressed from nature worship up through ghost worship to fetishism throughout the savage childhood of the races. With the dawn of civilization the human race espoused the more mystic and symbolic beliefs, while now, with approaching maturity, mankind is ripening for the appreciation of real religion, even a beginning of the revelation of truth itself.

XI: RELIGION IN GENERAL (Sumner & Keller 1421)

§324.* **Conservatism of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1430)

“The last thing to perish in a nation is its faith. The whole history of the world proves that no anomalies are so glaring, no inconsistencies so paradoxical, as to sap the credit of a religious system which has once been firmly rooted in the habits, instincts, and traditions of a race: and what remains longest is often the least rational portion...” (S&K 1430).

§323. **Nature of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1426)

Religion is, in a word, society’s adjustment to that which is, in any age, beyond knowledge—to the aleatory element, as personalized, through the long ages of human evolution, in the spirit-environment.

92:1.3 Religion arises as a biologic reaction of mind to spiritual beliefs and the environment;

it is the last thing to perish or change in a race.

Religion is society’s adjustment, in any age, to that which is mysterious.

As an institution, it is a framework of customs, rites, symbols, phrases, scriptures, apparatus, altars, temples, costumes, and various other details. The institution holds the ideas together and perpetuates them (S&K 1430).

§324.* **Conservatism of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1430)

“Many of the details in the Roman Catholic worship may have been derived from Buddhism; from this source comes the rosary. . . . By an extraordinary coincidence, each of these churches is conspicuous for its use of holy water, choirs, sacred pictures, tonsure, vestments, the bell in religious service, the orders of nuns, monks, and the vows of the monastic system...” (S&K 1435-36).

§323. **The Nature of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1426)

Robertson Smith tries to distinguish religion from magic and sorcery, as follows: “From the earliest times, religion, as distinct from magic or sorcery, addresses itself to kindred and friendly beings ...” If this distinction, which is parallel to that drawn by Lehmann between white and black art, is accepted, then plainly many peoples can have no religion (S&K 1428).

VIII: RELIGIOUS STIMULI (Hopkins 88)

As a social institution it embraces rites, symbols, cults, scriptures, altars, shrines, and temples.

Holy water, relics, fetishes, charms, vestments, bells, drums, and priesthoods are common to all religions.

And it is impossible entirely to

divorce purely evolved religion from either magic or sorcery.

92:1.4 Mystery and power have always stimulated religious feelings and fears, while emotion has ever functioned as a powerful conditioning factor in their development. Fear has always been the basic religious stimulus.

To turn now to the emotional factors of religion, a very crude dictum of ignorant antiquity asserted that Fear first fashions gods (H 93).

Even among the most primitive peoples may be found the same mixture of fear and attachment toward ghosts that conditions human intercourse, while in the higher religions hope, admiration, and sympathy unite with fear to make a complex far removed from abjection (H 95).

Derived from fear, through regret that one has offended against a spirit's desires, repentance is another emotion which belongs only to higher religions and yet can be traced back to primitive apprehension, though without understanding the sinner's position it is difficult to distinguish mere regret from repentance (H 96).

The existence of fear as a recognized aspect of advanced religions need not be insisted upon. The word "terror" expresses the attitude of the early Teutons toward their gods. The Hindu says, "It is fear alone that makes men virtuous," and also, "God is a great fear" (H 97).

[He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love (1 John 4:8).]

Fear fashions the gods of evolutionary religion

and motivates the religious ritual of the primitive believers.

As civilization advances, fear becomes modified by reverence, admiration, respect, and sympathy

and is then further conditioned by

remorse and repentance.

92:1.5 One Asiatic people taught that "God is a great fear";

that is the outgrowth of purely evolutionary religion.

Jesus, the revelation of the highest type of religious living, proclaimed that

"God is love."

2. RELIGION AND THE MORES

XI: RELIGION IN GENERAL (Sumner & Keller 1421)

§326. **Religion and the Mores.** (Sumner & Keller 1449)

[Religion] is by nature less adjustable than any other institution of society, for it is farthest from conclusive test and selection (S&K 1449).

Yet religion does adjust, tardily and almost grudgingly, in the course of time (S&K 1449).

Ultimately religion must reflect the mores in their alteration, as the next life and the spirit-world, on the principle of projectivism, repeat this life and this world (S&K 1449).

§324.* **Conservatism of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1430)

One of the chief tenets of religion is that the familiar and especially the archaic are holy, while the novel and strange are profane. This comes out of the function of religion as a sanction of the mores (S&K 1431).

92:2.1 Religion is the most rigid and unyielding of all human institutions,

but it does tardily adjust to changing society.

Eventually, evolutionary religion does reflect the changing mores,

which, in turn, may have been affected by revealed religion.

Slowly, surely, but grudgingly, does religion (worship) follow in the wake of wisdom—knowledge directed by experiential reason and illuminated by divine revelation.

92:2.2 Religion clings to the mores; that which *was* is ancient and supposedly sacred.

[Spencer] cites the persistence of cutting instruments of stone for sacrificial purposes “when implements of bronze, or even of iron are used for all other purposes” (S&K 1431).

[And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it (Exod. 20:25).] [See S&K 1431-32.]

“Further the primitive method of obtaining fire by the friction of two pieces of wood, survives in religious ceremonies ages after its abandonment in the household; and even now, among the Hindus, the flame for the altar is kindled by the ‘fire drill’” (S&K 1432).

It is readily enough appreciated that the employment of any novelty in connection with religion may easily be regarded as sacrilegious (S&K 1432).

[And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it (Exod. 12:8).] [See S&K 1432, re unleavened bread, bitter herbs.]

The retention of the old is not wholly confined to religion; all solemn ceremonial is full of survivals. The court of justice, the wedding, or the academic procession illustrates the same conservatism (S&K 1432).

For this reason and no other,

stone implements persisted long into the age of bronze and iron.

This statement is of record:

“And if you will make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stone, for, if you use your tools in making it, you have polluted it.”

Even today, the Hindus kindle their altar fires by using a primitive fire drill.

In the course of evolutionary religion, novelty has always been regarded as sacrilege.

The sacrament must consist, not of new and manufactured food, but of the most primitive of viands:

“The flesh roasted with fire and unleavened bread served with bitter herbs.”

All types of social usage and even legal procedures cling to the old forms.

§326. **Religion and the Mores.** (Sumner & Keller 1449)

When Princess Mary of England was married, certain phrases that have become utterly offensive to a refined taste were omitted from the service. They would have gone long ago had it not been for a mysterious sort of insulation that surrounds the traditionally holy, whereby even the obscene may be handled by the clean-minded without a shock—without revulsion because without realization (S&K 1454-55).

§325.* **Religion is Evolutionary.** (Sumner & Keller 1441)

Not seldom has theology warranted Frazer's characterization: "The history of religion is a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason;

to find a sound theory for an absurd practice" (S&K 1449).

92:2.3 When modern man wonders at the presentation of so much in the scriptures of different religions that may be regarded as obscene, he should pause to consider that

passing generations have feared to eliminate what their ancestors deemed to be holy and sacred.

A great deal that one generation might look upon as obscene, preceding generations have considered a part of their accepted mores, even as approved religious rituals.

