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Religion Transcending Science Transcending Religion

The nature of the relationship between science and religion has long been a central concern to both philosophers and theologians. For the most part, the relationship has been described in warfare imagery. Until this century, moreover, it has generally been assumed that science and religion are locked in mortal combat with victory assured to science. However, some modifications of this simple picture emerged with the birth of post-Newtonian physics, and particularly so with the ascendancy of the Copenhagen interpretation of indeterminacy in quantum physics. This did not, as some thought, bring about a reversal of the fortunes of religion in the discussion but the ambiguity of modern physics did spawn a 'detente' between the two communities.¹ Indeed, the stage was set for the construction of 'compatibility systems' designed to show how science and religion constitute an essential unity—each incomplete in itself and a complement to the other.² Some who are involved in the ongoing discussion, in fact, have gone so far as to claim that earlier analyses of the relationship between the two communities in terms of warfare imagery were simply wrong. In support of their claims they point to the espousal by some in the religious community of the very scientific discoveries that the philosophers have seen as destructive of religious belief.³

In this paper I *suggest* that the 'detente' between the two communities, even though real, is a matter of convenience, and merely temporary; that the 'compatibility systems' built are, ultimately, incoherent; and that the 'revisionist history' that would banish warfare imagery in recounting the history of the relationship between science and religion, or in predicting its future, is deceptive. There is, I shall attempt to *show* an unbridgeable gulf between religious knowledge, so-called, and science. Religion and science, that is, constitute two radically different modes of thought—mutually exclusive modes of thought with each transcending the other. Such transcendence makes it impossible to hold to both at the same time, (although the impossibility is purely a

logical one and must not be taken to mean that persons cannot, in fact, perform this 'feat' in their personal and social lives).

To *argue* the claim I have just put forward constitutes a task that cannot be undertaken within the bounds of a single paper. I propose, therefore, to 'illustrate' the claim in a comparative analysis of the thought of the little known Russian existentialist Lev Shestov and philosopher/social scientist Ernest Gellner. On one level their respective philosophical projects appear to have nothing in common. Closer analysis, however, will reveal an identity of structure in their thought that can provide the foundation of an argument for the claims made here. I begin with Shestov.⁴

Shestov boldly proclaims the incompatibility of religious and scientific modes of thought. In his *Potestas Clavium* he describes the move from religious (mythopoeic) to rational thought as a 'bewitchment' of the human mind for it involves a loss of Freedom through an acknowledgement and acceptance of (scientific) Necessity. He maintains, therefore, that "the 'logic' of the religious man . . . is quite different from the logic of the scientist."⁶ To know, according to Shestov, is to be subject to the 'laws of the universe' which, in the final analysis, predict the death, and therefore the insignificance, of persons, and so, ultimately, of ourselves. To cry to the gods (God) for help against that fate is, of course, simply absurd in a world of science—it is against reason—and yet that is precisely what religion, and in particular the religion of the Bible, is all about. Such 'help' could only be possible in a world not fully accountable in terms of necessary and binding physical 'laws'. And, as Shestov puts it, "The Ancient Greeks were already obviously afraid to leave the universe to the sole will of the gods for this would have been equivalent to admitting arbitrariness as the fundamental principle of life."⁷ To accept the 'necessity' of scientific laws, therefore, is the destruction of a peculiar religious mode of thought and existence; this is, as he states it in *Potestas Clavium*, a millennial struggle between Jewish and Greek genius.⁸

In *Kierkegaard and the Existential Philosophy*⁹ Shestov presents the same argument but uses here the story of 'the fall of man' as symbol of this change in the style of thinking. God had warned Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of Knowledge of good and evil lest they die, and Shestov sees that death symbolically in the 'Necessity' which is the essence of our knowledge: "Knowledge enslaves human will, making it subordinate to eternal truths which by their very nature are hostile to everything that lives and is at all capable of demonstrating its independence and which cannot bear to have even God as their equal."¹⁰ As in the former volume so also here Shestov maintains that the knowledge sought by us in a bid for power to control our own lives inde-

pendently of the gods (God) is an intellectual vision of inevitable destruction of all that has ever come to be. The principles of causality are, if they are to be of any 'value', inflexible but as such can only account for the universe as a relentless round of birthing and dying. Consequently he once again concludes that 'science'—the philosophic vision—makes nonsense of the human cry for help that is the centre of religion for, he writes, "when love comes face to face with truth, it is love that must retreat."¹¹

