

Perennialism and Universal Reality

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Abstract

The universal reality actually presents two intertwined realities, mutually reinforcing and explaining, namely the esoteric and exoteric aspects. Esotericism is the essence or substance, while exotericism is the form or format of reality itself. The perspective of perennialism does not only focus on existing diversity, but also reacts to the perspectives and attitudes of human life that have begun to be enslaved and "re-created" by advances in science and modern technology. Humans become helpless when faced with the current conditions, even though these conditions he himself has engineered. Humans in their lives are always preoccupied and trapped by the laws of relativity and measuring everything by quantities, regardless of how these conditions have led to the edge of their existence. Perennialism actually seeks to build a system of thinking that sees everything in this history as different expressions of a single Divine tradition. Faith in God, believing in the day of resurrection, and being faithful to always do good deeds is the core of all religious and theological teachings. A perennial and universal virtue, even though its understanding, approach and manifestation are always local and particular.

Keywords: *Perennialism, Relative, Tradition*

Introduction

Philosophy as a method of thinking has presented various perspectives in examining and understanding the reality of life. Since its inception, philosophy has always 'disturbed' and delved into issues that have, are or will occur through a critical and radical way of thinking. Thinking in the realm of philosophy is not only limited by space and time, but rather crosses and encompasses all things related to life. Therefore, the object of study of philosophy is not limited to what exists, but also to what may exist.

In its history, such methods and patterns of thinking have given birth to various views and understandings of the universal reality. Perennial philosophy is one of a number of views that pay attention to the variety of objects in human life. Perennial philosophy is a school of philosophy and mysticism, as well as a worldview which has become famous thanks to the hard work of its pioneers whom Seyyed Hossen Nasr – who is also a perennial philosopher – calls 'The Masters' (teachers), namely Rene Guenon, Ananda Coomaraswamy and Frithjof Schuon. In one of his works, *Echoes of Perennial Wisdom* (1992), Schuon calls Perennial Philosophy as "...the universal Gnosis which always has existed and always will exist": a universal mystical knowledge that has existed from time immemorial and will continue to exist forever. Meanwhile Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1997) calls Perennial Philosophy the term *Scientia Sacra*, and

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this term according to Nasr is a traditionalist perspective which echoes in the West began to be heard at the beginning of the 20th century through the works of the French philosopher Rene Guenon, and a professor of orientalism at Harvard, Ananda Coomaraswamy.

Aldous Huxley (1970), in his book, *The Perennial Philosophy*, explains that the first to use the phrase perennial philosophy was a German philosopher and mathematician, Gottfried Wilhelm Von Leibniz (1646-1716), although in essence it existed long ago, 'immemorial' and 'universals'. It was from Huxley's work that the term perennial philosophy became famous in the West (see also in Nasr, 1997, 1993; Schmitt, 1996). Regarding this Perennial Philosophy or Eternal Wisdom, Huxley (1970) explains: "The basic principles of Eternal Wisdom can be found among the ancient legends and myths that developed in primitive societies throughout the world. A version of the Highest Commonality in theologies, past and present, was first written down more than twenty-five centuries ago, and since then this inexhaustible theme has been under constant discussion, from the perspective of every religious tradition and in all major Asian and European topics."

Historically, it is strongly suspected that the term *Philosophia Perennis* was first used in the West by Augustinus Steuchus (1497-1548) for the title of his book *De Perenni Philsophia* (1540), then popularized

by Leibniz. In Nasr's preface to Schuon's book *Islam and Perennial Philosophy* (1976), it is found that Leibniz himself defined the term as a method of retrieving traces of truth among ancient philosophers and of talking about the separation between light and darkness. However, long before the term was used, it was Plato who underlies these philosophical teachings, and were further continued and developed by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. So sturdy, there has been no significant change in the principles of his teachings since the Middle Ages until now.

Paul Tillich in this case argues that "the type of perennial philosophy comes from the strong influence of the traditions of Platonism, neo-Platonism, the mystical traditions of Cusanus, Eckhart and Bohme, and Schelling's idealism. This can be seen in his emphasis on not looking at God as a person, but rather as something transcendent. Meanwhile, mysticism is an important element in understanding divinity and the human relationship itself with God" (Thomas).

Regarding the notion of perennial philosophy, Huxley (1970) provides the following definition: First, metaphysics which shows an essence of Divine reality in all things of life and thought. Second, psychology which shows that there is something in the human soul that is identical to the Divine reality. Third, ethics that places the ultimate goal of humans in knowledge that is both immanent and transcendent regarding all existence.