A considerable amount of religious controversy has been occasioned by

the never-ending attempts to reconcile olden but reprehensible practices with newly advanced reason,

to find plausible theories in justification of creedal perpetuation of ancient and outworn customs.

92.2.4 But it is only foolish to attempt the too sudden acceleration of religious growth.

Says Oliveira Martins of Mohammedanism: “Out of that religion which unites with great refinements of intelligence a singular moral obscurity and a materialism without charity, the Berber or Tuareg, the negroid, and the negro comprehend and so take over only the second part, which is compatible with their respective capacities. . . .

Whatever may be the moral value of a religion, the people that accepts it will derive from it that which is compatible with its genius and with the evolutionary stage of its civilization” (S&K 1446).

“It is a law which may be regarded as practically universal, that the religious conceptions of a people are expressed in forms which are modelled, in large degree, on those political and social institutions which the economical conditions of their situation have produced ...” (S&K 1447).

It is believed by specialists that the aridity of the climate of northwestern Arizona has had a profound effect on the religious beliefs and practices of the Hopi (S&K 1446).

Seeck generalizes as follows: “We all follow the teachings of our religion precisely as far as they correspond to our moral impulses, that is, we are led by these impulses, not by religion. . . . Morality is not determined by religion

A race or nation can only assimilate from any advanced religion that which is reasonably consistent and compatible with its current evolutionary status,

plus its genius for adaptation.

Social, climatic, political, and economic conditions are all influential in determining the course and progress of religious evolution.

Social morality is not determined by religion,

that is, by evolutionary religion;

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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but on the contrary religions have been modelled over and over again according to the changing conceptions of morals” (S&K 1448).

It is a question to what extent primitive people may actually take on a more evolved religion;

normally the old beliefs merely persist under a new form (S&K IV 842).

In **New Zealand**, in 1862, there rose the Hau Hau religion, the name of it being derived from “Jehovah.” It was a mixture of Christian, Mosaic, and Buddhist elements.... The priests

spread the tidings that they **received direct commands** from Jehovah through the Angel **Gabriel** and that the Maoris had been marked out to be a **chosen people** (S&K 1446).

Adultery was allowed by the religion and concubinage was reckoned a virtue.

Those who had belonged to the Christian church went over by preference to Hauism (S&K 1446).

rather are the forms of religion dictated by the racial morality.

92:2.5 Races of men only superficially accept a strange and new religion;

they actually adjust it to their mores and old ways of believing.

This is well illustrated by the example of a certain **New Zealand** tribe

whose priests, after nominally accepting Christianity,¹

professed to have **received direct revelations from Gabriel** to the effect that this selfsame tribe had become the **chosen people** of God

and directing that they be permitted freely to indulge in loose sex relations

and numerous other of their olden and reprehensible customs.

And immediately all of the new-made Christians went over to this new and less exacting version of Christianity.

§327. **Religion and Morals.** (Sumner & Keller 1458)

Throughout this book religion is shown to have sanctioned a great variety of conduct (S&K 1463).

It has prescribed game-laws, cannibalism, human sacrifice, the killing of the old, suicide, incest, polyandry, polygyny, slavery, and the levirate; has guaranteed all forms of property-holding, of inheritance, and of government; has both favored and proscribed commerce and the taking of interest; it has been forced to bend to new vices. It has therefore offered no absolute standard of morality, for there is none, but has sanctioned what lay in the mores of the time and place—or, often, what lay in the mores of the place at some previous time (S&K 1463).

92:2.6 Religion has at one time or another sanctioned all sorts of contrary and inconsistent behavior,

has at some time approved of practically all that is now regarded as immoral or sinful.

Conscience, untaught by experience and unaided by reason, never has been, and never can be, a safe and unerring guide to human conduct. Conscience is not a divine voice speaking to the human soul. It is merely the sum total of the moral and ethical content of the mores of any current stage of existence; it simply represents the humanly conceived ideal of reaction in any given set of circumstances.

3. THE NATURE OF EVOLUTIONARY RELIGION

§324.* **Conservatism of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1430)

Throughout this book occur cases of survivals illustrative of the conservative character of religion. So pronounced is this trait that the study of the cult is not unlike the exploration of fossil-bearing strata (S&K 1436).

The reason for the cruder morals of the gods is the same as for the obsolete character of their food:

they were the morals of an antecedent state before the rise of mores of restriction (S&K 1439).

When this stage passes and new cultural forms appear, the once-developed cult-forms do not, however, at once fall away. They persist alongside the new economic and other structures and become inconsistent with the latter (S&K 1440).

The cult presents a "picture of the past" (S&K 1440).

§329. **Disservices of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1467)

A church, sect, party, or association has a program. It is formed to do something. Such a union does not exist in order to find out the truth.

92:3.1 The study of human religion is the examination of the fossil-bearing social strata of past ages.

The mores of the anthropomorphic gods

are a truthful reflection of the morals of the men who first conceived such deities.

Ancient religions and mythology faithfully portray the beliefs and traditions of peoples long since lost in obscurity.

These olden cult practices persist alongside newer economic customs and social evolutions and, of course, appear grossly inconsistent.

The remnants of the cult present a true picture of the racial religions of the past.

Always remember,

the cults are formed, not to discover truth,

It assumes some dogma to be true ... That dogma is made the postulate of its action and the purpose of the union is to bring those together who have a common conviction and to organize them for action which will propagate their faith or realize its application to life (S&K 1474).

§327. **Religion and Morals.** (Sumner & Keller 1458)

Religion in history, from the earliest to very recent days, has not been a matter of morality at all but of rites, ritual, observance, and ceremony; it has expressed political traditions and ties or sustained political power or nourished sanitary and hygienic practices believed from experience to conduce to societal welfare (S&K 1464).

§325.* **Religion is Evolutionary.** (Sumner & Keller 1441)

The ideas of incarnation, inspiration, revelation, propitiation, contrition,

repentance, atonement, intercession, vicarious sacrifice, expiation,

prayer, confession, worship, another life, ritual sacrifice, sacrament,

ransom, salvation, redemption, covenant, uncleanness, purification, prophecy, men's duties, sin, original sin,

but rather to promulgate their creeds.

92:3.2 Religion has always been largely a matter of rites, rituals, observances, ceremonies, and dogmas.

It has usually become tainted with that persistently mischief-making error, the chosen-people delusion.

The cardinal religious ideas of incantation, inspiration, revelation, propitiation,

repentance, atonement, intercession, sacrifice,

prayer, confession, worship, survival after death, sacrament, ritual,

ransom, salvation, redemption, covenant, uncleanness, purification, prophecy, original sin—

and all the rest go back to the limit of our knowledge of man on earth. They were all implicit in the primordial ghost-fear and have all been evolved so gradually and steadily that beginnings cannot be found for them (S&K 1442).

§328. **The Power of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1465)

[contd] For countless generations, says Lippert, religion was nothing else than a struggle for existence projected beyond the grave, for the domain beyond death was introduced, as it were, into the range of the struggle in this world (S&K 1465).

Religion for the primitive man was not speculation but worship; and worship was nothing but the extension of the self-maintenance struggle into a spirit-world of which all primitive men, with remarkable unanimity, cherish the same childish conception (S&K 1465).