In both these volumes Shestov maintains that the belief in the eternal validity of the principles of knowledge means that even the gods (God) are (is) subject to them and that because of this 'man' is 'enchanted' into believing that in the loss of the self in the impersonality of law is 'salvation' to be found.¹² What I have referred to above as the disenchantment of the universe by philosophy Shestov refers to as a 'bewitchment' and an 'enchantment' of the human mind by God.¹³ And theology, the hellenized thinking of the fathers of the Church, is an element of that enchantment/bewitchment by God:

. . . theology itself which, as I have already indicated, was even in the Middle Ages, at the time of its highest flowering and triumph, the servant of philosophy, (*ancilla philosophiae*), wanted absolutely to be above and beyond God. The entire *potestas audendi* of the philosophers and theologians expressed itself chiefly in the endeavour to subordinate God to man.¹⁴

'Religious thought'—i.e. faith—is, however, quite opposed to this way of thinking; it is a 'religious philosophy', he argues in *Athens and Jerusalem*, that surmounts such knowledge, for faith is the *deus ex machina* that smashes Necessity.¹⁵ "God's thunder," he writes, "is the answer to human wisdom, to our logic, to our truths. It breaks to bits not man, but the 'impossibilities' placed by human reason—which is at the same time human cowardice—between itself and the Creator."¹⁶ Either one follows reason by which reality is revealed according to scientific laws or one follows the Biblical revelation of God. The dichotomy of the two ways of thought is unmistakable in Shestov:

. . . if reality is rational, if we can derive truth only from reality, then elementary consistency demands of us that we pass Biblical revelation through the filter of the truths obtained from reality. And conversely, if revelation receives the sanction of truth, it must bear the halter of reality [R]evealed Truth engulfs and destroys all the coercive truths obtained by man from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.¹⁷

The task of thinking—i.e. religious thinking—is not to attempt to justify the revelation of God for that is but to submit to reason—

rather, one is to dispel the power of reason through faith which is a renunciation of the tree of knowledge and a return to the tree of life.¹⁸

According to Shestov, then, Religion (Christianity) *transcends* (and therefore abrogates) reason because a proper understanding of 'biblical (religious) thinking' precludes the philosophy of the Greeks and the modern philosophy and science to which it has given birth. An analysis of the notion of Christian philosophy, especially as it arose in the middle ages, will clarify and confirm that interpretation. In his analysis of E. Gilson's Gifford lectures, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, he maintains that the philosophers of the period, in attempting to bridge the gulf between the Bible and Greek philosophy were unwittingly recapitulating the sin of Adam and Eve: ". . . the medieval philosophers who aspired to transform faith into knowledge were far from suspecting that they were committing once again the act of the first man."¹⁹ They were, that is, being seduced by the promise of knowledge; hoping to transform the truths received from God without attendance of proofs into proven and self-evident truths. Medieval thinkers were incapable of removing the influence of their classical training, of giving up their Greek heritage, and consequently took their task to be the grounding, through rational argument, of the revealed truths of God, or what Gilson referred to as 'created truths'. This, however, subverted the 'created truths' for, as Shestov puts it, ". . . the principles of the Hellenic philosophy and the technique of Hellenic thought held them in their power and bewitched their minds."²⁰ But this, Shestov maintains, is not possible for the God of the Bible is a God who creates and destroys everything, even the eternal laws of the Greeks and therefore God has nothing in common with either the rational or moral principles of ancient Greek wisdom. Espousal of Greek metaphysics, therefore, means a rejection (i.e. an ignoring) of the Bible: "The principles for seeking truth that it had received from the Greeks demanded imperiously that it not accept any judgement without having first verified it according to the rules by which all truths are verified: the truths of revelation do not enjoy any special privilege in this respect."²¹