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Meanwhile, Frithjof Schuon revealed that perennial philosophy is a metaphysical truth that is eternal which underlines various religions. The written sources are the revealed scriptures as well as the writings of the great spiritual leaders (The timeless metaphysical truth underlying the diverse religions, whose written sources are the revealed Scriptures as well as the writings of the great spiritual masters).

The term perennial usually appears in the discourse of religious philosophy, with the agenda being discussed are:

First, about God, the Absolute Being, the Source of all beings. The Most True God is one, so all religions that have arisen from the One are in principle the same because they come from the same source. Second, perennial philosophy wants to discuss the phenomenon of religious pluralism critically and contemplatively. Even though Religion (Religion) – with major A and R – is only one correct, but because it is passed on to humans in the historical and sociological spectrum, then –like sunlight that appears with various colors – “Religion” in the historical context is always present in pluralistic format (religions or religions – with small r and a, also showing plural at the same time). In this context, every religion has something in common with the others, but at the same time it also has unique characteristics that make it different from the

others. Third, perennial philosophy seeks to trace the roots of religious awareness of a person or group through symbols, rites and religious experiences (Hidayat and Nafis, 1995).

Discussion

According to its adherents, perennial philosophy is a philosophy of eternity which emphasizes that Divine reality is very substantial for life. We can see this in their invitation to return to the spiritual wisdom (values) of authentic religions – as well as the teachings of wisdom –. Perennialism seeks to develop inner-space awareness in order to empower the potential of the "center" in humans. So, it can be understood that perennial philosophy is a religious worldview, like other worldviews, which has a special understanding of reality, including that of the Divine and the place for humans in reality.

It can be said that the essence of the discussion of perennial philosophy concerns the eternal truth, eternity and beauty in the sight of God. This concept is very important, especially in Islam which makes faith in Allah and the Last Day the main basis of its existence. The last day must be understood precisely. For people whose terminal faith is still on earth, with the alternation of night and day as a timepiece, the rising of dawn is experienced as tomorrow's event. Whereas for people whose terminal of faith is already in the sun, the change of day and night is only an

illusion, because the sun is never not bright all the time. This understanding of the last days leads to an understanding of Yaumuddin, the days of religion. If we still have faith terminals on earth – partners and resistance terminals – then the days of those religions will be understood as tomorrow. Even though Allah Qiyamuhu Binafsihi started from the past, now and until whenever. This is not internalized because we are covered by our own self.

Perennial philosophy primarily focuses on the One, Divine Reality which is the substance for all forms of existence, life, and thought. However, the nature of this Reality cannot be digested and understood for granted except by people who have been chosen and fulfill certain conditions: people whose hearts are pure, full of love and poor in lust. Why should so? No one knows. Only by making psychological and moral experiments can one discover the innermost nature of thought and its potentials. In the ordinary life of reason, these potentials are still veiled and not yet uncovered. To reveal it, people must meet certain conditions and comply with certain rules as well (Huxley, 1970).

1. The Ontological Assumption: Levels of Reality

Ontology is one of the most ancient branches of philosophy which is used to investigate what is meant by being, reality, existence and change by distinguishing it from the opposite of these terms, namely does not exist, does not exist, does not exist,

and does not change. Practically, ontology is applied to see how someone interprets the existence of something and distinguishes its existence from other existences (Kattsoff, 1996). Ontology also tries: a) to describe the ultimate nature of Being (The One, the Absolute, Perfect Eternal Form), b) to show that everything depends on it for its existence, c) to link human thoughts and actions that are individual and live in history with reality certain (Good, 1996).

Schuon says that his role in Perennial philosophy is to "bring back the concept of the Absolute into a relativized world." He harbored a deep sense of the sacred which was manifested outwardly by his seriousness and perseverance (Schuon, 1994).

All of Schuon's works reaffirm traditional metaphysical principles, address the esoteric dimension of religion, penetrate mythology and religious forms, and criticize modernism. It clarifies the differences between the exoteric and esoteric dimensions of religious traditions and uncovers the metaphysical veil of all orthodox religions. The important themes of Schuon's writings, as summed up by Martin Lings are: the Sole Ultimate Reality of Absolute, Infinite Perfection and human imperfection made in the image of the Perfect, namely the image of a place. the fall of man and to that image man returns on his way to reunification with his Divine Source.

