

LETTER TO CARL – July 4, 2002

Dear Carl,

First off, this response to yours may appear rather disparate but I'm just going to fire away and let the chips fall where they may. I'm deep into a serious and careful re-reading of Thomas Altizer's GENESIS AND APOCALYPSE with its sequel, THE GENESIS OF GOD, waiting in the wings, and I hope to correlate his findings with what the experiments confirm, but that's going to take a while. Now that all the returns are in, at least those that I've been able to uncover, as I've suspected for some time Altizer comes as close as anyone to what we're about regarding the meaning of history. And that includes members of the Kyoto School - Tanabe, Nishitani and especially Abe with whom Altizer has engaged in an occasional dialogue. What I find so incredible is how he, or they, too, for that matter, manage to do it at all, to come so close to certainty by simply relying on intellect, on speech and thought, an achievement completely beyond me. Witness the fact that for years, when studying them and/or others, I'd veer from this view to that view, from this insight to that one always looking for the one Open Sesame. And now it's here.

For instance, if you look at the very top of page 118 of the excerpt I sent you, the continuation of the sentence that reads, "a reversal which itself has been reversed by the actuality of history, and most clearly so in Western Christian history, a history that has very nearly completed a movement from the transcendence of transcendence to the immanence of immanence," we see now and see immediately in light of the experiments, that the "very nearly" (which I've italicized), though drawing ever closer to the bottom-line still suggests a promissory note, leaving it to Headlessness to confirm and confirm definitively that the "very nearly" he's been at once documenting and, like John the Baptist, crying for in the wilderness has now arrived in Person, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Person of the experiments. No longer confined to the arcane and sometimes brilliant speculations of scholars and theologians (or even prophets and mystics for that matter), with the future behind us - at least in terms of linear history - the long longed-for Second Coming is now and forever upon us. And I do mean us, as Altizer, consistently making the necessary connections, brilliantly analyzes in another incisive and off-beat work, his HISTORY AS APOCALYPSE. There, following studies of Dante, Milton, Blake, Hegel and Nietzsche - precursors all - he finally turns his attention to FINNEGANS WAKE, to Joyce, the last of the great ones to pay homage to Here Comes Everybody in a language and summing-up that, by suiting the action to the Word and prefiguring the experiments by inviting the reader to enact what is read, takes speech to the end of the line. Like history itself stretched to its absolute limit, further than that through intelligible chaos we can't go without altogether (and all together) falling off the edge of the world into the waiting arms of an unutterable simplicity. Which rest that is silence - the experiments - is precisely what's happened and which Joyce himself, uncannily knowing without knowing, foresaw in so many words at the start of the Second World War (even as Douglas was experiencing his declared epiphany in the Himalayas) with his recognition that the fall he'd celebrated in the Wake - the wake of history, the nightmare from which, as he put it, he'd spent his life trying to awaken - had now plunged deep enough, was now so total and complete as to insure the further and final realization that, having come full circle and all verbal possibilities exhausted not least by him, there was nothing left to do but wake. And if, what with the bombs falling, it looked as if after him would come the deluge, no matter. It would just be icing on the cake. Because virtually on his death bed he wrote that were he to begin again, it would be with something as yet inconceivably simple and childlike. As one of his colleagues in Paris and a fine writer in her own right, Djuna

Barnes, put it: "Let go hell and your fall will be broken by the roof of heaven." And so it's come to pass, no longer figuratively but literally and demonstrably for all who care to look, to try the experiments on for size and then see.

I really must make every effort to locate Altizer (he's now retired) and get in touch with him along with his associate, D.G. Leahy, who, the last I heard and I think I mentioned to you, teaches at Loyola in Maryland. Not that I hold out any great hopes of sharing, no less convincing them that these literally miraculous instruments present rather than re-present the end of a future that, always on the look-out for the main chance, has now learned to turn the other way and, by reversing itself, conduct us directly into the Presence, into the very ground of Mercy and Goodness. It's been my experience that when one has so much invested in a particular line and career - in their case intellect and speech - it's pretty hard to make the break from specialization into freedom and the silent openness of the Whole. Witness what happened to the apes, and not only the apes but to the animal kingdom itself as, each to his own, it got side-tracked vis-à-vis us who, except for an upright posture designed to subsidize vision and a ready hand and tongue enabling us to talk our way out of a paper-bag and then right back into it - in a word, to all appearances practically helpless - would certainly not have been chosen top of the class or voted the most likely to succeed. On that score, I'm reminded of Joyce's first and, so far as I know, his only meeting with Yeats, at the time, though still immersed in his pixies and elves, the big Irish gun in London. At any rate, on the strength of DUBLINERS and, it may be, the PORTRAIT too - I don't recall at the moment - the younger Joyce sailed over from Ireland and introduced himself to the great man. Apparently the meeting didn't go at all well, to the point where, on leaving, Joyce couldn't resist a parting, "I've come too late to help you." And that was that. But, of course, it wasn't. According to some, the evolution of Yeats' wonderfully mature style can be directly attributed, at least in part, to the doubts raised by that immodest and arrogant (but, as we see now, justifiably arrogant) encounter. Not to anticipate - nevertheless, there may be parallels here. Obviously alongside these packs and sets of great ones those of us around Headlessness, and that includes Douglas, don't stack up to a hill of beans. Still, I can't help but recall the parable of the Prodigal Son, that other Johnny-Come-Lately who parlayed his inheritance into the better part, indeed, into the best part if the experiments are any judge. And they are - in fact, the only judge.

Speaking of Douglas - thank you for sending me back to the autobiographical section in the abridged version of the HIERARCHY which, as I think I mentioned, I hadn't looked at in years. I can see why the first time I picked it up I couldn't put it down, if for no other reason its wonderful epigrammatic and elliptical, almost breezy, elegance, at the same time packed with the most prescient and precious substance. For instance, on page 229, he writes, "We live by deicide," a remark that might almost be taken for off-hand until we realize it anticipates the "Death of God" movement Altizer later co-opted and which, though admittedly more thoroughly documented than even its initiators, Hegel and Nietzsche, could ever have dreamed, is merely a variation on this theme. And I could go down the list. "What really is mechanism from the lower hierarchical viewpoint is intention from the higher." (I'll try to go into this notion of "immanent teleology" more thoroughly when I come to the diagram I've enclosed). Or "Only the post-mortem discovers one-directional history." (184). Precisely what, following the uncovering of Headlessness we're now in a position to confirm: that if, as with any story, we can't see it whole till it comes to an end, paradoxically and by definition it can't come to an end until we do see it whole. And if on the surface this circular argument offends our sensibilities by seemingly suggesting no way out, in reality it's anything but. Because contrary to expectations but quite in conformity with the

alchemical formula that like cures like, the end of one-directional, linear history, rather than indicate the resumption of an endless round, points to the end itself and reveals it, its purpose served courtesy of the Gap, as open at both ends, beginning and end. Which is no more than to say that when all perspectives, macro- as well as micro-cosmic, simultaneously converge as they do in Headlessness and sign, signified and signifier - consciousness and history, percept and concept - make in all One, then among other services the experiments render is the justification of their forerunners, 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Science and 3<sup>rd</sup> Person History, both restored to their proper place in the nature of things. Nor, again in light of the experiments, should it be surprising that, fulfilled rather than destroyed, these very watchwords of modernity are immediately resurrected, immediately brought back to life.

Because what becomes obvious in this resurrection of history if you will, is the disclosure that what primarily and essentially happens in history is nothing less than an emerging awareness of the Consciousness that creates it in the first place, a consciousness that, a.k.a. God, becomes conscious of itSelf, not merely by occurring in history but because it is history. (Again, the enclosed diagram, which I'll get to, may be of help here). On the one hand, if all of us now have the aware capacity, at least potentially, to experience what, reverting to Scholastic terminology, we might call the essence of things and this through the guaranteed deliverance of 1<sup>st</sup> Person Science, it's only because, on the other, that deliverance has been made available thanks to the existence of its special mode of delivery, 1<sup>st</sup> Person History. What this suggests for our interpretation of such notions as providence and predestination and teleology, not to speak of theories of natural evolution, I'll leave, if not to the imagination, at least for later or some other time. Suffice it that, no longer limited to an academic exercise or to intellectual and theological wrestlings - in a word, to anybody's guess rather than everyone's assurance - these, too, along with the rest of creation, have suffered the ultimate imprimatur. Quite simply, for history to culminate in the experiments and the absolute realization that we're literally built for loving is at once to testify to the predestination it embodies and the providence that, if it hasn't exactly guided, has certainly not prohibited our falling off the deep-end in order to arrive in its own name at the place it never left. And that name - no longer name-less but name-free - is freedom itSelf, the consciousness that, contrary to Teilhard, doesn't evolve in order to involve but, as Douglas points out in a fairly recent but largely neglected paper, unfolds even as it visibly enfolds.

But once again Douglas has beaten us to the punch (and the punch-line) when he writes, "...to live in the present moment, taking no thought for tomorrow or yesterday, must be my first concern. And my second must be to find in this Now all my tomorrows and yesterdays." (224) Which, as regards this last, is presumably and hopefully what we're all about - to second, not the first proposition which is Self-evident, but the second which, though implicit in it, is not. And I can think of no better way to seize all our yesterdays by the throat than, armed with the experiments, shake the truth out of them by taking thought in light of "this Now."

For instance, you ask how the card experiment makes available the experience of the resurrection of the body and what people are talking about when they talk about the resurrection of the body. What, indeed?

Well, I think I have a pretty good idea of what most of them have been talking about, in fact, have talked about so much and so often that for all practical purposes they've literally talked themselves and the Subject to death. Hence the beneficent effect of a Hegel or a Nietzsche and the lingering spectacle of a modernity that, on its way to learning Nothing by forgetting a great

deal, though no longer engaged in a two-way, as Pascal proposed, but a three-way wager on immortality - in effect, a bet across the board on tomorrow morning - still persists despite all odds in backing the wrong horse by putting its money where its mouth is. For instance, for the first time in history we have a large and ever-growing contingent of non-believers, professed agnostics and atheists who, once described as publicans and sinners and, as a result, reasonably tolerant (though not always so), are now free to speak their piece. Free, though not necessarily easy, since to express doubts as to the truth of reality or sweep it under the rug or even deny the fact of its existence, though there may be exceptions to prove the rule (but I doubt it), is hardly conducive to a sound mind in a sound body (or vice-versa as we see now), not to mention offering a nod in the direction of the "hand" that feeds them. Alongside them - not so much opposed as running parallel but also providing a leaven - we have an equally large company of what we can only call easy believers, those who, indulging in what Spengler referred to as a second, watered-down religiosity, still hanker and, as we see now, justifiably hanker after a lost paradise but, despite their "scientific" protestations, for the most part still continue to look the wrong way. Finally, we have the toughest nuts to crack - the true believers sacred and profane who, coming in all shapes and sizes, though they may, when properly house-broken as they have been in the West (at least for the present), be put to good use as God-dogs, if allowed to roam unconstrained will most certainly turn out like the little girl in the nursery rhyme to be positively horrid.

In face of these possible variations - and deviations too - what would, what could a notion like the resurrection of the body possibly look like since for the question to arise in the first place almost instinctively suggests that, as with all questions, there has to be an answer that precedes it? Expectations like this don't just pop up out of nowhere and for no reason unless, of course, everything else does. In any event, does it mean that, following the natural disaster to end all natural disasters, these bones will live or, God help me, that my "soul," finally brought to something like attention - an act I can very well perform right now by just seeing Who I am - will again be made to stand up straight and, encouraged by this cosmetic posturing to assume once and for all its cosmic posture, will be ready to re-open for business as Uplift Incorporated? As if the flesh, for all that it's provided my only visible means of support up to now, hasn't given me enough trouble on this go-round without its having to lust after the strange gods of reincarnation however they manifest, whether in carnal or, even more deadly, in spiritual form. Or, inasmuch as the dream of flight originated with the Idea of angels anyway, does it mean I'll suddenly and miraculously be equipped to ascend by sprouting a set of newly-acquired wings - what the well-dressed man will wear when, clothed in nothing but his desire, he seeks entrance into the finest company?

But even here the prospect has worn somewhat thin now that, admittedly jaded, I can mount to the heavens, if not quite under my own steam, at least by boarding a plane. Most important of all, because largely unregarded, is how these parodies, even as they betray the essential by serving up left-overs from the un-lived life, nevertheless anticipate its consummation with their on-going promise of a blue-plate special, a promise which, incidentally - such is the beneficent nature of reality - has now been kept. No longer reserved for the fortunate few but quite in line with the providential unfolding of history, the invitation to chew on something other than the menu has now been extended to all. In any case, setting aside for the moment the above contradictions and the healthy skepticism they evoke - the Buddha's refusal, for instance, even to consider such curiosities as both distracting and dangerous or even Thoreau's refreshing response on his death-bed where, caught by his pious sister reading Homer - and in the original no less - and admonished

to turn his thoughts to the next world, replied, "One world at a time, sister. One world at a time;" - setting these aside as, strictly speaking, also opinions, in the words of one of my favorite T.V. sportscasters when reviewing the latest in disputed calls - the foul ball that was fair, the first down that wasn't - "let's look at the tape," in this case the court of final appeal, the body in question in light of the card-experiment

Since you ask for a "hermeneutic analysis" as regards 1<sup>st</sup> Person History, rather than follow the step-by-step details of this particular experiment which are set forth so clearly and thoroughly in *THE LITTLE BOOK OF LIFE AND DEATH* and which, along with *THE SCIENCE OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> PERSON* and *THE TRIAL*, seems to me seminal to a definitive understanding of Headlessness and its ramifications, I'll skip right to the chase with some random observations.