For medieval philosophy, then, the goal was clearly set out: it must, at all costs, defend the truths of faith by the same means that all other truths are defended by or else find themselves in an unbearable intellectual situation. But this is not really a 'bridge' between the Bible and Greek philosophy but rather a transformation or transmutation of the Bible in that it makes the Christian faith—the 'created truth' of God—another kind of human knowledge:

The philosopher seeks and finds 'proofs', convinced in advance that the proven truth has much more value than the truth that is not proven, indeed, that only the proven Truth has any value at all. Faith is then

only a 'substitute' for knowledge, an imperfect knowledge, a knowledge—in a way—on credit and which must sooner or later present the promised proofs if it wishes to justify the credit that has been accorded to it!"²²

But faith, and especially the faith of the Bible, he insists, has nothing to do with knowledge. Not only is faith not knowledge, and here Shestov invokes the authority of the life of faith of Abraham and St. Paul, but rather stands opposed to knowledge.²³ The knowledge of the Greeks is 'impersonal knowledge'—a recognition that all of life is subject to Necessity (of law) and that it is, therefore, "... indifferent to everything, truth that we raise above the will of all living beings."²⁴ Biblical faith quite to the contrary extends the life of possibility and thereby transcends the death of Necessity. This is the theme tirelessly repeated by Shestov in all his writing, the force of which can hardly be captured in so brief an account as this. To *trust* the possibilities that faith opens up, lacking all proofs as did Abraham, for example, is foolishness to philosophy and knowledge; it is contrary to reason. Indeed, in his book on Kierkegaard, he sees Abraham's transgression of the law of ethics as the essence of the movement of faith pointing out that the Bible glorifies him rather than seeing him as a disgrace.²⁵ Faith therefore is not 'credit knowledge' but rather a mysterious and creative power, 'an incomparable gift'.²⁶

For the Greeks, that is, for rational thought in general, such obedience to God is 'war'—it is to find oneself in that unfortunate condition described by Socrates in the *Phaedo* of being a *misologos*.²⁷ But to follow reason is to deny Possibility and to destroy the power of God. Consequently, it is impossible to 'defend' the God of the Bible through rational argument for that would amount to a destruction of rational argumentation itself.²⁸ "We must," Shestov therefore urges, "before everything else, tear out from our being all the postulates of our 'natural knowledge' and our 'natural morality'."²⁹ Salvation must (as Plotinus had already recognized centuries back) seek salvation outside of knowledge and outside of reason.³⁰

As has already been intimated above, E. Gellner, a philosopher and social scientist of a radically different frame of mind to that of Shestov, has a surprisingly similar understanding of the nature and history of human thought. For Gellner too there are 'modes of thought' and modern-Western-scientific thought is incommensurable with earlier forms of thinking; the modern mind, as he puts it in the title of an essay ("The Savage and the Modern Mind")³¹, is clearly distinguishable from the 'savage mind'. The move from the latter is the former constitutes, he says, a 'copernican revolution' because it shifts the *ultimate* seat of legitimacy of belief(s) from 'visions' to 'epistemology'. The

difference between the two, therefore, as with Shestov, hinges essentially on the quest for knowledge—scientific knowledge—to which Gellner refers elsewhere as the ‘leap of science’.³² What the leap amounts to, he suggests, “is that the world is seen *within* knowledge, and not the other way around.”³³ It is a search for the ‘validity’ of knowledge claims that will provide an ‘entry permit’ to our world.³⁴ In summary: “The great transition between the old, as it were non-epistemic worlds, in which the principles of cognition are subject to the pervasive constitutive principles of a given vision, and thus have little to fear, and a world in which this is no longer possible, is a fundamental transition indeed.”²⁵ In an essay on “An Ethic of Cognition” he describes the difference in the ‘modes of thought’ as even more glaringly obvious: “The biggest, most conspicuous simple fact about the human world is the Big Divide between what may rightly be called the industrial-scientific society and the Rest,”³⁶ and the difference is one of morality and cognition.