Aristotle called this Absolute Reality the term "Unmoving Mover". But what Aristotle called the

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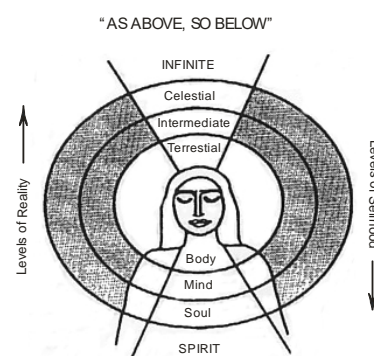
"Unmoving Mover" is very different from the Divine Source posited by proponents of Perennial philosophy in the great religious traditions. In contrast Aristotle is more concerned with cosmology while the Perennial philosophers are more concerned with liberation and enlightenment. The goal of Aristotle's philosophy is to know the "immovable Mover" externally and theoretically, while the goal of the Perennial philosophers is to be directly aware of His existence and to know Him thoroughly so that they and others truly become "Immovable".

In his essay "Seeing God Everywhere", Schuon mentions that "remembering God in everything" and "metaphysical transparency of phenomena" are other relevant expressions that Schuon uses to underscore God's immanence in the world. This reminds people that God reveals himself not only through holy books such as the Bible, the Upanishads, and the Koran. God also shows the light of His reality through the natural beauty of the world. Just as if knowing the essence of an artist can be done through his art, then finding the presence of the Creator can be done through His creations. Schuon's thesis shows that the physical and spiritual life of man is closely intertwined with his ability to "see God everywhere" and "remember Him in everything."

Regarding the nature of the Scriptures, Schuon said, "The scriptures are sacred because, firstly, they are closely related to the transcendent order; secondly, it

has the property of absolute necessity; and thirdly, it is beyond the comprehension and investigative capacity of the ordinary human mind. Its sacredness is like the presence of a center on the edge of a circle, the absence of movement within that which moves. As for nobility, it is its expression because it is in nobility that the center manifests itself at the periphery, for example, the inner state is shown by outward behavior. This sacred introduces a quality from the Absolute to things that are relative and bestows a form of immortality on everything that is fragile or transitory." (Schuon, 1994).

The ontological assumption built by Schuon states that in the Unity of Being there are also other characteristics of being, which seem contradictory but in fact are not, namely that being is hierarchical: from the highest Being, namely Ultimate Reality (Absolute Being) to the lowest being (humans and objects). This hierarchy is also found in human existence (hierarchy of selfhood): spirit, soul, mind, then body. The unifying Ultimate Reality is the substance of all things (life and thought).



(Source: Permata, 1996)

In the Islamic context, a priori a human being is a dual vessel made for the Absolute, while Islam fills the vessel, first with the truth about the Absolute and then with the laws of the Absolute. So in its essence, Islam is a truth and a law (Truth and Law), where the first answers to intelligence, while the second to will. So Islam wants to eliminate uncertainty and doubt. Or more precisely Islam wants to eliminate mistakes and sins. The error referred to here is assuming that the Absolute is not absolute, the Absolute is relative, the Absolute is more than one, or the relative is Absolute. Then these faults by sin are placed at the level of will or action (Schuon, 1994). The ontological assumption is inseparable from the epistemological and axiological assumptions.

If man is will, then God is Love. If man is intelligence, then God is Truth. If man is a will that has been mired and powerless, then God is Love that gives forgiveness. If man is an intelligence that has experienced darkness and delusion, then God is the Truth that is bright and gives salvation. All of this is due to the intrinsic nature of knowledge which brings intelligence to the level of truth – giving the pure for free. God's love saves us by "making himself" into us; This love "goes down" to "go back up". God's truth leads man to salvation by giving back to the intellect His object...that is, by "warming" us that it is only the Absolute that "is" (Schuon, 1994).

2. Epistemological Assumptions: Perennial Intellectual Dimensions

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that "investigates the origin, structure, methods and legitimacy of knowledge" so that in general epistemology can be called the philosophy of knowledge. There are many questions to be answered in epistemology, such as: Do you know that? What is the origin of human knowledge? How to find out? What forms and forms of knowledge exist? How do we know what we know is right or wrong? In general, these questions fall into two groups: the first group deals with sources of knowledge, and the second group deals with the relationship between knowing subjects and known objects (subject-object relations) (Kattsoff, 1996).