The first thing that comes to mind is the quote Douglas himself gives from Ramana Maharshi, that the real answer to every serious question is to see who asks it. Which - no sooner said than done - by holding the card up but at some distance, if it doesn't immediately reveal the essential, at least establishes the rules of the game. First off, whose resurrection of whose body are we talking about? Is it that flat, two-dimensional fellow's out there staring at me from the mirror who, despite the obvious fact that he's so patently made in my image rather than the other way round, nevertheless persists in making faces at me and worse, of me, and so in his refusal to fuse confuses? Is it any wonder that from Adam and Moses and Job on down virtually everyone's been running around protesting, if not downright complaining, that he or she has never seen God face to face when, truth to tell and as the pointing finger and the paper-bag and this experiment in particular incontrovertibly demonstrate, there's no -thing to see, there's no -body home in the first place? Which observation if taken at face value (and it has been) might be construed as giving aid and comfort to the enemy, to those big, bad bogey-men known as atheists and agnostics to whose intransigence, having driven us to this pretty pass, we owe so much. Of course, if we look hard enough, we can always find exceptions to any prevailing rule, the kind that, formerly attributed to geniuses - and one of the great boons of Headlessness, but quite fitting considering its universality, is that geniuses, spiritual or otherwise, need no longer apply - turn out to be the exceptions that prove it. A St. Teresa of Avila, for example, who could declare with a perfectly straight face that "God has no hands, no arms but mine." To which had she dared she might have added, "and no no-face but mine."

Still, in light of history and especially the end of it, things could have turned out worse. We might have stopped at this relatively innocuous if not innocent imposition by the man in the mirror, in which case, though well short of the Source, that is to say, of the end which is precisely end because it includes the beginning and everything in-between, we'd only have suffered a mild case of arrested development approximating late adolescence, the kind celebrated in the myth of Narcissus, for instance. But we'd most certainly not have arrived at the be-all and the end-all, the experiments. Indeed, pausing to catch our breath during the so-called Dark Ages, that's exactly what we did do until, resuming our immersion in a pool of self-admiration, a descent into the Unconscious marked, paradoxically, by the highest of high hopes, and picking up speed all the way, we headed towards full maturity, towards the flowering of civilization and the obvious and very real universal rewards of modernity, of one world and the inalienable right of each of us to "life" (for which now read long life), "liberty and the pursuit of happiness." We even threw in air - conditioners for good measure. (And considering the sweat and misery that's gone into the road we've travelled these past five or six thousand years, in a period of global warming, if that's what we're going through, an air-conditioner is certainly nothing to sneeze at as again demonstrated by

the experiments and especially this experiment, and as, judging from their behavior, more and more are beginning to suspect, we still haven't got it quite right.

Though getting closer if only by default we're still pretending to look at things upside-down and, as a result, can't see that if the pursuit of happiness would only stop for a minute the happiness of pursuit could catch up to it. The problem, of course, is that same fellow in the mirror who, passing himself off as me, continues to take my name in vain and, as any newspaper headline will testify, never so much and so dangerously as when he swears by it. That is, if he's not swearing at it as, growing increasingly suspicious and disenchanted, a few (and it always comes down to a few, sometimes to only one as in the case of a Socrates or a Buddha or a Jesus) begin to ask unseemly questions and, to add insult to injury, provide even more unseemly answers. In the most recent case, the case of modernity, though its beginnings are generally assigned to the 17th century and the emergence of 3rd Person Science and its natural ally, popular government, and both notably in Britain, feelers had already been sent down and its roots established some four centuries earlier with, to name only two, Roger Bacon's explorations into the experimental method and Dante's attack on the Papacy. But contrary to what now passes for history, for 3rd Person history with its endless disputes as to who did what to whom and when and resemble nothing so much as the interminable Scholastic disagreements as to how many angels can dance on the head of a pin, exact dates don't matter. Or if they do, don't matter nearly so much as what those events signified and what they led to.

And what they led to with their rumblings and revolutions and rebellions and all following in the wake of disappointed millennial expectations was nothing less than the prospect of a world on its way to being turned right-side up by being turned upside-down. And, indeed, auspiciously enough the most popular rallying-cry at the onset of this movement, the English Civil War - and, as we see now, all wars are essentially civil - was just that: a pamphlet distributed by the Ranters called *The World Turned Upside down*. Except for no-nonsense nannies like Thomas Hobbes who, literally fearing for the survival of the race and with good reason given his perspective, could describe the world as a "condition of war of everyone against everyone" in which "the life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" and so canonized the doctrine of confrontation as it hadn't been since Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and Machiavelli, little did these early revolutionaries dream what a hornet's nest they were stirring up or how by this reversal of history's continuity - the death of a king and a king assumed divine by right - the first step had been taken, however unwittingly, towards its own eventual reversal, a reversal that would finally enable us for the first time in history to assign its facts, whatever they are, to the Fact itSelf, to the one and only Actor Who, no longer charged with being a Witness once removed and a distant one at that, assumes full responsibility as its sole Participant. Just as in the TRIAL Douglas has definitively examined the true nature of omniscience and omnipotence and omnipresence as it pertains to each of us individually, so it's my contention that this simple card with its oval cut-out and mirror provides us with the key, not only to who we really really are (which goes without saying), but how, as a species, we got from there to here (which does not).

It's my contention that if history's hitherto indecipherable code is read aright, from first to last, from Alpha to Omega, its essentials are contained in this experiment. The very Fact that the card exists at all, not only with all that it reveals about Who we really really are but, equally important for our purposes, about where we're coming from and hopefully heading - the place we never left - is proof positive that what was once upon a time vaguely referred to as the ways of Providence is still alive and kicking, still sitting up and taking nourishment and that the billions and billions of

years of natural evolution that was to come to its definitive end at the very latest some five or six thousand years ago at the hands, we might almost say with the onslaught, of human history, is in turn to be succeeded, if it's to succeed at all, by a universal vision now made possible for the first time because now made explicit for the first time. Can it be a coincidence - assuming there are such things - that, to use Guenon's terms, the Reign of Quantity now coming to an end one way or the other is about to be superseded, has in Fact already been superseded, at least in embryo, by the Reign of Quality - the experiments? Or that the human dimension, by every quantitative measure falling exactly in between the smallest and the largest thing in the universe (or so the physicists tell us), equally corresponds, as any number of Douglas' diagrams indicate, to the locus of divine consciousness, here where the cross is made at dead-center between I AM NOT and I AM ALL?

Stranger parallels have happened in the realm of prophetic history. Witness the rise and fall, if not of a rarely tried Christianity but of a Christendom which, petering out (no pun intended) into the totally profane and secular world we live in even as it inhabits us, has, despite itself (speaking of Providence), graciously provided the finishing touch to what's turned out to be its most precious gift: the celebration of the death, along with its own, of God Himself. Now He, too, released from that awful transcendence to which a misguided enthusiasm had sentenced Him (and, in the name of a Word no less), can assume his rightful place in person, in the 1st person of the experiments, and so, reduced to who he really really is, a not-god, is free for the first time in history to show his no-face in public as the meekest of the meek and weakest of the weak, the only condition under which the awesome power of omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence could possibly operate. Can it be a coincidence, then, that, measured on the great scale-pan of creation, from first to, if not last, to the present (and now the Presence), this whole transaction, the whole human enterprise including that of the earliest hominids, can be clocked in as occurring at one minute to midnight and what that suggests of an end? Or that given what we know of deepest night, the possibility of a new day is again on offer, to be ushered in, not as expected in a cloud of glory (mushroom or otherwise) but in the only way possible, in the twinkling of an eye?

And lest this sound at once utopian and alarmist - a call for a heaven on earth or else - aside from the fact that we've been there and done that and both past and present run-throughs haven't gone according to script, in reality and quite in keeping with the reversal revealed in the experiments, it's just the opposite. Rather than do - and God knows if past is prologue and the proof of the pudding in the eating we've done enough by way of rehearsing for this ultimate in revelations - the time has come in all its fullness to undo, to recognize the once and future apocalypse for what it is, was and always will be, an ever-present unveiling here for the taking. Far from somehow acquiring or developing a new Consciousness a Teilhard proposes, as Douglas rightly points out in *THE LITTLE BOOK* all that's required is to acknowledge (and act on) the one we've been given, the earth in heaven that, sometimes referred to as the fitness of the environment, was established long before our arrival and will remain so long after our disappearance.

So let's begin with the looking-glass man to see what we can see through the eyes or, as we might say now, through the eye of history, always keeping in mind that if we're limiting ourselves to examining a somewhat special, indeed a unique region by virtue of its capacity for mercy and freedom, it represents only one of the regional organs of God's body, all of which are, of course, interdependent. In any case, it would appear that on the strength of the card-experiment alone and what it reveals as to how we got from there to here, we're now in a position, in *the* position paradoxically, to end speculation and elevate homo mirans (and I hope I've gotten my Latin right:

from mirare, to look, to wonder, to admire) to the rank of his predecessors, homo sapiens and homo faber. I'll go even further and suggest that, by right of his tutelary genius as the premier guide to his own divinity if only by default, this mirror-man surpasses them since, though admittedly a late-comer, in fact the latest-comer on the scene, when was that ever a bar to the last becoming first?

It's my view that if this experiment, coming as it does after thousands and thousands of years of trial and error, opens the door to our understanding of history and to more than history - the door through which we've had to pass in order to gain access to the enormous room that contains it - then the key to that door and the first fumbling attempts to open it is present in the mirror, a breakthrough even an ingenious and imaginative Alice couldn't quite fathom. Though she grew small enough to head in the right direction, failing to look in at what she was looking out of, she merely managed to become homesick at home and so for all her pains had no recourse but to look forward to looking back, to exchanging her birthright for a mess of potage and the inevitable disillusion (and terror) that awaits nostalgia and memory and sentiment. A hard doctrine, perhaps, this becoming homesick at home, but who says the simple, any more than the nightmare of history, is easy? After all, what are mirrors for if not in the final analysis to reflect the real thing? Even more pertinent for our purposes, where do mirrors come from - and when? If apes ape and young children imitate but, nevertheless, consistently fail to recognize their image until, relatively late, they reach a stage of conscious awareness that at once takes time yet at the same time is lost on every other creature on earth (and that would include, not only your favorite dog or cat but, as the evidence suggests, even the earliest primitives who have to be taught to see their selves just as we now have to be reminded to see our Self) - is there a correlation between this first confrontation between time and its surrogate, history, with that arch-representative of space, the mirror, a confrontation that was not so much to be resolved as definitively and universally dissolved in the union consummated in the sight of this experiment?

Setting aside the inevitable aporia as to which comes first the chicken or the egg in favor of the reciprocal and necessary interplay between individual and species, I think there is. In fact, it's precisely this interplay between the "I" that proceeds from the percept "AM" and leads to the concept "we" - the lie that tells the truth - that sets the stage for history. Is it conceivable that a Jesus could have been designated Word in the absence of language or that Douglas could have first imagined and then zeroed-in on universal personal experience had he not been heir to all the ages with its wealth of racial and historical memory? I think not. There's a wonderful moment in one of Brecht's plays where some blow-hard or other starts bellowing about how Alexander the Great conquered the whole known world. To which someone pipes up from the cheap seats, "Alone?" The notion that simply because seeing who we really really are is ours by right as well as grace is somehow a guarantee of its conscious acknowledgement is simplistic, as any toddler looking into a mirror would testify if it could only talk. In fact, it's only after it begins to talk and is persuaded by its image that the mirror - truly the instrument of the devil, the devillus, the little god- is talking back in the only manner of speaking it's capable of, that that innocence can be said to end and experience, that is to say, history, personal or otherwise, can be said to begin. To experience, to ex-per-iment - the roots are identical - means to go through. For the first time in history yet thanks to it, we're now in a position, not only to approach the nightmare as Alice did before she got cold feet, but to see through it as she did not, and so take back with our right what we providentially handed over to that little devil, the image in the mirror, with our left. I say providentially because had we not done so the story could not have been completed as promised

and along with it the immense occupation and privilege now available to all, not only of witnessing but participating in the great reversal, the reversal of the reversal that began it. We'd be right back where we started from before the fortunate fall, engaged in a one-way conversation held in a garden. And we're not. Yet, paradoxically - and paradox seems to be the name of the game - of course we are.

Well, how does the little one, the ape of God, talk back? Like all of us he learns and learning takes time. Can it be an accident that, recapitulating step by step the historical road we've taken, the lead-in to this definitive experiment begins with a mirror any more than, even before the invention of glass replaced tin, its first appearance in history coincides with the development of metallurgy which, again in this reciprocal interchange between individual and species, between the I and the we, in turn "reflects" the emergence of a burgeoning civilization, of extended settlements and later towns and finally cities where, bereft identification with their tribal gods, strangers are thrown together for the first time ever? The earliest cave-drawings, for instance, rarely if ever display human heads, nor so far as we can guess absent writing, any 'I's' either. Even archaic sculpture coming long after depicts only the most rudimentary lineaments of a face. Is it any wonder, then, that, however it came about - whether, as, again, with the chicken or the egg, demand created supply or, as is more likely judging from the forces at work in our world-wide market-place, supply created demand (who needs or even wants a computer till some individual odd-ball, pilfering, like Prometheus, the treasure the species has stored up, decides to build one?) - the presence of the mirror initiates an absolutely new epoch in the history of self-consciousness? And it's a self-consciousness that despite the protestations of the seers - the prophets, Jesus, the Buddha, the mystics, all more honored in the breach than in the observance, all more heard than listened to - still calls the shots, still rules the world, for all intents is the world or at least the world as believed in and will remain so until exposed by this simple experiment for what it is.