In his book *Legitimation of Belief*, from which I have already quoted here, he sets out this difference of mind and cognition in terms of two epistemological models—there are, that is, two theories concerned with cognitive legitimacy, namely ‘re-endorsement’ theories and ‘selector’ theories. The former are ‘mentalistic’ in that their distinguishing feature is the acceptance of mental powers as self-explanatory. The latter are ‘empiricistic’ and they deny that consciousness is an explanatory principle rather than something itself in need of explanation. In the essay on an ethic of cognition also referred to above, he writes: “The essence of empiricism is that all, but *all*, theoretical structures are accountable; that none can claim such an awful majesty as to be exempt from the indignity of inquiry and judgement; and that substantive theoretical systems as to elude and evade this indignity are out. *Out*.”³⁷ Selector theories and, consequently, knowledge, for Gellner, as for Shestov, thoroughly ‘disenchants’ the universe and seems to stand opposed to ‘life’ in the sense of a ‘meaningful existence’. This, perhaps, requires a little further elaboration.

Selector theories, based as they are upon empiricist principles of legitimating knowledge claims, are, according to Gellner, essentially ‘mechanistic’: “The growth of knowledge presupposes its communicability, storage, public and independent testing, independence of anyone’s status, moral or ritual condition and so forth. This is what makes such knowledge powerful, and it is also what makes it ‘cold’, ‘disenchanted’, ‘mechanical’ ”.³⁸ Such a view I would be willing to argue is already perceptible in the philosophy/science of the Milesians in their attempt to account for the existence and nature of the universe not through divine agency as in mythic forms of thought but rather in

terms of substance and causal transformations of that substance.³⁹ And it is that same scientific view, it seems to me, that animates the radical disenchantment of the universe in the 'philosophy/science' of Watson, Skinner, *et. al.* This subsumption of persons under impersonal explanatory principles is dehumanizing because it seems to remove any element of purposive activity, and hence meaning, from human existence. A meaningful universe, that is, is one amenable to human concerns and purposes; one that is sympathetically in tune with our human fears and anxieties. The prescientific world, therefore, is meaningful because it is still 'enchanted'. 'Mechanism' as in that of the selector theories of knowledge destroys all this for ". . . enchantment works through idiosyncrasy, uniqueness, spontaneity, a magic which is tied to the identity and individuality of the participants, and all these are excluded by orderly regularity."⁴⁰

The agreement here between Shestov's existentialist perspective and Gellner's empiricist stance is remarkable. The language of 'life' becomes problematic in light of the language of knowledge. Since general 'visions' of life in archaic cultures and 'religious systems' or 'views' of life in modern ones provide meaning in a picture of the universe as enchanted, where agony, whether transcendent or purely immanent, is in no need of explanation. They stand opposed, however, to science and its causal understanding of that same universe. And the conflict is not merely contingent but necessary: "There is no escape: it is not the content, the *kind* of explanation which de-humanizes us; it is *any* genuine explanation, as such, that does it."⁴¹ As he puts it elsewhere and in more detail:

. . . the disenchantment is not a contingent consequence of this or that specific discovery, but inheres in the very method and procedure of rational inquiry, of impartial subsumption under symmetrical generalisations, of treating all data as equal. Reductionism is not an aberration, it is inherent in the very method of science. If we 'scientifically' establish the reality of some 'human' and seemingly reduction-resisting element in the world, we would *ipso facto* thereby also 'reduce' it, in some new way."⁴²

Although Gellner's description of our present state of affairs as described here is almost identical to that of Shestov, his evaluation of that 'condition' in which we find ourselves is radically different. There is a sense in which, like Shestov, he sees the quest for knowledge as a 'fall': "All in all, mankind has already made its choice, or been propelled into it in truly Faustian manner, by a greed for wealth, power, and by mutual rivalry."⁴³ The style of knowing that is chosen commits one to a particular kind of society, he suggests here, and all we can do is to try, in looking back at the 'copernican revolution', to understand what happened.⁴⁴ But such pessimism is not, I think, characteristic of