Of all the questions above, the most important question to be answered in epistemology is: what distinguishes between true and false knowledge. Practically, this question manifests itself in issues of scientific methodology, namely how one can develop a theory or model that is better than other theories or models. In other words, epistemology practically means talking about the validity of the methodology used in a proposition (theory or model) about knowledge.

Knowledge is a function of being. When there is a change in the person who knows, it is certain that there will also be a change in the nature

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and amount of knowledge. For example, the figure of a child changes due to educational growth so that he becomes an adult. Among the effects of these changes are changes in the way of knowing and the number and nature of things that are known. When a person is more mature, then the form of knowledge becomes more conceptual and systematic, as well as the usefulness and factual content of knowledge also increases. Also consider, for example, the changes experienced by scientists who are able to use more sophisticated tools. An astronomer, for example, if he is equipped with a spectroscope and a 60-inch reflector, it is as if he has super eyes that can see far. The knowledge possessed by this "superhuman" is very much different, both in quality and quantity, from someone who only relies on the naked eye (Huxley, 1970).

What affects a person's knowledge is not only psychological and intellectual changes. As a moral being, what he knows depends on what he chooses for himself. According to William James, "Exercise may change our theoretical horizons, but it is also like two sides of a coin: it may take us to new worlds and maintain our power. Unattainable knowledge may be attained when higher powers and lives are attained." In perennial parlance, "Gift is purity of heart, because with it God can be seen." Rumi also expressed the same thing in his scientific metaphor, "God's secret key is love" (Huxley, 1970).

In Perennial philosophy, knowledge no longer places human and natural manipulation as two opposing forces. It is also not a data reduction process for statistical purposes, but rather it is a tool to liberate humans from the destructive crush of fear and then directs the way towards the rehabilitation of human desires and the awakening of faith and confidence within a person (D'Arcy, 1957).

Perennial philosophical knowledge shows the relation of all existence in this universe with the reality of the Absolute. The realization of this knowledge in human beings can only be achieved through what is called "intellect", the path of which can only be reached through traditions, rites, symbols and means which are fully believed by perennials to originate from God.

Schuon's style of seeking intuitionism explores knowledge of the world in its essence, as it truly allows for the awakening of clarity and calm, awareness of things and things as they really are, which will make human life meaningful. The closest truth that humans can reach, said Schuon, is the relative reality in which humans struggle to live. The transcendent truths and divine realities reflected in words are limited and relative. Schuon offers an alternative way for mankind by inviting them to see the truth through intellectual intuition, through the

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eyes of the heart, beyond reason-rationalism and sensory-empiricism (Schuon, 2002).

Sadr al-Din Shirazi identified true knowledge with perennial wisdom that has existed since the beginning of human history (Nasr, 1997). The Islamic concept of the universality of revelation passes from hand to hand with the ever-present idea of Primordial truth, a truth without history.

In religious literature, the term "truth" is used in at least three very different senses. Sometimes truth is treated as synonymous with "fact", for example when people assert that God is Truth, which means God is Primordial Reality. But it is clear that the meaning is not the same as the meaning of the word in the phrase "worship God in spirit and truth." In this phrase it is clear that "truth" means direct understanding of spiritual Facts. Finally, there is another more common meaning of the word, as in the sentence, "This statement is true" which is used to emphasize that the symbols that make up the statement correspond to the facts referred to by the statement. The spirit of all these meanings is clear. Whenever one hears or reads about "truth", one must first reflect for a long time to ask oneself: which of the three meanings of "truth" above will be used at that time (Huxley, 1970).

In his book *Understanding Islam*, Schuon asserts that total truth which includes all possible

viewpoints, aspects and modes, when relying on reason alone is of no benefit. According to Schuon, we must not lose sight of the fact that reason works indirectly, or works by contemplation, and the axioms advanced by reason are inadequate for exploring the purely intellectual realm. Reason is formal. It works with "compressions", alternatives and exclusions. In other words, reason works with partial truths. The mind is not like the pure intellect which is unformed and is light which propagates in all directions. The introduction of humans to God through reason alone can only be done negatively. Every human gift about God must be based on empirical experience, no matter how abstract the gift is. Because of this, the human concept of God -no matter how sophisticated it is- must always be seen as relative (Kartanegara, 2007).

It is true that reason largely takes a stand or its validity from the intellect, but reason must be able to reach essences through its conclusions – not through direct experience. Reason cannot be ruled out in making verbal formulations, but reason cannot be involved in obtaining direct knowledge (Schuon, 1994).

