Several of Professor Wilfred Cantwell Smith's contributions have been deeply significant in raising vital questions for reflection. His *The Meaning and End of Religion* is an obvious and widely respected case in point; and his recent writings about a world theology herald a new age in global reflection. I wish here to extend his thinking.

Certain paradoxes occur in view of his critique of the hypostatization of religions. One paradox concerns the way in which adherents of religious traditions are increasingly recognizing Western labels—the so-called '-isms' which Smith did so much to undermine. So now 'followers of religions,' as we have hypostatically to call them, are more and more turning their attention to such notions as 'Hinduism,' despite the variegation and complexity of this human phenomena. Now there is commitment to such things as African Religion and Native American Religion—each a synthesis from many different sources. Such hypostases run against many of the trends in recent scholarship, which have been sparked by Cantwell Smith's observations. So I wish to see if there is a way of reconciling the truth of the more 'adjectival' approach of Cantwell Smith and the emerging realities of contemporary religious ideologies which increasingly accept the categories which he has criticized.

Actually, the situation is more complex. Many anthropologists and historians of religion wish to emphasise 'religion on the ground' rather than the higher abstractions which text-based studies have often espoused—the Hinduism of the villages and towns rather than the lofty formulations of the Upanisads and of the *darśanas*. Cantwell Smith, however, is more individualistic: it is the faith of the individual that he is concerned with—whether a person is more Christian or Hindu yesterday rather than today. So there is perhaps a three-way tug of war:
that is, between religion in the air, on the ground, and in the soul. On-the-ground religious studies often stress multiplicity as do in-the-soul religious studies.

But—and this is the paradox that I have already introduced—pluralism on the ground is being increasingly replaced by a sense of unity and acceptance of the relevant ‘-ism.’ Although they are not without challenge, many ‘adherents’ are focusing on relatively modern unities. Let me cite a few instances. First, despite the many variations of religions in sub-Saharan Africa and the immense fragmentation of languages, types of economies, traditional political arrangements, cultural expressions, and so forth, something called ‘African Religion’ (rather than African religions) has emerged. As I say, it is not an undebated concept. Nevertheless, it has its advocates. Similar remarks apply to what is now called ‘Native American Religion’ in North America. There are causes in it, as with African Religion. But more than this. The evolution of events in India during the struggle for political independence from England saw the development of a new self-consciousness within Hinduism (which had already had some expression because of the contrasting influence of Islam within India). As well, Buddhists have long been aware of the adjective buddha and the term sasana. The whole colonial experience has of course both accentuated this self-awareness and also led to some adoption of colonial categories—because of censuses if for no better reason.

In the post-colonial, emergent world civilization, every group is coming into more and more intimate contact with other groups and has a sharpened sense of identity, for good or ill. New religions are forming, and ‘-isms’ abound. Can such phenomena be combined with Cantwell Smith’s perceptions? I think that they can, through a double distinction—between formation and roots; and between spirituality and religious tradition.

In a review of N. P. Chandhuri’s book Hinduism published in the Manchester Guardian, I once wrote: “For a new religion Hinduism has remarkably ancient roots.” I think there is truth in this comment. Let me cite some examples of the roots-formation distinction. Obviously, Christianity has its roots both in the religion of Jews prior to the time of Jesus and stretching back to the remembered part of Israelite religion, and in the New testament period of Jesus, Peter, and Paul. However, classical Christianity, i.e., the Christianity of Catholicism and Orthodoxy, did not really form itself through those roots alone, but with an infusion of Neoplatonism and the like—in the 3rd century C.E. particularly. So I would say that while the classical Christian faith had its roots in