Gellner's view. On epistemological grounds it seems we are forced into opting out of the world—our moral world included—in order to evaluate it because neither our 'selves' nor our cultures are unproblematic, or solutions to problems but, rather are problems themselves that require elucidation and explanation.⁴⁵ And the only way to achieve that understanding is to break free from our ethnocentrism and anthropomorphism and to adopt a 'noncircular' framework of reasoning in which ". . . human requirements are not allowed to limit, or even create presuppositions, in the sphere of scientific theory."⁴⁶

Gellner does admit that the empiricism he advises is, in the final analysis, a choice; an arbitrary decision. In this he seems to echo Shestov's *charge* of the arbitrariness of reason/rationality. However, Gellner's stance is much more positive. There may indeed be no 'proof' of the rightness of this empiricist 'knowledge' but it is still, nevertheless, the best ideology available to us, for its prejudgements, as he puts it, are indirect and negative. And this ideology, he further maintains, is supported by the argument from illusion and the important difference between its success and that of other abortive styles of thinking.⁴⁷ In this, the scientific 'attitude' *transcends* that of religion.⁴⁸

Unlike other positions regarding the nature of modern science, Gellner's stance cannot, I think, be charged with naivete. He is quite aware, for example, that the viewpoint of the "surrogate angel"—the opting out of the world in order to evaluate it—is not actually possible. He admits convergence, that is, between re-endorsement and selector theories. It is obvious that no particular explanation at any given moment is absolutely acceptable and yet the principle of mechanism itself is not questionable. Consequently, when particular explanations are in question it is *persons* who make judgements about them. He concludes, therefore, that

. . . we shall never find ourselves without either ghosts or machines, or without the tension arising from their joint presence. Knowledge means explanation, and explanation means the specification of a structure that will apply generally and impersonally to all like cases. The mechanistic vision of the world is the shadow of this ideal, our ideal, of explanation. Yet at the same time, no particular explanation is ever permanent or sacred; it is judged by us ghosts.⁴⁹

But, as he points out elsewhere, this does not mean that one must, because of this, rule out altogether the possibility of a nonanthropomorphic account of persons. The fact that the 'study of man' is 'man' (persons) does not, that is, entail that the explanatory concepts must also be 'human'; the account may quite reasonably be causal in form.⁵⁰

It is obvious from this discussion of Gellner, then, that even though he provides an account of modes of thought that parallels that of Lev

Shestov, his evaluation of the situation that ensues is radically different. He affirms scientific as opposed to religious thought and its vestiges in humanism and humanistic thinking. "The requirements of life and thought," he writes "are incompatible"⁵¹, and on this he is in agreement with Shestov. But Gellner refuses either to give up thought and the quest for knowledge or to allow it, for nonepistemological reasons or ends, to be adulterated by the 'mentalism' of theological/religious thought, (and for Gellner all theology is voluntarist theology), or of contemporary idealistic social sciences which are but contemporary attempts to 'reenchant' the universe.⁵² For Gellner, therefore, science *transcends* religion.

The conclusion that presses itself upon us on completion of this analysis is that plain coherent thinking cannot operate in terms of the principles inherent in both faith (religion) and reason (science). To proceed upon such an assumption is to admit that religion *transcends* science and that science *transcends* religion where transcendence of principles implies their abrogation. But we must also conclude that mutual transcendence is not logically possible.