And what is it, or rather what has it been, now that, all the returns in, we have the whole picture and for the first time ever, side by side with Who it is, the mirror and the image in it can be seen for what it is and so be addressed, one is almost tempted to say undressed, in the only language it understands, its own naked voice of silence? What has this new self-consciousness as certified by the mirror turned out to be if not a presage, the first and absolutely necessary step in an historical passage that's led us towards ultimate realization and true Self-consciousness in, of all places, an oval cut-out in a piece of cardboard? Think of it - and in view of what it reveals of the unthinkable, of the unheard of up to now, how can we help it? - for the first time ever, the constant and ever-present companion, the abyss on which the very ground of ex-istence rests, is made visible in all its invisibility. A shift of venue, incidentally, which, for all the doing it took to get there, or rather here, can now be transacted as if by magic - that dream of pre-history - in the twinkling of an eye. Think of it - as simple as switching on a light: incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection in one fell swoop; the natural condition of all life as it has been from the beginning - in fact, is the beginning - still signalling its *Let there be light*, only this time at the end of the tunnel and the beginning of its own Self-realization. And as if that weren't enough to confound the wise, all decked out in nothing fancier than a gross, manufactured, recyclable piece of goods worth little more than the material it's made of. You'll forgive me if I can't resist pointing out that, as once in a manger, the Fact is not above suiting its action to the Word and putting in a literal appearance where most desperately needed when, as we see now, a world-wide society approaching universal literacy, indeed, the promise of universal everything, is still unable to hear It, no less read It. Nor

is the manner of its appearance from below without its ironies when it comes to letting the air, and mostly hot air, out of the inflated balloon of human pretensions that launched its mirror-image to the skies in the name of transcendent divinity.

Recognizing that in a brief sketch like this we only have time for the barest outline, we can do worse than begin with the Greeks, specifically the Athenians. In fact, situated as they are on the cusp of two epochs - caught between two ways of looking at the world, between the devil of modernity and the deep blue sea of the archaic - we have no alternative. Because, though not quite modern itself, what is Athens - the so-called Greek miracle - if not the first to answer the one indispensable question, 'Mirror, mirror on the wall/ Who is the fairest of them all?' in favor of its own image, the human, and so, aside from making it the darling of Oxford dons everywhere, initiated a debate with Jerusalem and points East that's been going on ever since? Did all these firsts, and God knows they were legion - the first naturalistic treatment, even glorification, of the human body in portraiture and sculpture, the first architecture built to human scale, the first manifestation of a democratic polity, the first philosophy, and even more important for our purposes, the first foray into an exclusively human history (and this is not even to mention the developments in science and mathematics) - did all these represent a breakdown, a parting of the ways, not to speak of the Way, as traditionalists of all stripes including Plato were and still are convinced, or a breakthrough? Or, paradoxically, as is the way of Providence if not the world, did it signal, now that we have the whole picture, the first step towards the ultimate reconciliation of both perspectives, towards a breakthrough that, given its essential nature, would not, could not, reveal itself for what it really really is until the civilizational and religious breakdown that occasioned it was complete and had hit bottom, until, rousting out every last vestige of the childish, of the primordial and primitive and archaic and taking on a life of its own, the mirror-image had conquered the whole of the One World and its gods, until there was Nothing and only Nothing left to respond to its non-essential nihilism, in effect, to its non-existence? Can it be an accident that, given this extreme set of conditions, the extreme Measure called for, the extreme Measure responded? Or that, taking the long way round, what had first to be acted out in and as history before it could be seen to arrive at at once its liberation and justification by means of a simple cardboard cut-out, is simultaneously revealed by the experiment itself to be the very template on which it had been designed in the first place? A nice instance of God disposing of man's proposing - to find ourselves back where we started. But with this difference and it makes all the difference. For the first time ever we're now in a position, the position, to know it.

Since I've already gone on much longer than I intended - such are the delights of exploring the ramifications of Headlessness - and I haven't even gotten to the heart of the Subject, and I do mean heart and I do mean Subject, in the interest of simplicity let's try to schematize after the Fact what the Fact of this particular experiment tells us about the historical effect the mirror has had and continues to have on both our individual and collective views of reality. It's my claim that solely on the evidence derived from this experiment and what it reveals, moving forward in time from the mirror's first use to its eventual universal diffusion (and even an imprecise date, assuming it could be determined, is unimportant) signals the parting of the Way between God and the devilus, the little one, between the eye of God (often so called in early societies) and an 'I' splitting off into self-consciousness. However this process came about - whether by ontogeny, individual experience, recapitulating phylogeny, race history, or the other way round, an argument still unresolved and probably undecidable - is irrelevant to our purpose since we can still observe the effects of this fortunate fall working its wiles in any nursery in the land as the infant progresses

towards early childhood. And despite the sentimental temptation still operative in some quarters to refer to this necessary separation as the original temptation, it turns out it was a necessary one and, if progress can be defined as a movement towards a hoped-for goal, it also constitutes a progress. Necessary because without it, without a first rudimentary self-consciousness that must be learned and then passed on as history, there'd be no this, no experiments. And progress because what this gradual maturation led to can now be identified as an historical epoch now coming to a close and which can only be described as a passage from an original, infant perception to a conception of self-consciousness (via the inception of the mirror or its reasonable facsimile) to, finally, the ultimate Perception of a total Self-consciousness, its end achieved by means of a hole in a card

Where this interpretation differs from generally received opinion, however, and, in this sense and in this sense only, vindicates the Judeo-Christian insistence on its own superiority, is that this return to the place we never left is represented as a simple return when, on the contrary, if history is any judge, we see now it's been anything but simple and, strictly speaking, hardly qualifies as even a return. That is, if a meaningful distinction can be made between a beginning and an end, between the unconsciousness of childhood, once symbolized as the Earthly Paradise, and the childlike awareness that attends, that is the Heavenly Jerusalem. And it's precisely this intimate connection with and ultimate dependence on a concrete, linear history uniting conception to perception and arriving not only at a knowledge of God which is simple but knowledge of the world which is not, that distinguishes the experiments from anything ever seen before. And that would include all mysticism, all theology, all metaphysics, all cyclical theories of eternal return and so on, all of which, to some degree, exhibit at least some symptoms of regression, if only in their dependence on language, rather than certify to an advance in time from the place we never left to the place we never left. (Which is still another story since, as, demonstrated in the circle experiment, beyond both beginning and end yet visible as the Gap, their Source remains true to itSelf as no place at all). It's what allows Headlessness, the affirmation of silence, to take precedence even as it supersedes, if only by a hair's breadth, its closest approximation, Zen, the negation of speech.

And that hair's breadth is history and it begins with the Jews. But even here it should come as no surprise that, given the nature of the subject with all its complexities (as distinct from the Subject, simplicity itSelf), we run into all sorts of ambiguities. Can history, if it is a beginning, be represented as other than the beginning of its own end, when, in reality, it makes its first conscious appearance so demonstrably late, when, as I've already mentioned, if on the great scale pan of time the whole human enterprise from beginning to end can be calculated as taking place at one minute to midnight, history itself - all of it, dating back five or six thousand years at best - can be consigned to no more than its last second or two if that? Which, not incidentally, offers one more instance of that reciprocal interchange between the workings of Providence and the ways of man: the perfect synchronization between a collective need as expressed in the signs of the times - the increased acceleration of communication and movement and danger (the bomb and so forth) - never out of sight of its Co-respondent sign, the sign of all time (in this case the experiments): literally God's speed, the simultaneity faster than light, indeed, the light itSelf that contains the immediate answer without which the question, any question, can't be asked in the first place.

The truth of the matter is that all history, but specifically sacred history, is by definition late and though, as I say, the evidence derived from the card-experiment may seem to go against the grain of virtually all received opinion, it nevertheless attests to how late it is. Because for all the

forward-lookingness of first, Judaism, and then Christianity and Islam - a forward-lookingness made absolutely compulsory by the once and for all providential expulsion from the Garden; for all the anticipation and, as we see now, justifiable anticipation inherent in the three and only three historical religions, (as distinct from Hinduism and Buddhism, for instance), what's often disregarded but now made obvious is how equally backward-looking, how retrospective as well as prospective the Semitic monotheisms are, at least in their exoteric manifestations. A strange paradox, but to what else can we attribute their enthrallment to time, to the pathos of postponement and their belief in the promise of the future, if not to the remembrance of things past, of the way things had been in the visible and spacious cradle of Paradise and might be again? How else account for their often death-defying and fanatical insistence when confronted with martyrdom, even crucifixion, if not to their stiff-necked and unassailable fidelity to the recollection of that vision, to a once upon a time now lost, at once the source of their present bondage yet hope of their future liberation? Is it any wonder that the Jews, who were not so much the first to get it right as the last to preserve it right or at least almost right, by remaining true to this vision of truth in face of the mirror - of man made in the image of God - could only interpret the new-fangled goings-on in their back-yard as the abomination of desolation and so with a fury that bespoke a single mind rather than a single eye set about demolishing the claims of the Molochs and Baals of this world - God made in the image of man? And this is not even to speak of the later unspeakables, of the Greeks and the Romans with their stable of gods no less, and who, for all the subsequent attempts by the likes of a Philo Judaeus working out of Alexandria at the time of Christ to reconcile the irreconcilable and so lay, by way of allegorical interpretation, the foundation of a future scholasticism, could only resolve the issue by tipping his hat to the philosophical good, to a reason which, if not quite the enemy of the best, was certainly no better than a hired hand in the service of revelation.

The key here - and it's absolutely central to my thesis - is the "single mindedness" that had already long since largely displaced the single eye still operative in the more static, unhistorical East, in the Vedas, for example, and the tradition that, from the Upanishads and the Gita through the Buddha and Shankara and Nagarjuna right up to our present-day Zen, still continues alive and well to this day. Because from beginning to end, from the "and God said" in Genesis to the visions described in Revelation, the Bible and later the Koran are, from first to last, testaments almost entirely addressed to and dependent on the hearing of the ear, to the saying rather than the seeing. And, as we all experience in our own individual development, the impulse towards that conception, that fall if you will, already arrives late or at least late enough to have acquired a rudimentary past before, aided and abetted by the mirror of consciousness with its capacity for reflection, it puts its I AM into words. And, lest we forget what once upon a time we didn't even have to remember, what is history, the tale told, and, though seemingly headed the other way, prophecy, too, if not homage to hearing - opposite sides of the same coin but both deriving their ultimate authority from the spoken word with all the limitations and ambiguities and dualities that that jurisdiction entails? Can it be sheer coincidence that the self-styled peoples of the Book beget, at least in one instance, the very Word itSelf before, their reproductive faculties almost exhausted but their victory almost complete and as if to testify that, among other qualities, God has a sense of irony, the final stamp of approval to this way of thinking - and what is thinking if not in words? - is administered by the Seal of the Prophets, himself an illiterate?

But the damage - and by damage I mean the necessary and providential damage - had been done. As we see now and could only see now, now that we have the whole picture, if the idolatry

of an exclusive transcendence marks the high point of the monotheistic temptation, it also signals the beginning of its long descent until, if only by means of attrition and its own internal contradictions and with no place left to go but down, as if to demonstrate once again that under no circumstances will or can God be mocked, it collapses into the disbelief of modernity, into a de-divinized universe whose absolute prerequisite for the vision of God will be met by the actual sight of God as a not-god, and so falls, kicking and screaming, into the sheltering arms of the experiments - the Seal of Prophecy itSelf, the promise kept.

Now I realize these are rather sweeping statements and as such are arguable to say the least. But, as I can only insist, isn't the tone set right from the beginning where even the tender intimacies of the Lord in the Garden are displayed at a distance, a distance that, exacerbated by the initial disobedience, will eventually, either by fits of anger or starts of hope, cause Him to disappear altogether into the wild blue yonder and so become the by-word if not quite the bye-bye word for a total transcendence? What is the child in each of us, brought up to see and be seen but not heard, to make of this mysterious Other reduced (or elevated, as the case may be) to its own exact opposite, a Voice that is heard but never seen? True, there are repeated attempts - and certainly one that is more than noteworthy - to, if not recognize and acknowledge the Gap, at least bridge it and approach ever closer to the Source. For example, we have the early episode of Moses and the burning bush; we have some of the Psalms. Perhaps most notably of all at least up to Jesus, we have Job.

Job is an interesting case of how the notion implicit in the mirror but now made explicit - of man made in the image of God - though a truth often defended to the death, especially early on but even later when it had already lapsed into dogma, is, nevertheless, no reliable guarantee of either its interpretation or its meaning, however intense the experiential suffering that may have gone into it. A charge, incidentally, that, as we also see now, can be levelled against a good deal of what has passed for the canon, whether theological or philosophical or metaphysical or what have you. Because what are we to make, not so much of Job's face-to-face confrontation with his God (sic!) - "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee" - but the conclusion he draws from it as he sits in sackcloth and ashes? Is it true, in light of the experiments and especially this experiment, that creatures are nothing in the sight of God when, if we look in the mirror and, its ultimate purpose revealed, indeed, made absolutely transparent by the reflected image become manifest to and as itSelf, we see it's precisely the other way round, that, in reality, it's the creature who is everything in the sight of God - it is all He has - and only God who reserves the right and prerogative to be designated as the no-thing He is? Granted that, given its state of articulation at the writing, history had not yet differentiated enough to help us become aware of it - in other words absent the experiments - who, then, is Job if not an advance sign and station on the way, a tentative sanctification of the repentance, the turning-around necessary to ultimate self-effacement?