§329. **Disservices of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1467)

[E]ach and every type of theory is explicable in the setting of its time and in the state of knowledge of its votaries. There is therefore no moral judgment to be passed upon primitive beliefs, such as we are accustomed to deliver when we call them superstitious.

Things went that way, and that is all there is to it (S&K 1467).

they all go back to the early times of primordial ghost fear.

92:3.3 Primitive religion is nothing more nor less than the struggle for material existence extended to embrace existence beyond the grave.

The observances of such a creed represented the extension of the self-maintenance struggle into the domain of an imagined ghost-spirit world.

But when tempted to criticize evolutionary religion,

be careful.

Remember, that is *what happened*; it is a historical fact.

§328. **The Power of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1465)

One of Lippert's significant passages may be quoted yet again: "History shows us that the creative force exerted by a notion on the development of civilization does not depend upon its relation to reality. The power of an idea lies, not in its certainty but in its vividness and in the number of people who believe in it..." (S&K 1465).

§324.* **Conservatism of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1430)

Religion does not, like science, look to its own correction and readjustment (S&K 1440).

§326. **Religion and the Mores.** (Sumner & Keller 1449)

In its nature, no religion ever changes, for every religion is absolute and eternal truth.... It would stultify itself if it should say: I am temporarily or contingently true, and I shall give way to something true. I am a working hypothesis only (S&K 1450).

"The faith once delivered to the saints" must claim to be perfect, and the formula itself means that the faith is changeless (S&K 1450).

And further recall that

the power of any idea lies, not in its certainty or truth, but rather in the vividness of its human appeal.

92:3.4 Evolutionary religion makes no provision for change or revision;

unlike science, it does not provide for its own progressive correction.

Evolved religion commands respect because its followers believe it is *The Truth*;

"the faith once delivered to the saints" must, in theory, be both final and infallible.

§325.* **Religion is Evolutionary.** (Sumner & Keller 1441)

“It sounds paradoxical to say that all civilization had its cradle in daimonism, yet that daimonism and civilization are inversely proportional”; that development **dissolves the cult**, though the **cult resists development**;

[Indeed, in the days of barbarism it was dangerous to know very much; there was always the chance of being executed as a black artist (88:6.6).]

that the world-**philosophy** that corrodes daimonism is rooted in daimonism (S&K 1441).

The **cult resists development** because real progress is certain to modify or **destroy the cult** itself;

therefore must revision always be forced upon it.

92:3.5 Only two influences can modify and uplift the dogmas of natural religion: the pressure of the slowly advancing mores and the periodic illumination of **epochal revelation**.²

And it is not strange that progress was slow; in ancient days, to be progressive or inventive meant to be killed as a sorcerer.

The cult advances slowly in generation epochs and age-long cycles. But it does move forward.

Evolutionary belief in ghosts laid the foundation for

a philosophy of revealed religion which will eventually destroy the superstition of its origin.

I, II: RELIGION (Browne 42)

5. Idolatry—the beginning of sacrifice—of prayer—of the church. (Browne 54)

[contd] But though religion may have exacted a high price for its saving of morality, still—*it did save it*. That is something many people are inclined to forget. They are accustomed to dwell only on the evils, on the thwartings and frustrations, which certain forms of religion in later days brought upon civilization.

But it is well to remember that, had it not been for religion and its underlying faith that the universe and its fell “powers” could be controlled, there would **not have been any civilization** to frustrate (B 54-55).

All that grace and color which transmutes mere existence into Life—in a word, all Art—may truly be said to have arisen out of religion.

Sculpture had its origin in idol-making, architecture in temple-building,

poetry in prayer-writing, music in psalm-singing, drama in legend-telling,

and **dancing in the seasonal worship of the gods. . .** (B 56).

92:3.6 Religion has handicapped social development in many ways,

but without religion there would have been no enduring morality nor ethics, **no worth-while civilization.**

Religion enmothered much nonreligious culture:

Sculpture originated in idol making, architecture in temple building,

poetry in incantations, music in worship chants, drama in the acting for spirit guidance,

and **dancing in the seasonal worship festivals.**

XI: RELIGION IN GENERAL (Sumner & Keller 1421)

§329. **Disservices of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1467)

Religion has hampered the industrial organization by cult-exactions in food and materials in general, in labor, time and thought.

It has prevented the accumulation of capital, by disallowing and diverting inheritance, and otherwise. Much of what it has exacted has been wasted, in an economic sense, in funeral-ceremonies, sacrifices, and tomb-building.

It has tampered with family-organization to the detriment of the latter,

and in group-relations it has caused wars, prevented the spread of peace, and otherwise kept peoples apart.

It has been the enemy of advancing knowledge and has retarded education (S&K 1468).

The cathedrals and the monasteries, with treasures, lands, and serfs, by the side of the huts of the poor, like the grand temples and pyramids by the side of the mud hovels, show how the struggle was diverted from this world to the next, and how "Life has played the miser for the enrichment of Death" (S&K 1469).

92:3.7 But while calling attention to the fact that religion was essential to the development and preservation of civilization, it should be recorded that natural religion has also done much to cripple and handicap the very civilization which it otherwise fostered and maintained.

Religion has hampered industrial activities and economic development;

it has been wasteful of labor and has squandered capital;

it has not always been helpful to the family;

it has not adequately fostered peace and good will;

it has sometimes neglected education and retarded science;

it has unduly impoverished life for the pretended enrichment of death.

Evolutionary religion, human religion, has indeed been guilty of all these and many more mistakes, errors, and blunders; nevertheless, it did maintain cultural ethics, civilized morality, and social coherence, and made it possible for later revealed religion to compensate for these many evolutionary shortcomings.

§330. **The Survival-Value of Religion.**
(Sumner & Keller 1474)

Exceedingly expensive, it has also been incomparably effective (S&K 1475).

Only the evolutionist can “justify” religion (S&K 1476).

Religion caused labor to be performed—as slavery did—which would otherwise not have been done.... It destroyed much capital, but also caused its accumulation (S&K 1476).

[The priest] experimented to find medicines, he worked up devices and tricks, which sometimes became arts, like that of writing, all to further his special purposes. He had the leisure to do this sort of thing, which involved at least the rudiments of intellectual exercise, and, later, to found libraries and undertake literary labors, just because he was supported by others.

92:3.8 Evolutionary religion has been man’s most expensive but incomparably effective institution.

Human religion can be justified only in the light of evolutionary civilization.

If man were not the ascendant product of animal evolution, then would such a course of religious development stand without justification.

92:3.9 Religion facilitated the accumulation of capital; it fostered work of certain kinds;

the leisure of the priests promoted art and knowledge;

Without this “injustice” to them, he could not have laid the foundations of a higher culture; what to them was a loss was for the race a gain (S&K 1477).

In the long view, then, even the shamans, whether tricksters or self-deceived, were worth to society what they cost (S&K 1477).

We must not forget that sorcery and magic provided that basis of observation and experimentation upon which, by correction, science was erected. The development of most of the learned professions is referable, at least in high degree, to the priesthood (S&K 1477).

Not to prolong a discussion of relatively minor matters, much less to try to combat the detailed complaints about religion and the priesthood, let us consider what is, after all, the first and last service of religion to society, namely, the discipline it exercises.

Not without justice has it been written that fear is the beginning of knowledge. It is certainly the beginning of that discipline through which alone wisdom arrives (S&K 1479).