NOTES

1. See Robert W. Friedrichs, "Social Research and Theology: End of Detente?", *Review of Religious Research*, 15, 1974.
2. I have surveyed this literature to some extent in my essay, "Science and Religion: Is Compatibility Possible?", *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation*, 30, 1978.
3. See especially James R. Moore's *The Post-Darwinian Controversies: A Study of the Protestant Struggle to Come to Terms with Darwin in Great Britain and America, 1870-1900*, Cambridge University Press, 1979.
4. My account of Shestov's position here draws, with permission, on my critical note on Shestov to be found in *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 7, 1984.
5. Lev Shestov, *Potestas Clavium*, Henry Regnery Company, 1968.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 11. This formulation reminds one of the thesis put forward by Thorlief Boman in his *Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek*, S.C.M., 1950. That thesis has been under heavy fire for some time (see, e.g., James Barr's, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, Oxford University Press, 1961), and alternative readings of the difference between the two cultures have been offered: e.g. D.M. Macdonald, *The Hebrew Philosophic Genius*, Russell and Russell, 1965; Claude Trestamont, *A Study of Hebrew Thought*, Desclée, 1960 and *The Origins of Christian Philosophy*, Hawthorne Books, 1963. Nevertheless there is still some life left in Boman's suggestions, I think, especially in his reference to the Levy-Bruhlian notion of Hebrew thought as a kind of prelogical thought, (Boman, p. 195). I will, however, give that whole matter, including discussions of the nature of the thought life throughout the ancient near East, close attention in a book I am presently writing, tentatively entitled *The Irony of Theology*.
9. Lev Shestov, *Kierkegaard and the Existential Philosophy*, Ohio University Press, 1969.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 264/5.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
12. *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1968; pp. 154/5.
13. *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1969; p. 308.
14. *Op., Cit.*, Shestov, 1968; p. 257.
15. Lev Shestov, *Athens and Jerusalem*, Simon and Shuster, 1966; pp. 70 and 98.
16. *Op., Cit.*, Shestov, 1969; p. 185.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 306.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 295. Of relevance to this point is Shestov's critique of Plato in *Athens and Jerusalem*. Plato erred, he insists, in seeking proofs to convince others of 'his' revelation: "But it is precisely because and inasmuch as Plato wished to make his revelation a truth that constrains, a truth obligatory for all . . . (p. 109)" that he leaves himself open to 'the fall'; ". . . Plato did not succeed in bringing back to men what he had found beyond the limits of all possible knowledge. When he tried to show men what he had seen, the thing changed itself mysteriously under his eyes into its contrary (p. 116)."
- Although the revelation of God, then, has no justification, neither does reason, for it provides the framework for all justifications, (see p. 164). On this point Shestov and Gellner, as I shall soon indicate, are in entire agreement.
- For a somewhat similar interpretation, although not evaluation, see J.C.S. Wernham's *Two Russian Thinkers: An Essay in Berdyaev and Shestov*, University of Toronto Press, 1968, especially pp. 63ff.
19. *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1966; p. 282.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 305. Shestov maintains that this was done first by Philo for Judaism: "Philo praised Holy Scripture to the skies but in praising it he delivered it into the hands of Greek Philosophy (1969, p. 42)." Shestov argues in this volume that Hegel did the same to Christianity much later. This theme is repeatedly raised by Shestov as well in his *Potestas Clavium*. The Catholics, he argues here, are obviously the most "hellenized" (p. 48), but so also, he insists, are the Protestants (p. 101).
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 299/300.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 299. That it is not an appropriate bridge was certainly sensed by some medievals like St. Bernard. See, for example, J. Leclerc's *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, New American Library, 1961, especially the chapter (9) on monastic theology; and several essays by B. Nelson in his *On the Roads to Modernity: Conscience, Science and Civilization*, Rowman and Littlefield, 1981. A recent but weak counter proposal is offered by A. Louth in *Discerning the Mystery: An Essay on the Nature of Theology*, Clarendon Press, 1983: Indeed, Louth's thesis seems to call for a return to Bernard's way of doing theology rather than Abelard's way of doing it. This matter, however, is the focus of another argument and cannot be pursued here.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 321. See also *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1969; p. 27.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 307.
25. *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1969; pp. 76 and 135.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 94. Shestov here describes faith as the loss of reason in order to find God. See also Shestov, *Op. Cit.*, 1966; p. 323.
27. *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1966; p. 325.
28. The assumption of rational argument would, of course, pinch the real nonrationalist and Shestov does not feel bound to adopt it. The reason is obvious for to assume rational argument to destroy it one must originally be bound by the accepted criteria of reasoning. Further, to assume the criteria to undermine the criteria is not itself a coherent project and so seems to preclude adopting the original assumption.
- The conundrums involved here are not new. And Shestov's relation to them seems to foreshadow much in contemporary literary criticism, especially in respect of the deconstructionist literature of authors such as Barthes, Foucault and, especially Derrida. The problems this presents for the theology have only recently been explored in a rather superficial manner: see, e.g., M.C. Taylor's *Deconstructing Theology*, Scholars Press, 1982 and the volume of essays, (eds., T.J.J. Altizer, et. al.) *De-construction and Theology*, Crossroad Press, 1982.
29. *Op. Cit.*, Shestov, 1966; p. 288.
30. Many see such a recognition of the inadequacy of philosophy to salvation as the point at which Christian revelation can be added to philosophy as its necessary complement. Obviously, as I point out immediately below, it is precisely that kind of thesis against which Shestov sets himself here as being seductive and dangerous. Louis J. Shein commits such an error of interpretation in his "The Philosophy of Infinite Possibility: An Examination of Lev Shestov's Weltanschauung", in *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 2, 1979.
31. E. Gellner, "The Savage and the Modern Mind", in R. Horton and R. Finnegan (eds.), *Modes of Thought: Essays on Thinking in Western and Non-Western Societies*, Faber and Faber, 1973a.
32. E. Gellner, *Legitimation of Belief*, Cambridge University Press, 1974; p. 170.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
34. E. Gellner, *Spectacles and Predicaments: Essays in Social Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 1979; p. 1.
35. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1974; p. 174.

36. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1979; p. 175.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 182.
38. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1974; p. 127.
39. I have developed this theme in an as yet unpublished paper "In Two Minds: Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Greece."
40. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 106 and 132.
42. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1979; pp. 7/8. See also Gellner, 1974; pp. 99, 107 and 151.
43. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1974; p. 127.
44. This seems to be the kind of counsel offered by J. Ellul in his analysis of modern technological society, (in, e.g., his *The Technological Society*, Vintage Books, 1964, and elsewhere) but the 'sentiments' are radically different. Ellul 'rejects' knowledge and affirms faith in a fashion not dissimilar to Shestov. (See especially Ellul's *Living Faith*, Harper and Row, 1980). A more popular response of the same kind can be found in A. Wheelis's persuasive *The End of the Modern Age*, Harper and Row, 1971. See also F.J. Moreno's *Between Faith and Reason*, Harper and Row, 1977. From a psychological point of view similar problems are raised by E. Becker, especially in his *The Denial of Death*, Free Press, 1973.
45. See Gellner, *op.cit.*, 1979; p. 205.
46. E. Gellner, *Cause and Meaning in the Social Sciences*, Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1973b; p. 50.
47. For further elaboration see Gellner, 1979; pp. 177/8 and Gellner 1973b; p. 69.
48. This does not, however, commit the scientist/rationalist to assuming that science will be, as it is often stated, the saviour of mankind. It does mean, however, that there is no longer a passive dependence on some agency other than human persons, on whom the world, so to speak, rests. To survive, persons must act and such action, it is claimed by the rationalists, is more successful the more accurate and complete the knowledge on which it rests. Consequently, the scientific response to life is not one of offering some absolute solution to life's problems but does urge an active, informed reaction to the problems and therefore it *transcends* religion/theology that, in the final analysis, counsel dependence and passivity. See on this score, for example, S. Hook's *Quest for Being*, St. Martin's Press, 1969; E. Nagel's *The Structure of Science*, Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1961; and K.R. Popper's *The Poverty of Historicism*, Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1957 and *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Harper and Row (2 volumes), 1962.
49. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1974; pp. 111/2.
50. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1973b; p. 73.
51. *Op. Cit.*, Gellner, 1979; p. 6. See also his 1974, p. 101.
52. A strong case for such 'idealism' in anthropology, however, is set out by Malcolm Crick in his *Explorations in Language and Meaning: Towards a Semantic Anthropology*, Malaby Press, 1976. Critique of Crick's argument, however, cannot be undertaken here.