The next step which for two millennia was believed to be ultimate but, as we see now, was necessarily penultimate (and how short a time-span even two millennia seem when measured against the all now available to each of us) - had to await the historical Jesus who, despite the controversy still raging round the significance of this or that event and the aura of myth, magic and miracle surrounding them, is essentially historical. As Schweitzer has definitively documented in his indispensable study, if Jesus weren't historical he'd be of no more (or no less) significance to us than any other atavistic figure, an Osiris or Prajapati, for instance. Because it's precisely the historicity of Jesus and his outrageous claim to be the Way and the Truth and the Life that at once

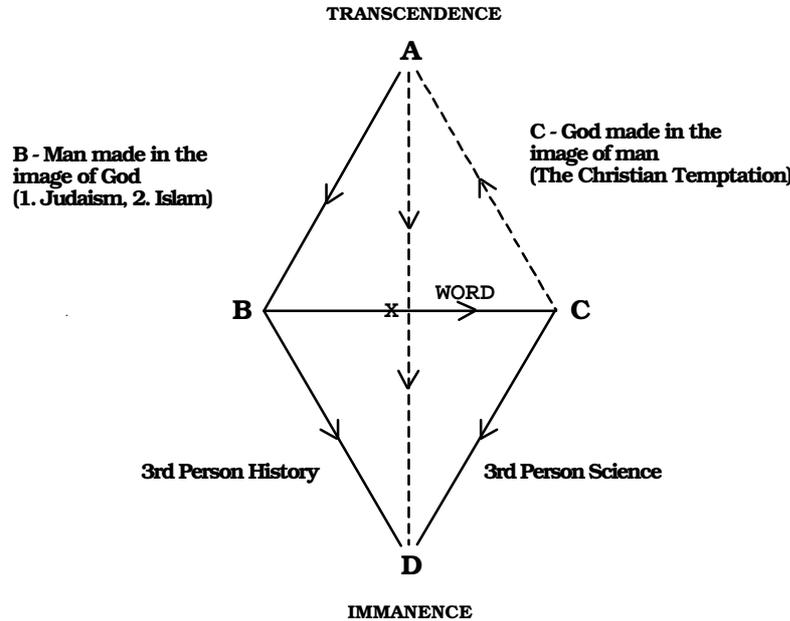
sets him apart from anyone seen before - from the wonder-workers of the time and even the prophets who had foretold him and whose written scenario he deliberately and consciously took upon himself to act out - yet at the same time, paradoxically enabled him to join together by means of the sacrifice of his life what history, even sacred history, especially sacred history, had long since put asunder - the immanence of transcendence. Not the parables, not the Sermon on the Mount, however magnificent and moving their presentation but all of which could conceivably have been pieced together in an anthology culled from the current wisdom literature of the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes (after all, like all of us, he may have appeared in a Void but he didn't pop up in a vacuum) - it's not these that make Jesus unique but the claim, later incorporated into the doctrine of the Trinity, that "I and the Father are one," the turning of transcendence itSelf on its head. It's this statement of Fact now made Self-evident in the experiments and especially in this experiment that, by whatever devious twists and turns it took to get there (or rather here), inaugurates the flesh and blood enactment of a eucharist no longer merely commemorative or symbolic of incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection but, whether we know it or not or even like it or not, reveals the very built-in structure of reality in which all of us live and move and have our being.

That said, if you'll forgive the presumption I think I'll take a leaf from Douglas' book. (It seems to me it's often overlooked - it certainly has been by me until now, until I've had to try my hand at it myself - how deft, as a trained architect, he really is at managing such things). Hence the following diagram which may or may not help clarify some of the issues I've raised. A few caveats though. First off, despite numerous suggestions as to how to negotiate this "infernal" contraption - expert friends assure me it can be done - I still haven't come up with a way to get it to print the figure I want, so I've decided to do it by hand. Secondly, and much more important, this is in no way an attempt to draft a precise chronological schema. You know, the kind of thing we learned in school - the Third Kingdom in Egypt began in 3022 B.C. with the accession of King So-and-So or whoever. On the contrary, rather than limiting myself to that kind of strictly temporal analysis - a method almost prohibitive now that we can see the Whole - since my concern has been to block in the broad dominant movements that have led us to where we are, to the end of history and its meaning made plain by virtue of the experiments, I've chosen a more logical, even an onto-logical approach. I suppose if we have to call it names, we could entitle it "Three ways to reflect on the nature of history with the aid of a mirror." Always keeping in mind that the fourth way - and the fourth is traditionally symbolic of completion - is reserved for the oval cut-out. At any rate, please consult the following diagram.

Let A stand for Transcendence, represented in various traditions as the Creator, the Primordial Silence, the Being of Being; in Semitic symbolism, He Who is unnameable - the Tetragrammaton - yet, nevertheless, is named Yahweh, the Father, Allah. In his regional maps Douglas, who's got it right, refers to it as the I AM ALL. Let D signify Immanence, non-Being, Nothingness, the Matrix or bottom-line, the I AM NOT on which every thing including the I AM ALL depends, not in the order of value but in the order of cause. Which, when you consider that all by its lonesome only the I AM NOT is "small" enough, indeed, non-existent enough to make room for the All and so contain It, makes absolute sense.

Please note, too, that rather than close the two triangles, the space at points A and point D where the lines almost converge at their peak and at their abyss, has deliberately been left open both to signify the Gap and indicate that in reality no such thing as a closed system is possible.

Let line AB, as the arrow indicates, represent the beginning of the downward path, the loss of



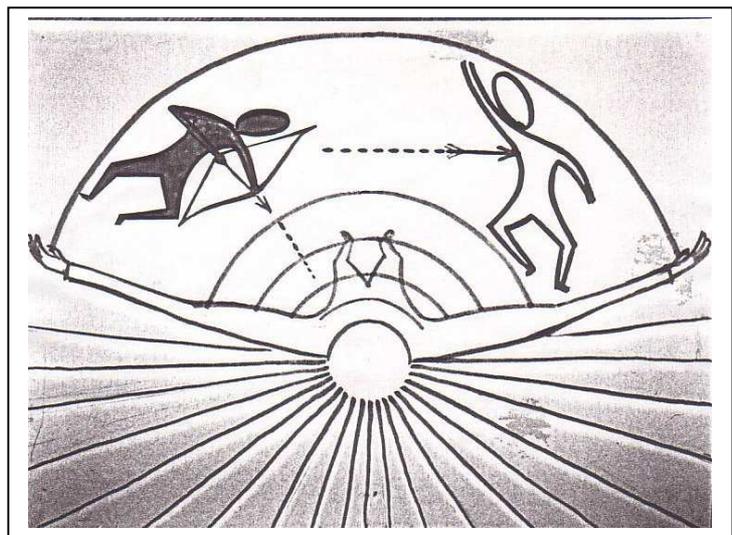
innocence - whether manifested singly in individual experience or collectively in myth and story - that led from the certainty of original vision to the belief, and as we demonstrably see now, the absolutely correct belief that man is made in the image of God. For our purposes - biblical history - this separation begins with the banishment from the Garden and the exchange of the fruit of the Tree of Life - perception - for the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil - conception -

at the behest of the devil. And where have we seen that little fellow before, God bless him - the devilus, the ape of god - if not in his inverted and persuasive image staring back at us from the altar of his I in every mirror in the land? Fortunately for us, by their own admission the Jews were a stiff-necked bunch. Or at least some of them were. Or at least a few of them. If they weren't quite able to cling to our birthright of single vision - and who did except for a few seers sitting cross-legged at the other end of the globe and then only after years of rigorous, ascetic training? - they could at least settle for the next best thing, the memory of it embalmed in the visible echo of speech, the Book, the word always within their hearing. And if after the initial loss even the efficacy of hearing began to wear off and recede into local dialect or into an even less comprehensible dialectic (as in the natural course of events it must, the ear being the medium of an ever-perishing time as the eye is of an ever-present space) who can blame them? And if in this reciprocal interchange even the distant sound of thunder, weary of its own wrath at this first disobedience and recognizing that in this game of hide and seek the ear is, at best, only a stop-Gap measure, adopted a more conciliatory tone before disappearing altogether - well, who can blame Him if, constrained as always by the needs and capacity of His listeners, He found his Self reduced to a still small voice, for the most part a mode of delivery - in some cases, even of deliverance - He's employed ever since in this epoch now passing away and which, it's generally conceded, for all that it's open to discussion not to say argument, is certainly better than nothing? But, as we're now entitled to ask, now that we've ended up where He begins, is it?

If point B constitutes the first stop, the place where true believers take refuge in the faith that man is made in the Image of God, then let point C represent its exact opposite, the playground of the easy believers, those who, assuming they'd even heard of a prohibition against graven images, were not a bit abashed by, indeed, actually revelled in the prospect of holding up the mirror to

human nature that revealed a God or gods made in the image of man and these no more than an arm's length away, so close you could almost but not quite touch them until they were carved in stone. Isn't that what the two-dimensional Homeric gods, as distinct from their very real and vulnerable human models, were all about with their eyes that appear to see and ears that appear to hear and mouths that appear to speak but with no insides whatsoever, no hearts - perfect reflections of the reflection in the mirror already once removed from its Original? For the first time ever transcendence itself - the gods waltzing around Olympus - become unmoored. Of course, like reading a gossip column, it's what makes them so fascinating, even distinguishes them from their Hindu counterparts whose wilder reaches of the imagination were at least kept in check within a traditional metaphysical framework, a structure the Greeks, assuming they ever had one, were, however unwittingly, taking the first steps towards literally razing to the Ground. And just to confound matters and make it doubly telling for us because, if nothing else, revelatory of the mysterious and unlikely ways of Providence that's led us from there to here, is how this imposition was performed in, of all things, the name of vision. Because if the Jews, admittedly once removed from the Source by reason of their Book, were and have remained the most audible defenders of the auditory (and, by extension, memory) on earth, the ancient Greeks were and arguably still remain the most visual people the world has ever seen. And by visual I don't necessarily mean visionary in the sense of forward-looking or imaginative (although they were certainly that), but in their devotion and commitment to *theoria*, to *idein*, to a seeing they practically invented or, if not invented, were the first grown-up children to perfect: the art, if not the science, of a looking at that, literally displacing the looking out of that had, for better or for worse, unconsciously ruled the world since its infancy, was about to lay the groundwork for all subsequent historical upheavals including the awareness that there was such a concept as history. The question then becomes and, as heirs to its eventual universal hegemony, we're entitled to ask it - what's wrong with this picture? Exactly what was this vision a vision of, this evolution that ends in a descent?

The answer isn't far to seek. As this experiment demonstrates, the vision they described was exclusively and still is a vision of the image or images reflected in a mirror held out about a meter away which, cunningly transposed, is then pasted back onto the Original by the mind's eye in what has to be at once the greatest imposture yet, paradoxically, the most necessary con game ever devised on - literally - the face of the earth. It's their claim to fame: the celebration and exaltation of the totally human that, by way of 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Science and 3<sup>rd</sup> Person History, not to speak of what's become our so-called "normal" way of looking at things, has since conquered the whole "known" world and, as we see now and could only see now, has had to conquer it if only to prepare us for the ultimate revelation to be made explicit, in of all places, a hole in a card, in the Gap if you will, that at once accompanies and contains all vision, that, if the truth be told, makes vision possible. And if we require secondary symbolic, as distinct from first-hand



experiential, confirmation - and though, as history has so maddeningly shown, there can be no guarantees regarding symbolic representations, it may help - all we have to do is consult Douglas' map, a copy of which I've enclosed, where it's made graphically evident that if we cover up the lower half and block out the all-embracing arms that contain everything within it, a whole dimension - the dimension of the Whole - is missing, that even to dream of saying "totally human" is to describe only half of man and not even that when we consider the asymmetrical relation that is its ruling principle and proof of which is now available to everyone.

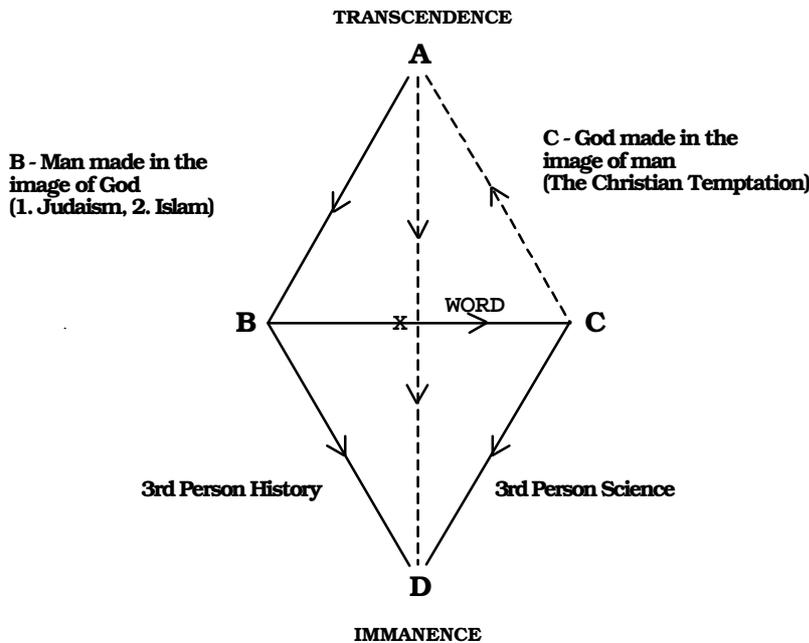
Yet that's precisely what happened as the seeds of modernity were being sown in Greece. We see it in the turn to a questioning philosophy and the advent of the Sophists for whom, for the first time ever, Man becomes the Measure, an aspiration unheard of up to then even as it surreptitiously acknowledges the power of the mirror. We see it in the poets and dramatists as, one by one, deity ends up a laughing-stock, no better than a shadow caught leering in my lady's boudoir. Most relevant of all, perhaps, for our purposes, we see it in the two great founders of what came to be known as profane, as distinct from sacred, history, Herodotus and Thucydides who, not yet equipped to prescribe the cure even as they attempted to diagnose the disease - the method of all profane history ever since - rather than attack the gods for their blind ferocity as Euripides did or make fun of them like Aristophanes, for the most part simply ignored them and so, by staking out what was to prove a perfectly respectable position (and never more so than now as virtually any scholar will testify), managed to preserve a sort of sanity by limiting our life on earth to the sad story of coming-to-be and passing-away as told to and by an image as seen in a mirror. And with the exception of the Christian interlude, admittedly a rather long one since it went on for well over eighteen hundred years and included such historically-oriented interpreters as Paul and Augustine and Joachim de Flore (condemned as a heretic) and Vico and Bossuet until Hegel finally blew the lid off the whole business by proclaiming the apocalyptic Kingdom of God as nothing more nor less than the historical realization of the totality of Absolute Spirit - a hypothesis now confirmed a Fact by any experiment - it was a perspective that from Polybius, though not a Roman himself but a fellow-traveller and the first to recognize the possibility of a universal world history, through the great Arab historian, Ibn-Khaldoun, through Gibbon and the now seen to be anti-climactic Spenglers and Toynbees of our own day, has dominated virtually all historical (and biographical) thinking ever since.