It is beneath this unearthly whip of scorpions that humanity has cringed for long ages and there is no doubt that its disciplinary value has superseded all other compulsions to which mankind has ever been subject (S&K 1479).

the race, in the end, gained much as a result of all these early errors in ethical technique.

The shamans, honest and dishonest, were terribly expensive, but they were worth all they cost.

The learned professions and science itself emerged from the parasitical priesthoods.

Religion fostered civilization and provided societal continuity; it has been the moral police force of all time.

Religion provided that human discipline and self-control

which made wisdom possible.

Religion is the efficient scourge of evolution which ruthlessly drives indolent and suffering humanity

from its natural state of intellectual inertia forward and upward to the higher levels of reason and wisdom.

92:3.10 And this sacred heritage of animal ascent, evolutionary religion, must ever continue to be refined and ennobled by the continuous censorship of revealed religion

No other agency has purged religious conceptions of their gross elements as has science.... If the conferring of refinement is a friendly function, even though it involves faithful wounds, then science is the best friend religion has ever had (S&K 1481).

and by the fiery furnace of genuine science.

4. THE GIFT OF REVELATION

92:4.1 Revelation is evolutionary but always progressive. Down through the ages of a world's history, the revelations of religion are ever-expanding and successively more enlightening. It is the mission of revelation to sort and censor the successive religions of evolution. But if revelation is to exalt and upstep the religions of evolution, then must such divine visitations portray teachings which are not too far removed from the thought and reactions of the age in which they are presented. Thus must and does revelation always keep in touch with evolution. Always must the religion of revelation be limited by man's capacity of receptivity.

§323. **The Nature of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1426)

92:4.2 But regardless of apparent connection or derivation, the religions of revelation are always

It is futile to say that if religion is characterized as reverence for higher powers

and belief in a future life,

that formulation excludes nothing and so defines nothing; and it is equally absurd to assert that civilized religion is degraded by such a definition (S&K 1429).

§324.* **Conservatism of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1430)

“ ... Religions from the first are not the product of logical reflection or experiment, but of sentiment and aspiration. They come into being as pure intuitions, and afterwards invade the province of the reason and assimilate the thought of centuries in their own synthesis” (S&K 1430).

§323. **The Nature of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1426)

Mason comes through with the simple definition that, “in a general sense, religion is the sum of what is thought or believed about a spirit world and what is done in consequence of such thinking” (S&K 1427).

Gumplowicz regards religion as “the conception of those ideas which rise in the human spirit concerning all those things which it is not in a position to apprehend through its senses but to know which it is driven by an unconquerable need of its nature.... All religion is merely a spirit-reflex,” called into being by the unknowable (S&K 1427).

characterized by a belief in some Deity of final value

and in some concept of the survival of personality identity after death.

92:4.3 Evolutionary religion is sentimental, not logical.

It is man’s reaction to belief in a hypothetical ghost-spirit world—

the human belief-reflex, excited by the realization and fear of the unknown.

Revelatory religion is propounded by the real spiritual world; it is the response of the superintellectual cosmos to the mortal hunger to believe in, and depend upon, the universal Deities.

Evolutionary religion pictures the circuitous gropings of humanity in quest of truth; revelatory religion is that very truth.

92:4.4 There have been many events of religious revelation but only five of epochal significance. These were as follows:

92:4.5 1. *The Dalamatian teachings.* The true concept of the First Source and Center was first promulgated on Urantia by the one hundred corporeal members of Prince Caligastia's staff. This expanding revelation of Deity went on for more than three hundred thousand years until it was suddenly terminated by the planetary secession and the disruption of the teaching regime. Except for the work of Van, the influence of the Dalamatian revelation was practically lost to the whole world. Even the Nodites had forgotten this truth by the time of Adam's arrival. Of all who received the teachings of the one hundred, the red men held them longest,

XXVII: DAIMONISM (Sumner & Keller 931)

§245.* **Deities.** (Sumner & Keller 970)

Dorsey, who is a reliable ethnographer, cites the assertion that the religion of the Mandans, Hidatsa, and Dakotas “consists in the belief in one Great Spirit,” and comments as follows: “But such assertions are closely followed by admissions which explain the mistake of the writer: ‘Great Spirit’ is synonymous with ‘Great Medicine,’ a name applied to everything which they do not comprehend...” (S&K 976-77).

“The historical evidence that the Great Spirit belongs not to the untutored but to the tutored mind of the savage is preserved for us in the records of the tutors themselves, the Jesuit missionaries in Canada” (S&K 977).

but the idea of the Great Spirit was but a hazy concept in Amerindian religion

when contact with Christianity greatly clarified and strengthened it.

92:4.6 2. *The Edenic teachings.* Adam and Eve again portrayed the concept of the Father of all to the evolutionary peoples. The disruption of the first Eden halted the course of the Adamic revelation before it had ever fully started. But the aborted teachings of Adam were carried on by the Sethite priests, and some of these truths have never been entirely lost to the world. The entire trend of Levantine religious evolution was modified by the teachings of the Sethites. But by 2500 B.C. mankind had largely lost sight of the revelation sponsored in the days of Eden.

92:4.7 3. *Melchizedek of Salem.* This emergency Son of Nebadon inaugurated the third revelation of truth on Urantia. The cardinal precepts of his teachings were *trust* and *faith*.

He taught trust in the omnipotent beneficence of God and proclaimed that faith was the act by which men earned God's favor. His teachings gradually commingled with the beliefs and practices of various evolutionary religions and finally developed into those theologic systems present on Urantia at the opening of the first millennium after Christ.

92:4.8 4. *Jesus of Nazareth.* Christ Michael presented for the fourth time to Urantia the concept of God as the Universal Father, and this teaching has generally persisted ever since. The essence of his teaching was *love* and *service*, the loving worship which a creature son voluntarily gives in recognition of, and response to, the loving ministry of God his Father; the freewill service which such creature sons bestow upon their brethren in the joyous realization that in this service they are likewise serving God the Father.

92:4.9 5. *The Urantia Papers.* The papers, of which this is one, constitute the most recent presentation of truth to the mortals of Urantia. These papers differ from all previous revelations, for they are not the work of a single universe personality but a composite presentation by many beings. But no revelation short of the attainment of the Universal Father can ever be complete. All other celestial ministrations are no more than partial, transient, and practically adapted to local conditions in time and space. While such admissions as this may possibly detract from the immediate force and authority of all revelations, the time has arrived on Urantia when it is advisable to make such frank statements,

even at the risk of weakening the future influence and authority of this, the most recent of the revelations of truth to the mortal races of Urantia.

5. THE GREAT RELIGIOUS LEADERS

92:5.1 In evolutionary religion, the gods are conceived to exist in the likeness of man's image; in revelatory religion, men are taught that they are God's sons—even fashioned in the finite image of divinity; in the synthesized beliefs compounded from the teachings of revelation and the products of evolution, the God concept is a blend of:

1. The pre-existent ideas of the evolutionary cults.
2. The sublime ideals of revealed religion.
3. The personal viewpoints of the great religious leaders, the prophets and teachers of mankind.