According to Kartanegara (2005), reason has a unique power that can help in abstracting from universal concepts. The way of the mind to investigate physical objects that are perceived by the senses is to ask several questions based on the

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mental categories they have – such as the categories of space, time, substance, quantity, quality and causality – so that the questions what, where, arise, why, who, how much, which, etc.

In theology, there is not only a conflict between predestination and freedom, but also between faith and knowledge. People don't just believe that freedom must be abolished in the name of destiny, or conversely, that destiny must be abolished in the name of freedom. But people also believe that knowledge must be rejected in the name of faith, or conversely, faith must be abolished in the name of knowledge. This happens to people who believe in rationalism: faith has to be put aside for what they believe to be knowledge. There really is no contradiction here because the two principles are two dimensions that complement each other. The same is true of faith and knowledge, in the sense that there is no knowledge without faith and no faith without knowledge. Faith is a relative and indirect mode of knowledge, whereas knowledge is not a mode of faith. Because of its relativity, knowledge requires an element of faith as long as it is a priori intellectual and not existential, part and not the whole (Schuon, 1985).

But theoretical knowledge, even though it is perfect and inviolable, always requires a relative element that helps the process of assimilation or integration because humans must remain imperfect

humans. On the other hand, in religious belief, there is always an element of knowledge that determines it because in order to believe, one must first know what to believe. In addition, in absolute faith there is an element of certainty that is not relative. Knowledge is the element of truth which gives all value to faith so that one can believe in something, whatever it is, as long as he believes in it. Only through the truth does the intensity of faith become meaningful. Somewhat paradoxically, it is fate that makes people free to choose between truth and goodness. Without freedom, of course there is no choice. Ultimately, destiny is what we are (Schuon, 1985).

Intelligence, with which we understand doctrine, is intellect or reason. In fact, reason is an intellect because it is through reason that humans understand the natural phenomena around them and within themselves; and also through reason he can describe things that are supernatural, namely through the transfer of intuitive knowledge into spoken language. Therefore, the function of reason can encourage spiritual intuition by means of concepts. The limit of things that language cannot express depends on one's mental structure. What is beyond one person's range of expression may not be difficult for another person to express (Schuon, 1995).

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In other words: in Semitic religions, so much importance is given to the contradiction between knowledge and faith that one forgets that in relativity, the two things complement each other. Knowledge is the correct perception of reality, and faith is the obedience of will and feeling to truth that is imperfectly perceived by reason. If the perception is perfect, it is impossible for a believer to lose his faith (Schuon, 1985).

In the past, philosophy and religion were intertwined, and theology was considered the queen of science. Since the birth of the scientific era, the relationship between the three has collapsed. It is true that great scientists like Newton had strong religious beliefs; prominent philosophers such as Leibniz, Berkeley, and Hegel positioned God as the center of their system. But the empirical tradition, whose main pillar is the method of scientists, has structured their discipline and standardized the separation between religion and philosophy as the separation between church and state. Information about Eastern philosophy seems to help restore the relationship between the three. Eastern philosophy provides evidence of the close relationship between metaphysics (philosophy) and religion, because even though they maintain their respective autonomy they can still complement each other (D'Arcy, 1957).

3. Axiological Assumptions: Primordial Ethics

As an implication of the two assumptions above, the axiological assumption leads people to believe that perennial knowledge and free will are always materialized and manifested in eternal virtues. The discussion on the axiological aspect emphasizes four groups of issues which are the main discussion, namely: (1) The nature of values; (2) Various values; (3) Value measure; and (4) the metaphysical position of values (Gie, 1979).

The axiological view of Sophia Perennis departs from an understanding that humans are transcendent intelligence and free will, then it is this intelligence and will or transcendence and freedom that will save humans. Intelligence and will are actualized by prayer which are divine and human words. This prayer is an act related to will, while its content is related to intelligence. Although they can be perceived by the senses, words are an immaterial framework of human will and understanding.

The originality of Islam is not the discovery that intelligence, will and words have functions that can save humanity, but that it makes all of this within the framework of Semitic monotheism, as a starting point in a perspective on human salvation and freedom. This intelligence is nothing other than the knowledge of the One, or the Absolute, and of the dependence of all things upon Him. In the same way we can say that will is al-Islam, or conformity with the will of Allah, the Absolute. While words are

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communication with Allah and are basically prayers and supplications.