At the time, however, only Plato and, to a lesser extent, Aristotle, took issue with what was fast becoming the predominant view, though, to some degree, they, too, were circumscribed by the absence of any serious consideration of history, it may be because as a contributing and meaningful factor it had barely begun, was being held in reserve, so to speak, for our own end-time. Thus we have the famous passage in Aristotle's Poetics in which, on grounds that a good plot is one that indicates what may happen as well as what did happen provided the possible is probable or necessary, poetry is judged more philosophical and elevated than history which only informs us of what did happen. A nice swipe at Thucydides, incidentally, but, nevertheless, since both views - his and those of Thucydides - have been found wanting, in a losing cause. Just another example of a limited perspective reversed and a perfectly logical proposition turned on its head through the good offices of the experiments. Because as we now know, now that the drama of history has played itself out and God can in deed be finally seen to be God as "the totality of Absolute Spirit," and, paradoxically, a not-god, it was precisely the good plot that, not only made possible, because probable or necessary, its "happy" ending but, by its very nature, was predestined to in-form us of it all along so that, once aware of it, we, too, could become living

testaments - in the final analysis the only testaments that count; so that we, too, might see that what may have happened has happened and has happened, not in poetry and the imagination, but in history and truth.

The towering figure of Plato is, of course, something else again and if I briefly bring him up here it's merely to illustrate the almost incredible twists and turns that a beneficent Providence is literally forced to accept in order to accommodate its end to our means, to encircle and contain them as it were. Because if, as Whitehead justifiably claimed, all philosophy is merely a footnote to Plato, it's also equally true, as Mircea Eliade insisted in his seminal study, *Cosmos and History*, that rather than inaugurate an epoch, the Platonic dialogues conclude one, are literally a summing-up, and a magnificent one at that, of archaic beliefs and convictions destined to be relegated, not to the dust-bin of history but to its actual emergence as a force that will at once preserve yet, at the same time, supersede it. Which, if true, speaks volumes about the subsequent downward course of philosophy and what it led to. According to Hegel who, right again though for the wrong reason - Reason itself - was often accused of arrogance, even of downright hubris, along with history, philosophy, too, some twenty-five hundred years after its inception, was about to achieve ultimate consummation thanks to his insights. As we see now but he could not see, he was being far too modest if only because the actual as distinct from his merely conceptual notion of Absolute Spirit - the end to which both philosophy and history have been heading - was about to be realized not just as a possibility in his own person but in everyone's 1<sup>st</sup> Person, in the nameless or, better yet, the name-free, the anonymous, 1st Person of the experiments.

What's interesting about Plato, however, at least within our context, is not so much his attack on Homer and the Sophists and the poets and the historians for their betrayal, as he saw it, of original vision - I suppose we might say for their surrender to the seductive and spurious image in the mirror - but the method he used to expose them which, in its equal dependence on language and symbol and myth (even if the myths - the lies that tell the truth he called them - were of his own making), essentially re-presented more of the same. As I've indicated by the line BC that I've



labelled Word, he was stuck on the same human-all-too-human axis as the rest of us, the grand horizontal that, by talking out of both sides of its mouth will come to characterize a whole epoch now coming to a close. And how this duality inherent in speech conceals as much as it reveals is beautifully illustrated in his Seventh Letter where, disavowing his written work as at best secondary, he takes a step backwards and,

perhaps reflecting a reputed youthful sojourn in Egypt, almost sounds like a Jewish prophet as he opts for the primacy (sic!) of direct one-on-one oral transmission as the best, if not the only possible, means of exchange between pupil and teacher, listener and speaker.

And where have we heard that one before if not from the mouth of virtually every guru East and West who's ever lived and justifiably so since, barring the occasional hit-and-miss power of touch, it was the best and in most cases the only authoritative means available at that stage of historical development? Nor was it just confined to gurus. As with the ear-oriented prophets, time-wise it was the universal rule, a world-wide axial condition of differentiation or lack of it that, like the horse and buggy, applied to founders and saviors everywhere - to the Buddha, for instance, with his last word to each of his disciples, only reserving a flower for his favorite, Ananda, that, however resonant of silence and later appropriated by Zen as its prime symbol, is still, in a manner of speaking, a far cry from the real silence of the experiments, of the actual Presence 'hearer than our jugular' now made available to all.

Which, there where the cross is made, where the broken vertical line AD intersects the base at BC and signifies in its freedom from all conceptual arrangements (including this) the downward path always open to the immediate experience not only of seers and sages and mystics but, in various degrees, of seekers everywhere and everywhen, of the likes of you and me, too, and even - history be damned - of the fly on the wall; there Jesus, flanked, on one side by Plato and, on the other, by everything that's come after in his name, there Jesus appears at the absolute dead center of the meaning of history, a meaning not to be consummated in all its fullness until, as prophesied, the 'Spirit' will have appeared in person and to all in the fullness of time. And who is that person if not the 1<sup>st</sup> Person of the experiments? And though I know I don't have to elaborate on this to you, nevertheless, just for the record: this is in no way to adopt the parochial view that all too often has, especially in the West, devalued other disciplines, other methods, other religions, other spiritualities, some of which go far more deeply and subtly in terms of individual realization into the nature of reality than anything we can find in the Old and New Testaments or, with the exception of anomalies like Meister Eckhart or St. John of the Cross (to name only two and both more often than not referred to as Buddhists by their more benighted co-religionists) anything we can find in the whole of Judeo-Christian literature for that matter. On the contrary, it's merely to point out that we're talking about history now and if we can most certainly assign the so-called Wisdom of the East and its unsurpassed insights from the Upanishads and the Tao and Buddhist Canon right up to Ramana Maharshi to the broken line AD (broken because it has no beginning and no end), it's precisely because, with the possible exception of some hints thrown off by the Pure Land Buddhist, Shinran, in his depreciation of Self in favor of Other Power - what we might broadly refer to as Providence - it has no inkling whatsoever of history in a meaningful sense or at least had none until only yesterday when, as a result, and as we see now the providential result of Western exploration and exploitation, Asia was dragged kicking and screaming into its conscious stream and so, as Douglas' acknowledgement of the influence of Zen on his own early work amply testifies, has, to put it mildly, helped wake us up to this, the Fact of life. And, as is the way in such matters, has helped itself too. Has, as a reward for its inestimable contribution to Headlessness, seen its own findings confirmed (where true) by the experiments.

And if, on line BC, I couple Plato cheek-by-jowl with Jesus - reputedly the Word - it's not so much to emphasize their similarities as to point up their differences: the one, a Greek, homesick for home and so looking back nostalgically to a fixed and static past for the place he never left; the other, a Jew faring forward with the same express purpose but with his eye trained on the future.

And therein lies the difference and it makes all the difference. To claim as some have done that Christianity is merely Platonism for the masses is completely off the mark and to give credence to the notion that simply because they emerge from the same place - in effect, the Gap - there's no room for distinctions between beginnings and ends when it's precisely the job of the place we never left to make room for such distinctions. Quite simply, were that not the case, were Omega denied its distinction from Alpha if only by right of its all-inclusiveness, were the endless, because timeless, round of an infant Eden not squared away in a time-free Heavenly Jerusalem, there'd be no need to designate them as such. And we would not have the experiments. We'd be right back, not to where we were before we started - to the face we had before we were born as the Zen people put it, the goal to be reached - but to where we started, at worst bogged down in a vast fluid pudding resembling chaos, at best lolling around the Fifth Day where all was immediately present to the birds and bees and still is, but with any possibility of completing the week - of not so much returning to the First as arriving at the Seventh Great Day with its offer of Conscious Presence, of mercy and justice and goodness for all - effectively eliminated.

That said - and admittedly it's a mouthful - we're finally in a position to recognize the limitations inherent in, not only the Greek perspective, but in all perspectives and all religions without reservation prior to the experiments and this simply by reason of their absolute dependence on speech and symbol rather than the silence that contains them. In a world literally riddled with instant communication on the one hand, and, on the other, by the possibility, if not of total, at least annihilation of a large body of its 3<sup>rd</sup> person inhabitants - both prospects, not incidentally, immediately answered to in kind by the experiments - all appeals to a past no matter how far back and however golden or to a future already behind us by virtue of the same renders them, if taken at face value, essentially regressive. And there's only one exception to, if not exemption from, this rule and, as Vico, the first great modern philosopher of history suspected when - whether out of fear of the Inquisition or true insight is irrelevant - he differentiated more than three hundred years ago between the *corso e ricorso* of pagan history and the Mosaic-Christian tradition as he so quaintly put it, it lies in the biblical breakthrough to the notion of a progressive, linear as distinct from a cyclic history, a breakthrough that promised and in no uncertain terms, not only the possibility of a release from cosmic law already available to this or that individual or even community (and still available by whatever means; cf. broken line AD) but, when the time was ripe, to a universal manifestation of this possibility that would reveal once and for all not only the presence of God in history but of history in God. And in what context would or could this ripeness of time occur if not in our's, in the complete breakdown for the first time ever of all religious and cultural, not to speak of geographical, differences and, suiting the Word to the action, in a nihilism so severe in its passion to destroy all sacrality as to include, along with everything else, the Death of God? And how else could it have come about except by exposing the inverted mirror-image of the Self for what it is - the image of the displaced person par excellence projected out there or up there and then, its likeness plastered all over the walls of heaven and hell too, foisted on an unsuspecting public as the real thing, not to mention the real No-thing? How else except by means of this experiment performed in, by and through the body (and since we're talking about the body and its resurrection it might be nice to include it in the equation for a change), how else could it be demonstrated - beyond language, beyond dispute, beyond even thought - that this glorified image of the little one writ large is an imposter who, masquerading as a transcendent Other and so denying us the possibility of total Presence, has bedevilled us into believing we are not the Same, the very source and origin of all things?

Not surprisingly, with this in mind we can finally make sense - and I do mean sense - of this process of incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection as it's been handed down to us and see how what was once rumored in myth and then acted out on the cross supposedly once unfolds into the fact of history even as it in turn is enfolded in the Fact of life itSelf. If, reverting to the diagram, we resume at point X which marks dead center at the intersection of broken line AD and line BC and follow the arrow to point C, we can begin to trace just how this process has led, not only to its consummation in the experiments but - and I dare say it - to incontrovertible testimony regarding what, in the old days, was referred to as the ways of Providence. And since the fact of Jesus, reputedly the Word made flesh - a name to which, as peasant-carpenter-rabbi, he could hardly have answered since he simply wouldn't have understood it - does represent a dividing-line (the B.C./ A.D. by which we've distinguished end from beginning in and still do), we can do worse than begin at his end, with his last word, the well-known but often overlooked when not entirely sloughed off, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Which confession of necessary and total failure in his sacrificial attempt to redeem the first fault, the fall from perception, could only reveal that even up to this point - his last cry - the story was not yet complete and that he, too, however right for the wrong reason, had to suffer the last, the transcendent temptation. And it's then and only then by matching in word and deed God's unutterable and abysmal solitude, His own original condition of absolute nothingness - "the flight from the Alone to the Alone," Plotinus describes it - could he or would he qualify, not as one who played God but who was God. And so he did. And so became, if not the first, certainly the representative figure of absolute immanence, not only of one who knew who he really really was - "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life" - but of one who acted on it and answered for it with the ultimate realization that, as in a marriage, until we forsake all others for our one and only Self we'll continue to be forsaken by none other than that other, the quasi god of glory and triumph that, blown up out of all proportions and magnified and objectified into absolute transcendence, begins to look more and more like the whore of Babylon. And we all know or at least should, in light of our conscious experience of the mirror-image in this experiment, who she is, or better yet, what she is: - that other who, however powdered and gussied up, is incapable of saying a word, no less the Word, and who, as a matter of Fact, though her lips may move, can't even squeak out an I AM. And it's not Me.

The rest is history and, presumptuous as it sounds, for all its meanderings and fits and starts falls readily into place thanks to the clarification provided by the experiments. The question, then as now, was and is what to make of it all. And if it's taken some two-thousand years to redress its seeming miscalculations or, rather, undress its unsightly accretions posing as the naked truth in order to reveal the no-thing itSelf - consciousness made luminous - well, so be it. Who says the now-proven ways of Providence are in a hurry or that its mills don't grind exceeding slow, if exceeding fine? Which is not to suggest that when pushed to an extreme as it is now and the need is great - one world and the possibility of an end to it one way or another - it can't pick up speed at a moment's notice and, immediacy its preferred mode of operation anyway, move into high-gear instantly on contact.

As for Jesus, the consternation following what, by any measure, must be conceded to be, if true, the most daring claim in history until the experiments and certainly lies at the very center of its meaning and prophetic fulfillment, was understandable, not least on the part of the principal figure himself. And if, as Mr. Eliot has since pointed out, "Humankind cannot bear very much reality," understandable, too, was the confusion such an unutterable but knowable mystery as incarnation,

crucifixion and resurrection instilled in the minds and hearts of those present at its creation or, as it was later called when the event finally came into some kind of focus, the second creation: the new Adam come to replace or, as we see more clearly now, to put in his proper place the man in the mirror who, though he may count himself as old as the hills when concentrated in and on his reflection, is, paradoxically, nowhere near as old as his Original - or as young. The miracle was that, barely liberated from the myth of the mirror for one brief moment before falling right back into its clutches, this sacrificial acting-out managed by going more than half-way for the first time to bare as much reality as it did, at least enough to see us through to conscious two-way looking.

How did it come about, then, and through what process of idolatry was the humble but by no means modest stand-in, Jesus, taken or, despite his specific disclaimer that the Son of Man must first give up his life before he can be resurrected as the Son of God, mistaken for the one and only Christ rather than, quite a different matter, the once and for all, because unique, 1<sup>st</sup> Person we all inhabit? How came it that the stitch in time - his realization achieved at the very last minute - was sufficient to save nine and so insure that, for all its betrayals and redemptive horrors, the core, if not the course, of history's meaning would be preserved intact and not completely extinguished as a theodicy, as the Self-embodiment and justification of an absolutely providential God?