92:5.2 Most great religious epochs have been inaugurated by the life and teachings of some outstanding personality; leadership has originated a majority of the worth-while moral movements of history. And men have always tended to venerate the leader, even at the expense of his teachings; to revere his personality, even though losing sight of the truths which he proclaimed. And this is not without reason; there is an instinctive longing in the heart of evolutionary man for help from above and beyond.

This craving is designed to anticipate the appearance on earth of the Planetary Prince and the later Material Sons. On Urantia man has been deprived of these superhuman leaders and rulers, and therefore does he constantly seek to make good this loss by enshrouding his human leaders with legends pertaining to supernatural origins and miraculous careers.

§240.* **Hero-Worship.** (Sumner & Keller 946)

Alignable with the conception of the hero and hero-worship is that of the god-man, son of god, son of man, or messiah; the culture-hero is deified and his return as a ruler, under a new dispensation which he shall usher in, is expected... Prodigies surround his incarnation, such as virgin birth and other miraculous happenings (S&K 949).

[contd] Messianic hopes have been harbored in Mongolia and a former hero has been expected to reappear; in southern Mongolia the people look for the return of Genghis Khan who shall lead them back again to the northwestward (S&K 949).

92:5.3 Many races have conceived of their leaders as being born of virgins; their careers are liberally sprinkled with miraculous episodes,

and their return is always expected by their respective groups.

In central Asia the tribesmen still look for the return of Genghis Khan;

in Tibet, China, and India it is Buddha;

The various *mahdis* of the Mohammedan world are well known; the last of them to make a considerable stir in the world was the one subjugated by Lord Kitchener in southern Egypt. "At all times the Moslems have believed that toward the end of the world a man of the family of the Prophet . . . must appear to revive religion and complete the triumph of righteousness" (S&K 951).

"The doctrines of the Hindu avatar, the Hebrew Messiah, the Christian millennium, and the Hesunanin of the Indian Ghost dance are essentially the same, and have their origin in a hope and longing common to all humanity . . . The belief in the coming of a Messiah who should restore them to their original happy condition was well nigh universal among the American tribes" (S&K 949).

The Messiah-doctrine of the Hebrews is well known. The Psalms announce the coming of a personal messiah.... There develops later the conception of a non-earthly being, not the Messiah of David's house, born on earth, but the "Son of Man." "This is an angel-like being, whose dwelling is in heaven"; he is pre-existent and is the destined judge of the world (S&K 951).

In Babylonia the notion of a son of God and a mother of God was current. Marduk is the intercessor between men and his father, Ea; he takes their complaints to him and brings his revelations to them (S&K 950).

The idea of a mediator between god and man is that "he stands upon the borderline between god and men" (S&K 950).

in Islam it is Mohammed;

among the Amerinds it was Hesunanin Onamonalonton;

with the Hebrews it was, in general, Adam's return as a material ruler.

In Babylon the god Marduk was a perpetuation of the Adam legend, the son-of-God idea,

the connecting link between man and God.

Following the appearance of Adam on earth, so-called sons of God were common among the world races.

92:5.4 But regardless of the superstitious awe in which they were often held, it remains a fact that these teachers were the temporal personality fulcrums on which the levers of revealed truth depended for the advancement of the morality, philosophy, and religion of mankind.

92:5.5 There have been hundreds upon hundreds of religious leaders in the million-year human history of Urantia from Onagar to Guru Nanak. During this time there have been many ebbs and flows of the tide of religious truth and spiritual faith, and each renaissance of Urantian religion has, in the past, been identified with the life and teachings of some religious leader. In considering the teachers of recent times, it may prove helpful to group them into the seven major religious epochs of post-Adamic Urantia:

92:5.6 1. *The Sethite period.* The Sethite priests, as regenerated under the leadership of Amosad, became the great post-Adamic teachers. They functioned throughout the lands of the Andites, and their influence persisted longest among the Greeks, Sumerians, and Hindus. Among the latter they have continued to the present time as the Brahmans of the Hindu faith. The Sethites and their followers never entirely lost the Trinity concept revealed by Adam.

92:5.7 2. *Era of the Melchizedek missionaries.* Urantia religion was in no small measure regenerated by the efforts of those teachers who were commissioned by Machiventa Melchizedek when he lived and taught at Salem almost two thousand years before Christ. These missionaries proclaimed faith as the price of favor with God, and their teachings, though unproductive of any immediately appearing religions, nevertheless formed the foundations on which later teachers of truth were to build the religions of Urantia.

92:5.8 3. *The post-Melchizedek era.* Though Amenemope and Ikhnaton both taught in this period, the outstanding religious genius of the post-Melchizedek era was the leader of a group of Levantine Bedouins and the founder of the Hebrew religion—Moses. Moses taught monotheism.

[Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: (Deut. 6:4).]

[Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; *there is* none else beside him (Deut. 4:35).]

[Compare: Lev. 20:6, Deut. 18:10-12.]

Said he: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God.”

“The Lord he is God. There is none beside him.”

He persistently sought to uproot the remnants of the ghost cult among his people, even prescribing the death penalty for its practitioners.

The monotheism of Moses was adulterated by his successors, but in later times they did return to many of his teachings. The greatness of Moses lies in his wisdom and sagacity. Other men have had greater concepts of God, but no one man was ever so successful in inducing large numbers of people to adopt such advanced beliefs.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 92

[It is interesting to note that about the sixth century before Christ there was a period of unusual religious creativeness, when six of the world's living religions originated (Hume 13).]

92:5.9 4. *The sixth century before Christ.* Many men arose to proclaim truth in this, one of the greatest centuries of religious awakening ever witnessed on Urantia. Among these should be recorded Gautama, Confucius, Lao-tse, Zoroaster, and the Jainist teachers.

The teachings of Gautama have become widespread in Asia, and he is revered as the Buddha by millions. Confucius was to Chinese morality what Plato was to Greek philosophy, and while there were religious repercussions to the teachings of both, strictly speaking, neither was a religious teacher; Lao-tse envisioned more of God in Tao than did Confucius in humanity or Plato in idealism.

[See 95:6.5, 170:1.6.]

Zoroaster, while much affected by the prevalent concept of dual spiritism, the good and the bad, at the same time definitely exalted the idea of one eternal Deity and of the ultimate victory of light over darkness.

92:5.10 5. *The first century after Christ.*

XL: RELIGION IN GENERAL (Sumner & Keller 1421)

§325.* **Religion is Evolutionary.** (Sumner & Keller 1441)

John the Baptist and his disciples were ascetic in their practice and used baptism; Jesus, who had been circumcized in the orthodox manner, prepared for his work by entering John's association and by asceticism.

As a religious teacher,

Jesus of Nazareth started out with the cult which had been established by John the Baptist

Later he repudiated certain **fixed forms, such as the fast** and the sabbath. The process was one of elimination from within rather than new invention or a wholesale clearing of the board (S&K 1442).

[See 5:4.10.]

[... Mohammedanism provides deliverance from the rigorous moral standards of Judaism and Christianity (5:4.1).]

and progressed as far as he could away from **fasts and forms**.

Aside from Jesus, Paul of Tarsus and Philo of Alexandria were the greatest teachers of this era. Their concepts of religion have played a dominant part in the evolution of that faith which bears the name of Christ.

92:5.11 6. *The **sixth** century after Christ.* Mohammed founded a religion which was superior to many of the creeds of his time.