From this flow one can find a triad in Islam, namely al-iman, ("belief") al-islam, ("law"; literally means "conquest") and al-ihsan ("way"; literally means "virtue"). Of the three elements, the most essential is "remembering Allah" which is implemented through words. From a metaphysical point of view, al-iman is the certainty of the Absolute and the dependence of all things on Him; al-islam is equilibrium with the Absolute in accordance with the terms of the Absolute; and al-ihsan returns al-iman and al-islam to their essences through the revelation of sacred words, because these sacred words are a vehicle for intelligence and will (Schuon, 1994).

Here metaphysical vision (intelligence) essentially has two vulnerable points that can cause it to be spiritually inoperative: self-knowledge and awareness – which is principally permanent – of the Absolute Reality. Self-knowledge is a logical as well as a moral tipping point. Logically, for seeing the Absolute also includes seeing the relative, and seeing the transcendent also involves the immanent. While the moral vulnerable point, because pure knowledge is related to the brain, so it has a high potential to produce psychic chaos, namely the temptation of complacency, narcissism and

arrogance (author: excessive individualism) (Schuon, 1997).

This view is actually, according to Schuon, the cause of the exotericism against gnosis with arguments that are too simple. Authentic exotericism is definitively of a kind and does not stop at theory alone. Knowing is becoming (Schuon, 1997).

Therefore, in human life, basic virtues are also needed that must be possessed by a person. The virtues that must be possessed are honesty, sincerity in the form of acceptance of the consequences of what is known as the truth and which implies all other truths. Truth is not enough to be recognized objectively in thought, but must also be assumed subjectively in action, both physically and mentally. Truth negates indifference, hypocrisy, error and lies.

In terms of sincerity, he gave birth to two main concrete attitudes: avoidance of what is contrary to the truth, and fulfillment of what is in harmony with it. In other words, it is absolute to detach from all that can separate us from the Sovereign Good and fulfill all that draws us close to it. And that is also the reason why the values of honesty and sincerity must also include the values of calm and steadfastness, or purity and alertness, and more fundamentally, humility and generosity.

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Without goodness there is no way, no matter how good the quality of human spiritual means (Schuon, 1997). Kindness is also part of wisdom. A wisdom without goodness is deceit and hypocrisy, not only in the beginning, but also in the long run, so to speak, that perfect knowledge of the Divine Reality presupposes or demands harmony with this reality, as the eye attunes to light. Thus, how important is the "inner" perspective before God, namely emphasizing intrinsic and fundamental inner qualities, the consequences of which at the same time avoid the trap of excessive formalism (Schuon, 1997). Then, what must also be realized is that the virtues performed are for self-interest, not to make those virtues "our" property (Schuon, 2002).

The teachings about virtue above are summed up in a "primordial ethics" which includes humility and charity. Humility is the awareness of our nothingness before the Absolute: man is not God, or the human "I" is not the divine "Self". As for generosity, it is our love for the Sovereign Good, which has given ultimate meaning to our social charity: the basis of generosity, compassion and philanthropy is that our neighbors too are "created in the image of God", or that the Divine Self is immanent in all human subjects.

Conclusion

Perennial philosophy teaches that the universal reality is the embodiment of the Supreme Perfection of God as the One who overcomes and encompasses the universe. Religion is important, but doing good overcomes everything. Spirituality must be centered on empathy and compassion, and that human beings must renounce selfishness, greed, violence and immorality.

This is what makes the difference between traditional and modern views of the world. According to the traditional view, reality is as amazing in terms of quality as it is in terms of quantity. In the modern view, while sharpening our understanding of various quantitative aspects of the world, it discards its qualitative dimension. All that remains is the distance between soulless matter and human consciousness. People often forget that modern thinking, or the culture that gave birth to it, is just a fluctuation that is not constant and cannot be positively defined because it has no real principles regarding the Unchanging.

Today, when the great works of the East are becoming widely known and appreciated, it is undeniable that new efforts must be made to expand the meaning of perennial philosophy. How great is the contribution of Perennial philosophy to human civilization if it can be demonstrated that their best and wisest figures convey teachings that

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are in accordance with the true and perfect way of human life. This suitability should not appear at first glance. Every religion and philosophy triumphed in its own time. They have their own eccentricities and deviations, have local colors and certain traditions. Muslims and Christians may be at war with each other, Hindus and Buddhists are in conflict; all disputes that are commonplace but pseudo in nature. The differences seem to cover up the similarities so that researchers have to dive into each religion to find the same factors in each religion.

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