The initial impulse is provided by Paul, certainly along with John the most commanding and articulate of the apostles if not the most authoritative if only because, unlike the others - Mark, for instance, as Schweitzer points out - he had the distinct advantage - at least from his perspective - of never having met, no less seen except in a vision (not to be confused with vision itself) the person in question in the flesh. And, make no mistake about it, as a cosmopolitan and Hellenized Jew steeped in the myths of the dying and savior gods then rampant throughout the region, from the standpoint of the future "spiritualization" of incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection as doctrine this did give him a distinct advantage if only by way of access to the so desperately longed-for yet still relatively unexplored area of faith, that same faith that, if it approximated the substance of things hoped for then has led us by way of its own inevitable attrition and collapse to the evidence of things seen now. And if these are beginning to sound all too suspiciously like the ravings of the village atheist - not so. I can only remind us both that in talking about Paul we're not simply talking about the ultimacy of his vision (if it was ultimate) or the magnificence of his prose or the indisputable consolation and encouragement he's brought to millions but of one of the few figures who, by actually changing the course of history, has made knowledge of him indispensable to any understanding of it. It's merely my contention that it was precisely his almost immediate succumbing to what I've called the transcendent temptation, his leap-frogging the crucifixion and its meaning in favor of resurrection, that's led to everything that's followed, in the Joycean sense, in its wake.

Quite simply, by persisting in holding out the hope of an overarching transcendent rather than an underlying immanent heaven, a heaven that, bereft of all disorder and change, bears, from the look of it, all the earmarks of hell; by snatching victory from the jaws of its defeat and relapsing into the myth of transcendence that Jesus' seemingly hopeless sacrifice on the cross had, however inadvertently, come to destroy, Paul succeeded, if not in fulfilling that dream (or, if you will, prophecy), at least in rescuing it, in re-routing it and setting it on the road that led to its long way home and ultimate fulfillment, to the experiments and a home where, the meaning of crucifixion and resurrection finally grounded in certainty rather than belief in one man's sacrifice, faith and hope can be seen for the human-all-too-human protective coverings they are, shells to be discarded once the core of charity is uncovered. To say, then, as many have, that as god-father to

Christianity and its bastard god-child, Christendom, he was involved in a colossal miscalculation is to miss the point, not only of the now-visible whole story but of the providential role in history of error itself which, from our failure to eat the whole apple to what might be considered our second fall, our devilish inability or refusal to recognize the Source of our mirror-image, has, like Plato's myth or even the perception of evil itself - the lie that tells the truth - performed its part to perfection. Contrary to received opinion, rather than suffer from the imaginative excesses of his high hopes that, however headed in the wrong direction were to end up way beyond his wildest dreams and, resembling the Roman manner of his death (hung upside-down), it was precisely his and others' inordinate and so-called unrealistic expectation that, leading to its inevitable and subsequent disenchantment, was instrumental in razing it to the Ground and so preparing us for its own eventual resurrection, its supersession in and by the experiments raised up like everything else from out of nowhere. I know comparisons are odorous but we've only to compare his testimony with that of the Buddha's who resisted all such speculation and talk of transcendence as superfluous, who begins, in effect, where the experiments end, to see that if "all things work together for good to them that love God," better yet is when they work together for knowledge of that good and best of all when that knowledge, at once universal and certain - universal because certain - is made available to all and not just confined to this or that one's say-so or even example.

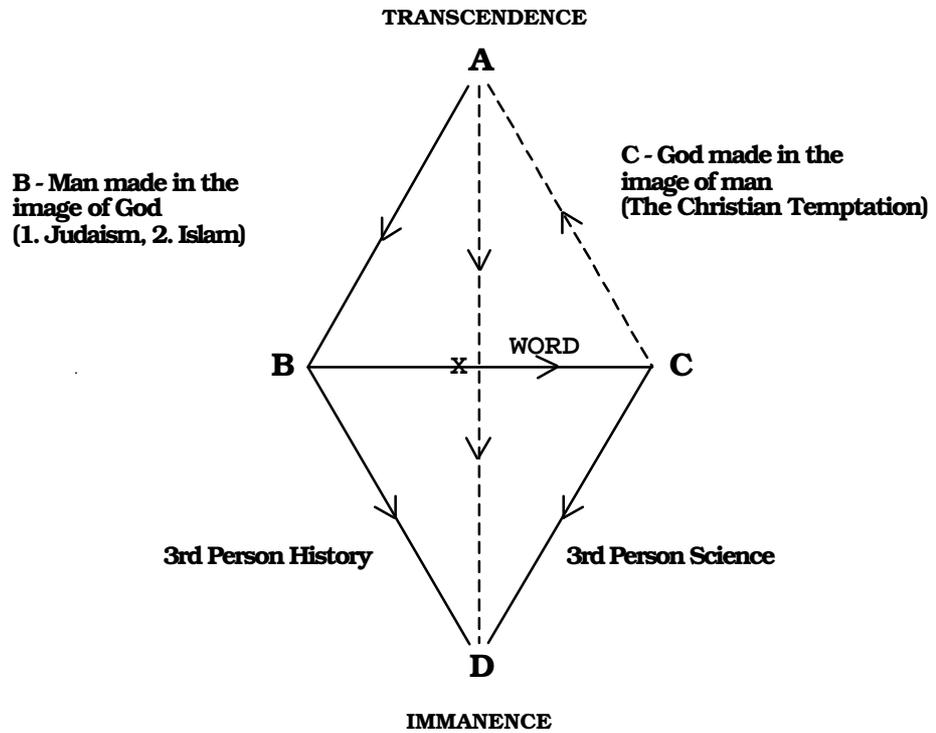
Which, now that the song is over but the melody lingers on, is no more than to say that we can follow with reasonable certainty - reasonable because coming from rather than heading to the certainty that contains it - how that "consummation devoutly to be wished" evolved in the service of life, how, in Heraclitus' words, the way up proved to be the way down, or, even more precisely, in Shelley's "We hope till hope creates/ Out of its own wreck the thing it contemplates." Because if Paul with his total reliance on faith despite his master-cum-suffering-servant's last words can be credited with being the virtual founder of Christianity, by the same token he must also be adjudged the one who supplied the first nail for its coffin, that same coffin that awaits every abuse that once provided a remedy. Harsh words, perhaps, but it's especially a harsh world that cannot afford its not-god to be mocked. And if, in literally not being literal enough, he was guilty of trivializing the once and for all meaning of crucifixion by converting it into the promise of a spiritualized *when*, a resurrection to be achieved in glory but not now, what are we to make of his side-kick, John, the author of the Fourth Gospel and reputedly the Book of Revelation as well, another Hellenized Jew sitting somewhere on the island of Patmos and meditating on the nature of the Word made flesh while, the body be damned, the world could go straight to hell? Which, of course, allowing for its various fits and starts and perfumed aspirations - indeed, because of them - is just what it did do, thank God, and so justified the Psalmist's claim that "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Indeed, judging from not only when but where the experiments put in their appearance, it might even be claimed that hell is God's natural habitat. And ours' too who, of all people, living for the first time ever in a totally profane and desacralized universe and so freed from the temptation to cry out for extraneous help from somebody other or even nobody other out there, can now confirm. In fact, in light of the crucifixion, not to speak of the evidence provided by those same experiments which, the crooked made straight, are a direct result of it, where else could we have dreamed of finding him or her, that is to say, Me, except at the bottom of the dung-heap we call history?

And that's exactly what happened and if we can trace or re-trace the process back to the root of at least this dispensation it's precisely because it did happen and happened precisely in this way

that we can see now how everything falls into place: how, beginning first with Paul and then following through with John who, off and running in Revelation (fittingly enough the last book of the Bible), went his fellow believer's upward bias one better and administered what looked to be, in its total, we might say totalitarian, spiritualization, the kiss of death but which, as finally trained in interior design and the uses of burial, we see now was no more and no less than an act of preservation, a little sleep, a little slumber that, rather than prove a bar to resurrection was, like the proverbial grain of wheat but proverbial no longer, the precondition for keeping the original message, the meaning of the crucifixion, alive. Like Snow White to whom the mirror told no lie but had to await her Prince Charming to reveal who she really really was, so, too, a long-suffering humanity had to search the wide world over and work through every possibility only to find them all wanting until it could fall into the sheltering arms of its sleeping beauty and kiss her awake. And this, not to live happily ever after when the story ends, but happily in the ever after where it begins. And is history with its necessary evil and wicked witches and set midway between myth and the Fact any less of a fairy-tale come true?

If we return now to my diagram, beginning at point C we can follow step by step how what at first appeared folly to the Greeks and a stumbling-block to the Jews did an almost immediate about-face and then

- the pull of the transcendent temptation just too great - proceeded to head in the wrong direction or at least what seemed to spiritual purists then as now to be the wrong direction. And then as now they were wrong again - for the right reasons. Which - the very fact that the experiments exist at all and are the result of a colossal miscalculation - only goes to show that God's ways,



a.k.a. Providence, are not our ways or, better yet, that our ways are not God's. Because it's at point C under the sponsorship of an imperial Rome - the first serious attempt at a universal world-state and so, not incidentally, in its resemblance to ours like no other in the history of the world - that Jerusalem and Athens, probing for their Original, converge to sound out, but as yet only to sound out, an absolutely new, a third perspective and harbinger of the real thing to come. No longer is it simply a question of either man made in the image of God or of god made in the image of man, but - and it's the genius of Christianity - of both/and: of man made in the image of a God made in the image of man. But who, then, is that man? Or, for that matter, who is that god? Is he his

mirror-image, Jesus of Nazareth the heavenly pin-up, or, as he himself expressly states and more than once, is he the Christ who, as prophesied, can only put in an appearance on the sole condition that he, Jesus, give up his life, his image completely destroyed, obliterated, crucified, in order to be born again and so resurrected? In which case who or what will that resurrection look like? More important, who or what will it be a resurrection of? Will it be of this or that person, of one who, though the lowest of the low and still wearing his crown of thorns, no longer even has a head he can call his own? Or will it be of a Jesus as the soon-to-be-adopted "head" of the universal Church when he returns as promised trailing clouds of glory? Or will it be as neither one nor the other but - since, incarnate as we are, we have to call him, her or it, something - as the one and only, the unique Person with nothing, but absolutely nothing, of his own to resurrect, not even a name, and so, liberated from all encumbrances by the total "failure" of his sacrifice and sentenced to eternal solitude, is finally free to arise as a world and everything in it - as the experiments demonstrate, the only resurrection there is. Nor should it come as any great surprise that the idea of a world that once upon a time was quaintly referred to as God's body has turned out to be not so quaint a notion after all, in fact not even an idea, but is, as we again see when acted out - first in myth and then in history and now in Fact in the card-experiment and so applicable to all - a quite normal designation for a perfectly natural state which is, in reality, the very ground and condition of our existence. The mystery here is how, except for a handful of seers and mystics who managed to negotiate, usually after terrible travails, broken- line AD and go directly to the Source and so come up with similar conclusions, it's remained a mystery for so long.

Which, of course, would be to take no account of history where it counts, in the collective conception of the "we are," the lie that tells the truth, rather than in individual perception of the "I am." Unlike immediate experience always present at its Source, at least potentially, history has to be mediated, has to take the long way round. Which, of course, is what makes it history. And since that's our concern and not the fine points of theology or metaphysics - all of which, I'm convinced, along with their so-called related problems in philosophy and what-have-you can now be definitively settled and will be in time - I'll restrict myself to examining how this trial run, at least this first public attempt at acting out the ever-present "mystery" of incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection, was detoured. And detoured to our benefit since, had the original message of Jesus been understood, had he completely understood it himself and the resurrection of the body not been reduced to a "spiritual" expectation, we would not have had the experiments. And had we not had the experiments, though the prophecy might have been fulfilled, the story would not have been complete. And were the story not complete how could we possibly distinguish between the wide-open spaces of faith and the see-all and be-all, because end-all, of certainty which, precisely because it leaves all the room in the world for doubt, has, paradoxically, no further need for it?

And if all this sounds as if it has the makings of a drama and suspiciously resonates of the fall in the Garden but on a "higher" plane, it's because it does. And who is cast as the tempter this time if not (and I know you'll forgive me for this one) the snake in the glass, our old friend and villain of our peace, the devilus, the little one, for whom the green grass of incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection is not enough, but in its lust for an imagined transcendence made in its own image wants to out-god God? And so, like piling Pelion on Ossa, exactly forty days after the big event (corresponding in its nice, balanced symbolism to time served in the wilderness, not to speak of the Ark) we get the anomaly of the ascension of the Son into heaven in order to sit at the right hand of the Father and all that that was to entail by way of mistaken identity "up there." "You never know what is enough until you know what is more than enough." So Blake who, as usual,

got it right and never more so than with his "The road to the palace of wisdom is paved with the stones of excess." Because it was precisely this excess, this unruly, even unholy, hope of heaven - unholy because illegitimate and illegitimate because unearned - with its necessary but failed expectations that led to its inevitable collapse, first by bringing it down to earth - the very meaning of modernity - and then, as if that weren't enough and it wasn't, to the ultimate hell of unbelief and disillusion, the very fall into which - as prefigured on the cross and now definitively in this experiment - can only be broken by the roof of heaven. As when, in the beginning of his own descent, Goethe's Faust remarks to his constant companion, Mephistopheles, his evil but indispensable "other", "I hope to find the All in your nothingness," so, too, the presence of the image in the mirror, the little one we call by name and who sits at the left-hand of the Father if you will, is also required if only to provide the perfect foil for a redemption that, as we see now thanks to two-way looking, can't take place without him. Who would there be to redeem?