His was a protest against the social demands of the faiths of foreigners

and against the incoherence of the religious life of his own people.

92:5.12 7. *The **fifteenth** century after Christ.* This period witnessed two religious movements: the disruption of the unity of Christianity in the Occident and the synthesis of a new religion in the Orient. In Europe institutionalized Christianity had attained that degree of inelasticity which rendered further growth incompatible with unity. In the Orient the combined teachings of Islam, Hinduism, and **Buddhism** were synthesized by Nanak and his followers into Sikhism, one of the most advanced religions of Asia.

92:5.13 The future of Urantia will doubtless be characterized by the appearance of teachers of religious truth—the Fatherhood of God and the fraternity of all creatures. But it is to be hoped that the ardent and sincere efforts of these future prophets will be directed less toward the strengthening of interreligious barriers and more toward the augmentation of the religious brotherhood of spiritual worship among the many followers of the differing intellectual theologies which so characterize Urantia of Satania.

6. THE COMPOSITE RELIGIONS

92:6.1 Twentieth-century Urantia religions present an interesting study of the social evolution of man's worship impulse. Many faiths have progressed very little since the days of the ghost cult.

§322.* **Alleged Absence of Religion.**
(Sumner & Keller 1421)

A beginning may be made with the African Pygmies who are in many respects the most backward of peoples. Of them it is reported that no religion, so far as could be discovered, had ever been in use; they do not know the totem and have no fetish-rites whatsoever (S&K 1422).

“Some of the tribes have neither religion nor superstition, nor do they practice any occult or fetish rites. Others have a vivid belief in the unseen world, in a god, and in the spirits of the departed, and so are higher in the scale of civilization than their more agnostic neighbors” (S&K 1422).

The Pygmies of Africa have no religious reactions as a class,

although some of them believe slightly in a spirit environment.

They are today just where primitive man was when the evolution of religion began.

The basic belief of primitive religion was survival after death. The idea of worshipping a personal God indicates advanced evolutionary development, even the first stage of revelation.

Of certain Dyaks it is reported: “ ... Were I asked what is the religion of the Land Dyaks, I should say none worthy of the name, but their *religious observances* may be classed as follows”—a list including killing and eating fowls and pigs, with a portion set aside for the deity; propitiation of demons and ghosts; the taboo; obedience to and belief in priestesses; dancing; the use of omens from the notes of birds (S&K 1423).

Among the Eskimo, “there is no knowledge and no idea of a Supreme Being or of a future state, so far as I could discover. One whom I questioned said: ‘Husky die. No more Husky.’” The great majority of the Indians did not rise to any idea of a single god (S&K 1424).

The abstract notions reach no farther than soul or ghost, or perhaps shadow, or their words mean only “wonderful” (S&K 1424).

The Dyaks have evolved only the most primitive religious practices.

The comparatively recent Eskimos and Amerinds had very meager concepts of God;

they believed in ghosts

and had an indefinite idea of survival of some sort after death.

There does exist a general belief [among the **Australian** aborigines] in **ghosts**, in the spirits of the deceased who have not received the right order of burial or who have been bewitched by sorcerers.... Their fear of ghosts showed itself particularly in their unwillingness to leave the surroundings of the fireplace at **night** and in the fact that they strictly refrain from nocturnal hunting (S&K IV 831).

The fact is that the Australians exhibit a **crude variety of ancestor-worship** (S&K IV 831).

“ ... Whether the Mavenda **sacrifice** to appease the spirits in case of illness or domestic calamity, as is the invariable case with **Zulu**, I did not ascertain ...” (S&K IV 833).

Holub noticed no signs of religion among certain South **African** peoples, but found in one case esteem for a certain snake, in another “a kind of freemasonry,” and in a third a belief in **fetishes** (S&K IV 833).

[“Previous to the introduction of **Christianity**, the Bechuana appear to have had only very vague religious ideas, and their attention was chiefly occupied by the detection of wizards and witches...” (S&K IV 833).]

XXVII: DAIMONISM (Sumner & Keller 931)

§245.* **Deities.** (Sumner & Keller 970)

Herodotus writes of a **Thracian** tribe, who believe mankind **immortal**, that they had only **one god** (S&K 977).

Present-day native **Australians** have only a **ghost** fear, dread of the **dark**,

and a **crude ancestor veneration.**

The **Zulus** are **just** evolving a religion of ghost fear and **sacrifice.**

Many **African** tribes, except through missionary work of **Christians** and **Mo-hammedans**, are not yet beyond the **fetish** stage of religious evolution.

But some groups have long held to the idea of **monotheism**,

like the onetime **Thracians**, who also believed in **immortality.**

92:6.2 On Urantia, evolutionary and revelatory religion are progressing side by side while they blend and coalesce into the diversified theologic systems found in the world in the times of the inditement of these papers.

[Compare 'A Conspectus of the Eleven Living Religions of the World', Hume x.]

These religions, the religions of twentieth-century Urantia, may be enumerated as follows:

1. Hinduism—the most ancient.
2. The Hebrew religion.
3. Buddhism.
4. The Confucian teachings.
5. The Taoist beliefs.
6. Zoroastrianism.
7. Shinto.
8. Jainism.
9. Christianity.
10. Islam.
11. Sikhism—the most recent.

92:6.3 The most advanced religions of ancient times were Judaism and Hinduism, and each **respectively** has greatly influenced the course of religious development in Orient and Occident.

I: THEORIES OF RELIGIOUS ORIGINS
(Hopkins 1)

Orthodoxy maintained in ancient India that there was one inspired religion

and all other religions were decadent forms of it, while in the sixth century B.C. heterodox Hindus said that all religions were invented by the priests for their own profit. The same theories sprang up independently centuries later in Europe (H 2).

Both Hindus and Hebrews believed that their religions were inspired and revealed,

and they believed all others to be decadent forms of the one true faith.

92:6.4 India is divided among Hindu, Sikh, Mohammedan, and Jain, each picturing God, man, and the universe as these are variously conceived. China follows the Taoist and the Confucian teachings; Shinto is revered in Japan.

92:6.5 The great international, inter-racial faiths are the Hebraic, Buddhist, Christian, and Islamic. Buddhism stretches from Ceylon and Burma through Tibet and China to Japan. It has shown an adaptability to the mores of many peoples that has been equaled only by Christianity.

XXVII: DAIMONISM (Sumner & Keller 931)

§245.* Deities. (Sumner & Keller 970)

That even in the pre-prophetic period “we can speak at most of henotheism . . . but not of absolute monotheism, would be sufficiently proved by the constant inclination of the people to Baal worship.” And this despite assertions that Jahweh is the true and only god. There was need of a transitional stage before monotheism could be reached; “it is impossible to get from animism to monotheism without a transition” (S&K 977).

92:6.6 The Hebrew religion encompasses the philosophic transition from polytheism to monotheism;

it is an evolutionary link between the religions of evolution and the religions of revelation.

The Hebrews were the only western people to follow their early evolutionary gods straight through to the God of revelation. But this truth never became widely accepted until the days of Isaiah, who once again taught the blended idea of a racial deity combined with a Universal Creator:

[O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubims, *thou art* the God, *even thou alone*, of all the kingdoms of the earth: *thou hast made heaven and earth* (Isa. 37:16).]

“O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, you are God, even you alone; you have made heaven and earth.”