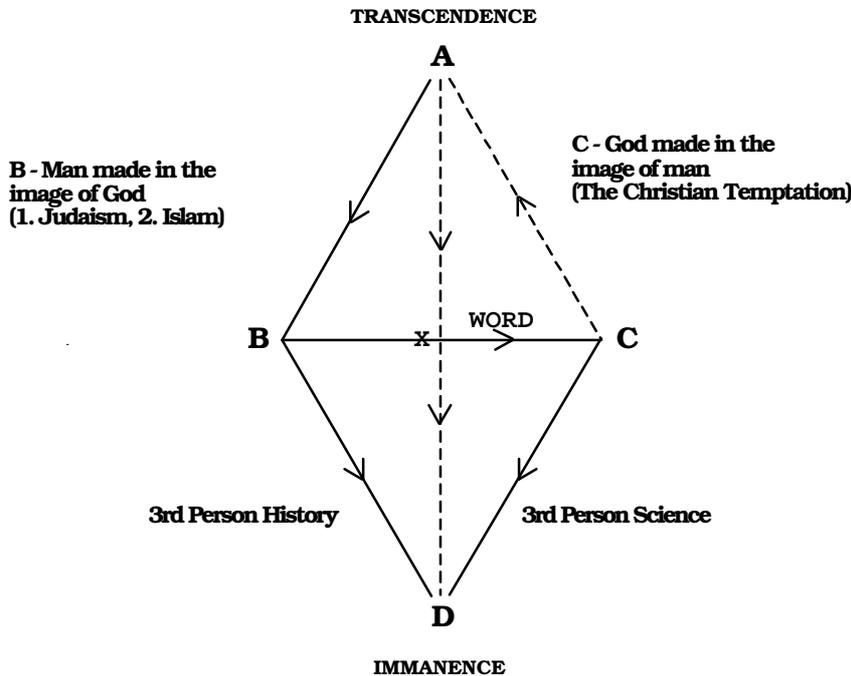
It only remains to sketch out as briefly as possible how, if the resurrection of the body as conceived turned out to be relatively venal - at best an incentive and consolation and at worst a distraction - though it took a couple of millennia before inevitable retribution set in, the doctrine of the ascension proved to be positively (and providentially) mortal, not least to the projected and magnified mirror-image of that God at whose hand from on high we've all more or less suffered ever since. I believe it was Freud who, revealing more than even he knew, dubbed it the super-Ego and for good cause now that we can celebrate without fear or favor its subsequent death and own rebirth into the way of all flesh via the experiments. And again, if this sounds unduly harsh, it's only because, far from pointing an accusing finger at those truly true believers - the martyrs and mystics and saints as well as the simple in heart, all of whom, as indicated by broken-line AD, can be said to have been guilty in various degrees of keeping the message alive through direct experience - it's meant to illustrate how, if for them, the arrow on line AD is headed down, beginning at point C, the arrow on broken-line CD is headed in exactly the opposite direction, up, up and away, as the shell-game - crucifixion sacrificed on the altar of its reflected glory - picks up where it left off.

But as I've already pointed out and it's worth repeating, a shell, even an empty one, especially an empty one, has its uses and this one, far from empty, still had a lot of history in it and providential history at that as, following official state-recognition by Constantine, Christianity, what there was of it, immediately undertook its conversion into the success story we know as Christendom. Not surprisingly, now that it, too, has come to an end only to rise like the phoenix out of its own ashes in the person, the 1<sup>st</sup> Person of the experiments, as with all inauthentic deaths and resurrections or as Disraeli remarked of a bad wine, there are lessons to be learned here: notably how, by by-passing the cross altogether, the vision of the ascension in the guise of the Church triumphant took over almost immediately. Instead of our disappearing act we now see confirmed as the Way and the Truth and the Life, we get almost its exact opposite. In fact, as we're in a position for the first time to see, the whole Christian era, the pre-eminent historical era, can now be characterized as the failed attempt to restore what for a moment at least had been turned upside-down on the cross and set it right-side up again in the eyes of the world. Which failed attempt - the negation of that original affirmation we know, paradoxically, as the cross and, paradoxically too, as the very entrance into life - has, in good and true dialectical fashion, been itself negated and, no longer merely talked about or hoped for, is now made visible as promised, the reversal of the original reversal itself reversed by the experiments.

We can observe it right from the earliest centuries where, the crucifixion almost never depicted, in some cases virtually ignored, we have those eerie Byzantine icons, eyes wide open, even kindly perhaps, staring at us from above and following our every move as the omniscient and omnipresent image of the Son, no longer merely relegated to the right hand of the Father, gradually begins to replace him “but there” and he who, when he appeared on earth as the weakest of the weak and lowest of the low, begins to acquire some of his Father’s patented high and mighty omnipotence. Rather than come closer - “closer than our own jugular,” as Mohammed put it - he begins to pull further and further away. We see the same transcendent impulse brought to something like perfection in the magnificent cathedrals of the aptly-called “High” Middle Ages with their heavenly aspirations, their longing to secure a purchase in a spatially and temporally remote and ever-receding “up there.” Or to go from the sublime to the not quite -so ridiculous, we can even see a residue of it, a hangover as it were, in an antique commemorative plate that sits perched over my desk, a gift I received years ago on which is inscribed “Remember the Lord thy God” and over which is etched a single eye that, reminiscent of those trick late-Renaissance portraits, follows me like a watch-dog wherever I go. That is, as long as I stay in range. But what happens when I wander off the reservation and leave the room or even, Heaven forbid, wander into the enormous room that contains us all and then look for myself? What happens when, the sky falling in on me - as good a definition of modernity as any - in my dis-illusion I begin to examine, not only the contents of the mirror but its properties, and begin to ask what, in God’s name, a single eye is doing “but there” as if in the head of an ogre. As, in effect, an Eckhart did ask and might have been broiled for his trouble had he not beaten the authorities to the punch by dying first. “The eye with which God sees me is the same eye with which I see Him.”

And Eckhart, of course, is only the foremost representative of the “mystical” type. In the theological camp we have Ockham’s “entities must not be multiplied beyond necessity,” which led directly to Luther’s and Calvin’s attempts to catch the fractured pieces and arrest them in mid-air, so to speak, as the whole edifice, built on a half-baked foundation, began to crumble to the Ground. But it was too late. Stripped to the bare bones of a faith that precisely because it was faith could not be absolutely certain of its truth, the providential damage had been done. And since in the theater of this world or at least this Western world everything else had been tried and found wanting, why not take a leaf from Heraclitus’ book - the way down as the way up - and, following the path of least resistance - every man doing what is right in his own eyes - trust to the laws of gravity and grace? As we see now and could only see now, now that we’ve hit bottom and can see the Whole, not at all a misguided formula for arriving at the two-way looking that reconciles the bad news with the good only to reveal that if, skirt it as we may, there can be no resurrection without crucifixion, conversely, exalt it as we might - and it may be we do exalt it because, up to now at least, we’ve had such trouble believing it - there can be no crucifixion without resurrection. The two, making in all One - God’s body (“fused but not confused,” as Eckhart put it) - go hand in hand. Interestingly enough, though not all that surprising since phenomena always mirror reality as perceived, it was just about this time - say a thousand years or so after its official recognition - that the cross and the man hanging on it as symbol of the ultimate sacrifice became, through the simple attrition of unfulfilled expectations, all the vogue for the first time and took center stage, no doubt reflecting the repeated but failed attempts to by-pass the crucifixion, painful and humbling as it is, and go for the glory. Just so, the so-called Second Coming has had to bide its time these many moons until, its preparations completed and all other possibilities exhausted, the mirror held up to a nature personified as 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Science and 3<sup>rd</sup> Person History could reveal its true face

and so demonstrate that, if picked up like the cross it is and followed to the bitter end, it, too, cannot tell a lie.



And follow it to the bitter end we have, which I've indicated by the arrows that, beginning at points B and C - the one signifying 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Science, the other 3<sup>rd</sup> Person History - head down towards point D which, of course, as the seers and sages who've preceded us and arrived singly via line A can testify, is not a point at all but represents the wondrous abyss and

openness of an immanence that transcends transcendence by the sheer capacity of its absolute nothing-ness. That this no-thing-ness, this awareness if you will, has been variously known by the name of God, or even more beside the point since it has none, of Godhead, might now appear in light of the experiments as largely irrelevant except that, given who we are, not to speak of who he is or isn't or what he has or hasn't, its naming was initially the best and, indeed in most cases, the only means to bring his, her or its Presence to our attention. And if those same seers, sages and mystics, though often at odds with their co-religionists and sometimes at the cost of their lives, were no longer sentenced to seeing through a glass darkly but, overriding all considerations of difference between this or that spiritual tradition, were agreed on the nature of that Presence, how much more likely that those odds are made all even now that their testimony has been confirmed and made available to all through the voice of silence, the very medium of the immediate.

I think that's kind of neat - "the medium of the immediate" as a description of the experiments : what goes without saying - the ever-present possibility of the experience of grace, the uncovering of 1<sup>st</sup> Person Science - delivered, and hand-delivered at that, by precisely what does not and cannot go without saying, the medium of history and what it discovers of the hitherto devious and mysterious workings of what was once called the ways of Providence. Earlier on I referred to Douglas' prescient and pregnant comment (and, having come to term in the experiments, pregnant and prescient it was) that "if to live in the present, taking no thought for tomorrow or yesterday, must be my first concern, then my second must be to find in the Now all my tomorrows and yesterdays." Since the requirement for the first - aware perception - has now been fulfilled and become Self-evident to all in the revelation, the uncovering of 1<sup>st</sup> Person Science, may we not dare, by taking thought after the Fact, to speak in the same breath of its completion in the second, in the conscious conception of a 1<sup>st</sup> Person History where the arrested development of all my yesterdays

and the open-ended promise of all my tomorrows are joined at the point of no-point, at once the Origin and Goal from which they emanate, and so disclose, in a final reversal and about-face, their ultimate meaning and purpose, unintended or not?

How else account for that conjunction of Self Power and Other Power by means of these simple instruments which, though practiced singly, have nevertheless been arrived at collectively via the lie that tells the truth, if not through the workings of a Providence that, like a dough-nut determined by its hole, can only reveal its transcendent Whole by the shape it takes? And what better shape could a god, or as the Zen people might say if they spoke English, “dog” spelled backward assume than to disappear into nothingness and so, getting lost in the quasi atheism and agnosticism of one damned thing after another, admit by reflection its semblable, its frere, now manifest in the faceless, anonymous crowd that is the hall-mark of modernity? How else explain that it took the destruction of what from the very beginning had, for all its regional differences, been a universally sacred world-view in which even its not inconsiderable sciences - after all, to learn to build a fire is no mean feat - were hedged about by hallowed restrictions, before it could evolve or, if you prefer, devolve into its exact opposite, a reversal that literally forced the Ultimate to reveal itSelf in the altogether if only as a, as the last-ditch Measure? ‘Lo, if I make my bed in hell, Thou art there?’ Where better to pronounce its last word which is no word at all and declare itSelf on present evidence than from the profane eminence it calls home, the roof of heaven Douglas denominates as the bottom line?

Indeed, if it weren’t for fear of falling into the same transcendent trap that has literally bedevilled us from the beginning by ascribing to an invisible hand an all-power from above instead of fixing the responsibility where it belongs on His Immanence, the Suffering Servant in us all who, operating all by his lonesome from his command-point below-stairs, is always available on demand but, nevertheless and paradoxically, hasn’t the authority to lift a little finger until summoned by such grand personages as you and me, we might almost be tempted to attribute the whole damned thing to what used to be called the argument from design. Certainly, when seen from the perspective of the experiments, from the within that reveals the without as one and the same, the providential point of view looks to be the perfect set-up for a God who, for all that he’s spent the better part of history - and the worst part, too - ostensibly trying to convince us one way or another of His existence, not to mention His caringness and love, has finally bit the bullet, taken a dose of his own medicine and, along with every other cliché in the Book, thrown in the towel. In short, in his capacity of allowing for all things and raining on the just and unjust, has, like everything else in these latter days when, as predicted, all things would be permitted, come out of the closet in order to confess that, yes, he, too suffers from a bias, that when push comes to shove there’s one thing that he, too, detests - and that’s being deified.

A momentous recognition which took some doing but since wherever we begin will take place in the middle we might as well start with the central historical event that led to the proof of the pudding in the eating - the experiments. And that has to be, however the facts were perceived and, even more important, recorded, the almost immediate perversion and inversion of the original Christian message, the message on the cross of the King of the Jews crowned with thorns, into - at least in its official version - its almost exact opposite, its conversion into an upwardly-mobile Christendom on its way to a mastery, however debased (though, as we’ll see, not yet debased enough to complete its task), of the whole known world. In that sense, the “Thou hast conquered, O Galilean,” reputedly the last words of Julian the Apostate who, quite reasonably, fought it tooth and nail, was right on. In another, however, his pronouncement was somewhat premature and had

to await its own inevitable and abysmal failure mirroring that of its founder before its message could satisfy its original intention and serve as a means to “conquer” the hitherto unknown world now seen as more knowable than any thing simply because it isn’t one.

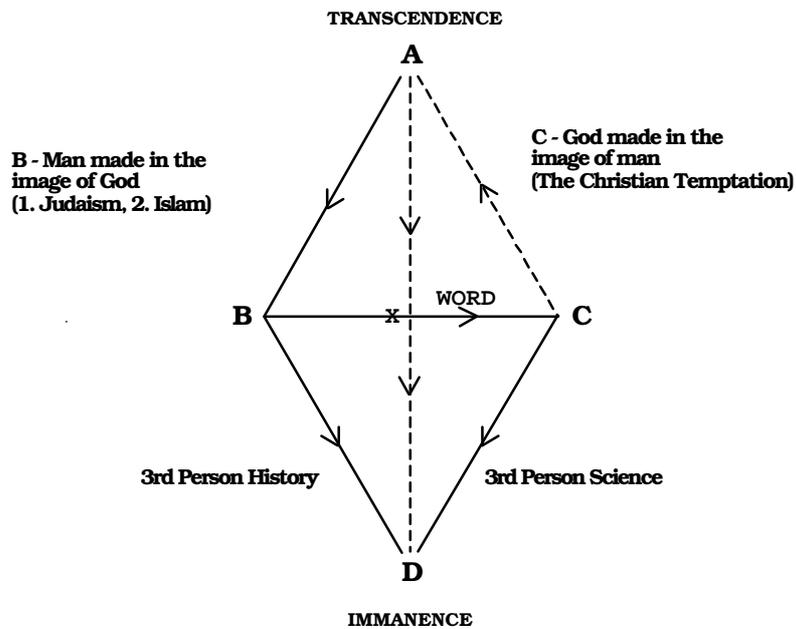
And that is our story which, aside from what it suggests about the intimate and necessary relationship between the Big One and the little one, between, in effect, a beneficent Providence and a not-so beneficent if well-meaning pretender, is, as if acted out in Sophoclean tragedy with its requisite “happy” ending, at once and literally a damned good one. To put it in good dialectical parlance: the original affirmation - I am the Way and the Truth and the Life - negated on the cross, that negation in turn had to be negated in order to arrive at its ultimate affirmation - the truth we know because we see it with our own eyes - of the resurrection, not only of the self as Self but, because it carries everything with it in its train, of the very cosmos as well. Had it arrived in any other way; had, by some supernatural as distinct from natural miracle, the prophecy been fulfilled as hoped and the objective world suddenly and literally transformed, though we might have been spared the subsequent breakdown of belief that led to its truth, deprived of absolute certainty we’d still be mere puppets dependent on the ambiguities of faith. Nor, since the prerequisite of the truth is that it be universally applicable in kind rather than in mere degree, should it come as any great surprise that the experiments, simple as they are and must be, confirm all those hints of what up-to-now have been manifest to our perfectly normal, but, nevertheless, limited and unconscious because “ungodly”, line of sight. We see it in the negation of the child’s perspective by the mature adult before it gives way, as it must, to the vision of second childhood. (Unless, of course - and, given our freedom, it’s always a possibility - the grapes turn into the wrath of vinegar rather than the sweet intoxication of wine). We see it in the Zen recognition that before mountains can become what they truly are and become mountains again they must first pass through the stage of not being mountains. And we see it by means of the reflection in the mirror and what it reveals of reversals. Why, then, if the truth is true and all of a piece, shouldn’t it arise in one instance as well as another? Why, aided by this same reflection, shouldn’t we see this process of upside-down to right-side-up to upside-down again, of birth to death to resurrection, at work in history? And we do, and never so graphically and conclusively as in these past three or four hundred years or so when, with the acceleration so typical of ends and moving with the speed of light it mirrors, it hurries to sanctify what had never before been sanctioned, what had never before, even in its wildest dreams, had had to be sanctioned: the death of God. Is it any wonder that along with Providence, even language, two-faced as ever, has been called into service in order to speak blithely of “things coming to a head?”

What’s so incredibly credible, at least for me, is how, not only guided by the score provided by the experiments but the very fact that they exist at all, we’re now permitted to sit in on the rehearsal and so get some insight into how an underlying Providence, by allowing its soloists free rein for every cacaphony and dissonance, would, as its name implies, “provide” by these means the very instruments to perform in concert and so make music of, of all things, history. Setting aside all “spiritual” considerations for the moment as not relevant to our purpose, it seems to me that by far the most significant pronouncement ever to come out of Jesus’ mouth, at least as regards the subsequent playing-out of events (which is, after all, what we’re about), was the “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s...”

Now I realize that, as with all things “out there,” this has been variously interpreted, notably as a temporal as well as temporary strategy by the founder himself who, quite convinced, along with his first followers - Paul, for example - that the end was near, could afford to be indifferent to the

luxury of a stop-gap measure that would not only prepare the necessary conditions for an imminent transformation but insure its outcome. That it turned out to be anything but imminent and certainly no “stop-gap” but, on the contrary, its exact opposite - the opening that eventually led to the revelation of the Gap as the Measure itSelf - has got to qualify as one of the great ironies of history, an irony absolutely instrumental in establishing the later family fortune that, now that we’ve put on the “dog” - that is, God spelled backwards - we can all enjoy by the fancier name of paradox. Because though it took some time before modernity could take hold - a good fifteen or sixteen hundred years or so with some pockets of resistance still making their last-ditch stand as we speak - it was the unintended consequence of the ‘Render unto Caesar’ that, sounding the death-knell to theocracy and all archaic perspectives, provided the catalyst that at once signaled the end of the old and the beginning of something never seen before, at least consciously and in mass: a world on its way to being turned right-side up and totally desacralized preparatory to its being turned upside-down and made sacred again once and for all. To limit, then, as is customary in its current interpretation, the significance of this universal upheaval to its so-called “adult,” its middle stage, to a history set loose from its traditional moorings in myth, or to its political effects, to the separation of Church and State with its embryonic intimation that the last shall be first by virtue of its right to vote, is to miss the forest for the trees and only tell half the story.

Which half - the trees - is what modernity, at least up to now, has seemed to be all about. And if I’ve represented it by the down-and-in-lines B and C - the one, signifying the emergence of a quantitative 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Science (as distinct from the traditional symbolic and sacred sciences) and the other, the renewed interest, dating from the Renaissance’ rediscovery of the ancients, in a quantitative 3<sup>rd</sup> Person History, a self-recognition increasingly freed from a biblical perspective - it’s



merely to indicate that having taken the long way round from what, in the realization of its total openness, had already been experienced by individual seekers on broken-line AD, would soon be readily available to all. And it’s this - the implicit made explicit at ‘point’ D (which is no point at all) - that constitutes the true meaning of modernity and the everything coming out of the closet that goes along with it: the unboundedness masquerading as license, the hitting bottom mistaken for hell. That it was left to what earlier on I referred to, for want of a better name, as the “non-believers” - at least non-believers in the reigning orthodoxy - to provide, if not the essential ingredient, at least the leaven that was to allow the at once birth-and-death-day cake of the experiments to rise - the only cake we have and can still eat too - has got to be, as a manifestation of a Providence at work in the least likely of places, one of the great paradoxes, if not mysteries,

of all time. And though this third and last category would certainly include some of the more way-out celebrants like a Jacob Boehme or Angelus Silesius and mystics of all shapes and sizes together with the honest-to-God heretics and hell-raisers who helped bring the witches' brew of the Reformation to a boil and so create a stir not seen since the time of Jesus, it's to the admitted agnostics and professed or merely suspected atheists that, in the final analysis, we owe so much, to the purveyors of "the facts, the facts," as Dickens' Mr. Gradgrind used to insist on with such glee, little realizing that like the rest of us he was playing right into the hand of the Fact.

And so - speaking of incarnation, crucifixion and, especially now, of the resurrection of the body since, as the head and tail of a coin making in all One testify, there are three sides to every story - we come to the final chapter and yet another cross-road, to the spectacle of a once triumphant and secular Christendom in the midst of its death-throes as, hoist by its own petard into the very shadow and mirror-image of its Original Self, it gets ready, at the one extreme, to explode into the world-wide possibility of a universal and material well-being, the parody of a heaven on earth of infinite longings matched by an infinite number of goods (whether delivered by its bastard off-spring, capitalism or socialism or some combination of both, is irrelevant for the moment), even as, at the other, the ongoing fulfillment of these necessary requirements has prepared it for its co-responding implosion to ground-zero and the uncovering of its ultimate substance and treasure buried deep in the ground of an earth in heaven. And all this through the good offices of the "Render unto Caesar," which beginning its descent as a trickle high in the icy peaks of a transcendence lost in the clouds and then gradually melting into a flood (in which many were drowned), has now reached the parched low-lands in preparation of its harvest for all seasons - the experiments.

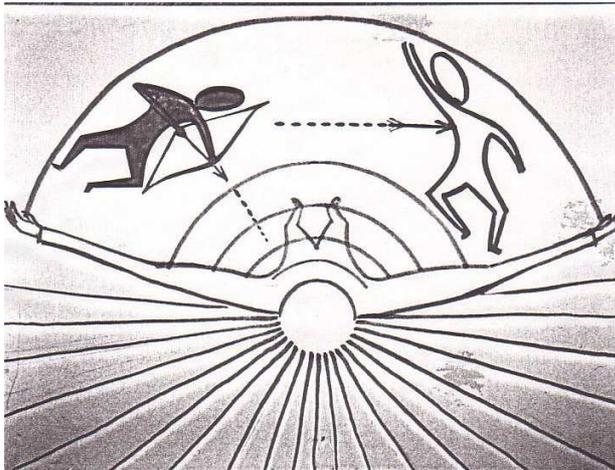
Because it was this crack, if you will, this fissure in the mirror and its image and the ensuing breakdown of belief that, reflecting the disappointment and disillusion with the expectations of a whole era (not for nothing known as the Middle Ages, the bridge to modernity), was eventually to offer the possibility of the conversion of seekers into seers and so fulfill Joyce's prophecy of sorts that, for better or worse, unto us has been given the age of Here Comes Everybody. No longer did it suffice to mistake the projection of the image pronounced holy for the face of God or to take the answer of the mirror at its Word but, rather than reflect it, reflect on it and so question it in the name of scientific objectivity, the first step down towards the revelation of the ultimate Subjectivity of which each and every one of us are simply in our complicated ways merely the expression. Nor was all this search and research confined to a handful of malcontents or even to 3<sup>rd</sup> Person scientists, to a Galileo or a Newton or the pioneering members of the Royal Society. It was all-pervasive. We see it in the Paradise Lost, where even before the action begins in earnest, God the Father, though treated respectfully enough, counts for no more than a supernumerary and is politely shuffled off-stage to leave the conflict to the Son and Satan, in effect to the Big One and the little one. We see it in Blake who, unlike the university-trained Milton (though equally stern) is nowhere near as polite when it comes to calling a transcendent spade a spade and whom, variously operating under the name of Ulro or Urizen and elevated so far out of sight he's soon out of mind, he christens usurper, fraud, tyrant, imposter. Most pronounced of all, we see it in Hegel for whom the whole thrust and meaning of history, whose purpose, no longer external to it but as in Aristotle, indwelling and immanent, has been to undo the consequences of the mistaken identity he refers to as the Bad Infinite, where everything ascribed to something or someone else rather than Self-determined and, as a result, the I AM relegated to its objective content rather than its role

as container, is rendered a cruel abstraction because beyond the bounds of any possible experience.

And so with all hell about to break loose (as a Dostoevski and Nietzsche predicted), having officially completed the first truly universal and totally tradition-deprived and nihilist century in history out of which has come the death-camps and the gulags and the bomb, we now have the experiments to mirror that parody by holding it up to nature, our nature, to see what we can see. And since it's not possible for God being god to close one door without opening another - if not by design not by chance either - what do we find when looking in that direction, looking ever more closely and minutely into the mirror rather than out of it, but a conspiracy of hypothetical quarks making believe they're the ones who are invisible as, huddling together to conceal their identity, they're revealed as unsightly pores and so give the game away? And the same dizzying parallel applies everywhere and in every field - the more we pay attention to particulars the more particulars we have to pay attention to until, our nose pressed against the glass in hopes of finally locating the door that will lead us through to the other side (which is really this side), all induction and deduction having failed, we arrive at the ultimate reduction where, nihilism triumphant, all becomes a blur and, for all our observance of strict traffic patterns (maybe because of it), a return to the original chaos. And we all know what the indefinity of that blank gift is said to have brought forth once upon a time - especially by its seventh day. And if we don't, all we have to do is draw the curtain and open a single eye on a rock-bottom world resting on its empty fundament as seen through an oval cut-out large enough to contain a head. Has it ever been more apparent - beyond the ambiguities of speech and yes, even number - than in this experiment when, all other possibilities exhausted and coming as close as we can to ultimate annihilation, we and the mirror becoming one and then none are finally free to publish the prologue because we know how the story ends? That if history has seemed no more than a cautionary tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury and signifying nothing, now, come into its own and home free at last, it's in a position to reveal the flip side of that "signifying nothing" for the first time ever. Which, of course, in a world where extremes, like God and the devil, the Big One and the little one, finally meet - and in a Gap no less - signals its arrival. Which, making in all One again, rings the bell.

I guess that just about does it for the moment. As usual, if I've gone on far too long, I might adopt as my best, if not only, watchword a prophetic passage from Milton's *Areopagitica* where he points out that "the light we have gained was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover outward things even more remote from our knowledge." Which, as far as I can see, and as near, too, says it all, all things being to some degree remote from the certain evidence of what we are in kind - Goodness, Justice, Mercy. So let's get on with it.

Note, too, that, though I intended to, I've barely touched on Douglas' accompanying diagram other than to point out that if you cover the bottom half - the all-embracing arms - you leave the world alone to the bow-and-arrow boys, one of whom - whether intended or not on Douglas' part - is aiming directly at the heart of the heart and so might be taken as going Machiavelli and Hobbes - though neither of them, bold as they were, would have dared to go that far - one better. That was to be left to Hegel and Nietzsche in accordance with the spirit of the times and the increasing speed of the descent. Yet, if my analysis is correct, it's precisely the death of god, or at least that imaginary god, that had to be consummated, even celebrated (as it is, for instance, in *Finnegans Wake*) before he could be "reborn" as a not-god as depicted here and which, of course, Douglas has gotten exactly right. If you're curious as to whose death of what God we celebrate and have a right to celebrate, just turn the diagram upside-down and look at Him in all his threatening and



transcendent glory sweeping us up like a bat out of hell on the prowl for a colony of ants in retreat - a rear-god action if there ever was one - when, in reality, it's he - a.k.a. who I really really am - who's on his back and, other than in his capacity to welcome us and receive us and suffer our slings and arrows, for all his outstretched arms remains unarmed except for mine. Is it any wonder that this mis-perception cum mis-conception has led us into all sorts of trouble

By the same token, if you cover the top part with your hand or a slip of paper and eliminate the archers as mere illusions (as they did in India, though not as often and as exclusively as people think just as all Westerners were not Machiavellians) not only is the Alone left alone with the Alone with no one to say "hello" to, so are you whoever you are. But, no more than an infant or an ant, how could you possibly know who that whoever is without a counter, a foil, a mirror to measure the Immeasurable by? As good a recipe as any for the need of a world - or for evil, too, for that matter - which, like it or not, is what we, in our divine mission as humans, are called upon to witness and redeem.

Best to you, Carl, and thanks for the occasion.

George