At one time the hope of the survival of Occidental civilization lay in the sublime Hebraic concepts of goodness and the advanced Hellenic concepts of beauty.

92:6.7 The Christian religion is the religion about the life and teachings of Christ based upon the theology of Judaism, modified further through the assimilation of certain Zoroastrian teachings and Greek philosophy, and formulated primarily by three individuals: Philo, Peter, and Paul. It has passed through many phases of evolution since the time of Paul and has become so thoroughly Occidentalized that

XL: RELIGION IN GENERAL (Sumner & Keller 1421)

§325.* **Religion is Evolutionary.** (Sumner & Keller 1441)

“ ... Most readily do [the ‘savages’] believe everything that [the missionary] tells them out of his revelation; only it does not take hold on them and does not influence their lives in the desired way. They distinguish it—in this very many accounts agree—always as the **revelation of a stranger-god** to a stranger-man; it is not *their* revelation. It may be excellent, they often say in support of their declination, but **for the stranger-men**, not for *them*” (S&K 1442).

many non-European peoples very naturally look upon Christianity as a strange **revelation of a strange God and for strangers.**

92:6.8 Islam is the religio-cultural connective of North Africa, the Levant, and southeastern Asia.

XXVII: DAIMONISM (Sumner & Keller 931)

§245.* **Deities.** (Sumner & Keller 970)

The Jewish religion had a strong influence upon Islam (S&K 977).

It was Jewish theology in connection with the later Christian teachings that made Islam monotheistic.

The Moslems came to reproach the Christians with the worship, in the **Trinity**, of three gods.

The followers of Mohammed stumbled at the advanced teachings of the **Trinity**;

That three can be one, and one three, has been the basis of innumerable disputes, reconciliations, and interpretations (S&K 977).

they could not comprehend the doctrine of three divine personalities and one Deity.

It is always difficult to induce evolutionary minds suddenly to accept advanced revealed truth. Man is an evolutionary creature and in the main must get his religion by evolutionary techniques.

§239.* **Ancestor-Worship.** (Sumner & Keller 941)

In general, ancestor-worship belongs to a plane of civilization somewhat higher than that of the ghost-cult.

In some cases, as in India, China, and Japan, it has remained amidst a relatively advanced civilization,

although with development of culture it is more likely, as in Egypt, Greece, and Rome, to yield to a set of deities of a higher order and become no more than a popular survival (S&K 941).

RELIGIOUS TOPOGRAPHY (Wieman & Horton 0)

IV. **RADICAL SECULARISM** (Wieman & Horton 0)

[contd] Marxism in Soviet Russia and Mexico; nationalism in Turkey, Germany, Italy;

religious indifference in universities and industrial centers in many nominally religious countries (W&H 0).

92:6.9 Ancestor worship onetime constituted a decided advance in religious evolution,

but it is both amazing and regrettable that

this primitive concept persists in China, Japan, and India amidst so much that is relatively more advanced,

such as Buddhism and Hinduism.

In the Occident, ancestor worship developed into the veneration of national gods

and respect for racial heroes.

In the twentieth century this hero-venerating nationalistic religion makes its appearance in

the various radical and nationalistic secularisms which characterize many races and nations of the Occident.

Much of this same attitude is also found in

the great universities and the larger industrial communities of the English-speaking peoples.

I: PRIMITIVE RELIGION (Wieman & Horton 7)

I. THE PROBLEM OF THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION (Wieman & Horton 7)

Especially in the University of Chicago, where the influence of John Dewey's philosophy is deeply felt, a group of religious psychologists and historians has arisen who stress the practical and social nature of religion in its beginnings and in its contemporary developments. Religion, from their "pragmatic" point of view, ... is essentially not a theory at all, but a practical social activity, "a shared quest of the good life" (W&H 16-17).

Certain types of religion lend themselves admirably to this social and pragmatic interpretation: the public religion of ancient Athens and other city-states, whose supreme deity ("Athene") was the city itself; the official Shintō rites of modern Japan, which are essentially a worship of the state personified in the imperial family; and, some would add, Italian and German fascism, which seem to be growing conscious of themselves as religious and not merely patriotic movements (W&H 17).

Not very different from these concepts is the idea that

religion is but "a shared quest of the good life."

The "national religions" are nothing more than a reversion to the early Roman emperor worship

and to Shinto—worship of the state in the imperial family.

7. THE FURTHER EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

XL: RELIGION IN GENERAL (Sumner & Keller 1421)

§323. **Nature of Religion.** (Sumner & Keller 1426)

As an illustration of what should not be included under the name religion, though it is not by any means regularly ruled out, is the so-called “scientific religion.” ... A **scientific** religion is an absolute contradiction in terms. It is a philosophy which contains two different and irreconcilable conceptions of causation (S&K 1429).

§325.* **Religion is Evolutionary.** (Sumner & Keller 1441)

“The impossibility of inventing a new religion is generally acknowledged. One might as well try to build a tree” (S&K 1442).

Any new religion has to take up the features of the old and assume its place in the unbroken series.

So too the **old does not pass away but merges into the later** (S&K 1442).

92:7.1 Religion can never become a **scientific** fact.

Philosophy may, indeed, rest on a scientific basis, but religion will ever remain either **evolutionary or revelatory, or a possible combination of both, as it is in the world today.**

92:7.2 **New religions cannot be invented;**

they are either evolved, or else they are suddenly revealed.

All new **evolutionary** religions are merely advancing expressions of the old beliefs, new adaptations and adjustments.

The **old does not cease to exist; it is merged with the new,**

Further, religions borrow and lend; in the savage particularly there is no feeling that his own religion is the only one for all men (S&K 1442).

“I wish,” writes Müller, “we could explore together . . . the ancient religions of mankind, for I feel convinced that the more we know of them the more we shall see that there is not one which is entirely false; nay, that in one sense every religion was a true religion, being the only religion which was possible at that time...” (S&K 1447).

even as Sikhism budded and blossomed out of the soil and forms of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and other contemporary cults.

Primitive religion was very democratic; the savage was quick to borrow or lend.

Only with revealed religion did autocratic and intolerant theologic egotism appear.

92:7.3 The many religions of Urantia are all good to the extent that they bring man to God and bring the realization of the Father to man. It is a fallacy for any group of religionists to conceive of their creed as *The Truth*; such attitudes bespeak more of theological arrogance than of certainty of faith. There is not a Urantia religion that could not profitably study and assimilate the best of the truths contained in every other faith,

for all contain truth.

Religionists would do better to borrow the best in their neighbors' living spiritual faith rather than to denounce the worst in their lingering superstitions and outworn rituals.

92:7.4 All these religions have arisen as a result of man's variable intellectual response to his identical spiritual leading. They can never hope to attain a uniformity of creeds, dogmas, and rituals—these are intellectual; but they can, and some day will, realize a unity in true worship of the Father of all, for this is spiritual, and it is forever true, in the spirit all men are equal.

II: RELIGION EMERGING INTO SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS (Westcott-Wieman 22)

DEFINING RELIGION AS A FUNCTIONING PROCESS (Westcott-Wieman 26)

In the beginnings, when the promptings to action were more directly connected with the physical appetites, the values sought were more material, more definitely the supplies necessary for existence (W-W 28).

As the ways and means of living became more civilized and more socialized, the ways of religious living changed also (W-W 28).

Religion, at its highest and best, is the devotion of the total self, through search, service and adoration, to the highest cause of which one is now conscious, providing that cause is deemed worthy of the devotion of all men, and is symbolic of ever higher unexplored values.

Religion, then, is a process of organizing the self around and toward the highest values (W-W 29).

92:7.5 Primitive religion was largely a material-value consciousness,

but civilization elevates religious values,

for true religion is the devotion of the self to the service of meaningful and supreme values.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

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DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN RELIGION AND CERTAIN RELATED FOCI OF HUMAN INTEREST (Westcott-Wieman 32)

Since religion is a way of living, an organizing of the self and all its interests, it has much to do with conduct.... **Ethics being the philosophy of morals**, only the two terms, religion and morals, need clarifying (W-W 33).

Moral “goodness” means *conscientious goodness* springing from *observance of duty*. Moral conduct is *respect-full* conduct. It is **discipline of the self by standards** (W-W 34).

Religious “goodness” means a **spontaneous goodness**

springing from *undivided loyalty* as over against the conscientious goodness of observance of duty. Religious goodness is *consecrated conduct*. It is *liberation of the self by loving devotion*, as over against discipline of the self by standards (W-W 34).

NORMS TO BE USED IN FUNCTIONAL APPROACH (Westcott-Wieman 38)

Thus there emerges out of the analysis of the function of religion six specific norms by which to evaluate religion, either in one’s own living or in a total culture, either for the individual or for the group. In summary, these norms may be stated as follows:

As religion evolves,

ethics becomes the philosophy of morals,

and morality becomes the **discipline of self by the standards**

of highest meanings and supreme values—divine and spiritual ideals.

And thus religion becomes a **spontaneous** and exquisite devotion,

the living experience of the **loyalty of love.**

92:7.6 The quality of a religion is indicated by:

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

1. The degree to which the objective of devotion is supremely worthwhile for all human living.

WORTHFULNESS of the objective (W-W 39).

4. The degree to which the devotee acts with his utmost power of sensing and discriminating values in concrete situations.

SENSITIVITY of the loyalty (W-W 40).

2. The degree to which the total self is devoted to the objective.

COMPLETENESS of the loyalty (W-W 39).

5. The degree to which the devotion of the individual progresses through his present highest objective in an emerging sequence of objectives of ever greater value.

PROGRESSION of loyalties (W-W 40).

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1. Level [of] values—loyalties.

2. Depth of meanings—

the sensitization of the individual to the idealistic appreciation of these highest values.

3. Consecration intensity—

the degree of devotion to these divine values.

4. The unfettered progress of the personality

in this cosmic path of idealistic spiritual living, realization of sonship with God and never-ending progressive citizenship in the universe.

92:7.7 Religious meanings progress in self-consciousness when the child transfers his ideas of omnipotence from his parents to God. And the entire religious experience of such a child is largely dependent on whether fear or love has dominated the parent-child relationship. Slaves have always experienced great difficulty in transferring their master-fear into concepts of God-love. Civilization, science, and advanced religions must deliver mankind from those fears born of the dread of natural phenomena. And so should greater enlightenment deliver educated mortals from all dependence on intermediaries in communion with Deity.

92:7.8 These intermediate stages of idolatrous hesitation in the transfer of veneration from the human and the visible to the divine and invisible are inevitable, but they should be shortened by the consciousness of the facilitating ministry of the indwelling divine spirit. Nevertheless, man has been profoundly influenced, not only by his concepts of Deity, but also by the character of the heroes whom he has chosen to honor. It is most unfortunate that those who have come to venerate the divine and risen Christ should have overlooked the man—the valiant and courageous hero—Joshua ben Joseph.

FACTORS FORCING RELIGION TO SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS (Westcott-Wieman 22)

92:7.9 Modern man is adequately self-conscious of religion, but his worshipful customs are confused and discredited by his accelerated social metamorphosis and unprecedented scientific developments.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

But now the young world is asking for definition of religion. It is forcing a vigorous and rather general focusing of objective attention upon religion in the hope that the truth in it may become more articulate and comprehensive.

Consequently, religion is being made conscious of itself and being forced to re-evaluate itself and its organization of the meanings of life (W-W 23).

[Religion] does not and cannot manufacture values. But through it, as a living process, man can discover, organize and serve values. Then as man changes, and makes new discoveries and organizations of value, or sees fallacies in his former organization, he must change the particular form and content which he has built up in religion. Usually this has been done through such a slow, gradual process that he is not aware of the religious re-forming. Today this has become for many, many persons a conscious undertaking, though not always an intelligent one (W-W 23-24).

DEFINING OF RELIGION AS A FUNCTIONING PROCESS (Westcott-Wieman 26)

If [religion] were an object or a unit process, or a single type of experience, or a set system of concepts, a universally acceptable definition might be approximated. But, for one thing, religion is a way of living, and a way not precisely identical for any two persons. Secondly, religion is the body of concepts which constantly generates the particular modes of responsiveness which give character to this way of life (W-W 26).

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Thinking men and women want religion redefined,

and this demand will compel religion to re-evaluate itself.

92:7.10 Modern man is confronted with the task of making more readjustments of human values in one generation than have been made in two thousand years.

And this all influences the social attitude toward religion,

for religion is a way of living as well as a technique of thinking.

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92:7.11 True religion must ever be, at one and the same time, the eternal foundation and the guiding star of all enduring civilizations.³

92:7.12 [Presented by a Melchizedek of Neadon.]

1. Of the Araucanians it is reported that Christianity “has made little headway among them, probably because they cannot even conceive of, much less understand, the principal dogmas and tenets of a highly developed religion.... At most they can be only **nominally Christians, accepting** certain moral ideas and outward forms, such as baptism, crosses in their burial grounds, etc., and all that appeals to the senses, but in the real bases of their ideas they are as pagan as they were three centuries ago...”

2. *Compare:* If the statements of the writers quoted at the outset of the last caption were strictly true, then religion could show no adjustment. There could be no variation in this range and no selection except by the utter destruction of the adherents of some ill-starred faith; there could be nothing except unvaried transmission. Such a view would be absurd on the face of it; otherwise a **special revelation** must needs be assumed to have taken place in the case of every minute peculiarity of every religion. If, instead of attempting to play the treacherous and futile logical game, the candid searcher goes to the facts, he finds that religion, like every other societal product, is in and of the mores and, like them, shows adjustment to life-conditions in the usual way. Its conservative quality renders its adjustments **slower** and more painful than those in, say, the industrial organization; but the time-element is not important in cosmic processes where there are no anxious, short-lived observers and actors to become impatient and dismayed (S&K 1441).

3. Grave moral problems of vice and its regulation and control on the one hand, and the present and future status of the church as a source of spiritual inspiration and teaching on the other, challenge all that is best in the American people to arise and make a powerful twentieth-century re-statement of religious truth—so to illuminate current Christianity as *to turn religion into a great practical and spiritual searchlight that will become **at once our guiding star** of national destiny **and at the same time** unfailingly attractive to that great body of honest, earnest, and truth-loving people who constitute the present backbone and the future hope of the American Republic* (William S. Sadler, M.D., *Race Decadence* [1922], pp. 5-6).