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THE LANGUAGE OF THE INNER LIFE

THERE are forms of thought which forever resist permanent exile from the expressions of human beings. If writers bemused by the "functionalism" of the scientific spirit refuse to use them, essayists and artists restore their currency in a spontaneous speech which survives outside the area of "exact knowledge." There they enjoy the usage of men who refuse to submerge their identity in any of the "progressive" orthodoxies. In general, these forms of thought are comprehended by what Emerson called "the soul's enormous claim," and which Santayana identified as its "invincible surmise." They have to do, in part, with basic intuitions concerning the excellence of the human qualities of human beings. Their more obscure references deal with the problems of inner understanding and private struggle, for which, in the present, there is hardly any context of living tradition. We now have access to men's thinking on such questions only through glancing blows of poetic in sight or in subjective nuances of the novel. To be sure, an oblique approach to this region of thought is slowly developing in the humanistic explorations of certain psychotherapists and psychologists—especially since the pioneers among them have turned to the psychology of normality and health—but in this case the significant words relating to the inner life are either newly invented ("self-actualizing" is a good example) or old terms heavily freighted with larger meanings. We have here, perhaps, an illustration of how the soul's enormous claim asserts itself—obliging a once modest medical specialty, psychiatry, to proliferate in all directions and to grow into what may eventually become a general cultural attitude and even prevailing philosophy of life.

But this is looking far into the future. Meanwhile let us profit by Carl Becker's notes (in *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers)* on how the key words of an epoch undergo replacement and change. His brief analysis amounts to a typology of "reality"-charged language:

> If we would discover the little backstairs door that for any age serves as the secret entranceway to knowledge, we will do well to look for certain unobtrusive words with uncertain meanings that are permitted to slip off the tongue or the pen without fear and without research; words which, having from constant repetition lost their metaphorical significance, are unconsciously mistaken for objective realities: In the thirteenth century the key words would no doubt be God, sin, grace, salvation, heaven, and the like; in the twentieth century, relativity, process, adjustment, function, complex. In the eighteenth century the words without which no enlightened person could reach a restful conclusion were nature, natural law, first cause, reason, sentiment, humanity, perfectibility (these last three being necessary only for the more tender-minded, perhaps).
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> In each age these magic words have their entrances and exits. And how inobtrusively they come in and go out! We should scarcely be aware either of their approach or their departure, except for a slight feeling of discomfort, a shy self-consciousness in the use of them. The word "progress" has long been in good standing, but just now we are beginning to feel, in introducing it into the highest circles, the need of easing it with quotation marks, that conventional apology that will save all our faces. Words of more ancient lineage trouble us more. Did not President Wilson, during the war, embarrass us not a little by appearing in public on such familiar terms with "humanity," by the frank avowal of his love for "mankind"? As for God, sin, grace, salvation—the introduction of these ghosts from the dead past we regard as inexcusable, so completely do their unfamiliar presences put us out of countenance, so effectively do they, even under the most favorable circumstances, cramp our style.

Mr. Becker's precise and illuminating services end with these illustrations of change, since our somewhat groping purposes attempt to go beyond

his urbane, relativistic demonstration. He wishes to show the confinements of thought and language, while we are interested in the inchoate longings of human beings to break out of them. It is germane, however, to note that the terms identified by Becker as the key words of the thirteenth century were seldom "inner life" words at all, having become chiefly counters in an externalized system of socio-religious control, and it may well be that the sterility of this language in relation to authentic human longing was just as great, then, as the emptiness we now feel in the key words of the first half of the twentieth century—"relativity, process, adjustment," etc.

We go to contemporary literature for examples of the states of mind and feelings (rather than "words") that play a decisive part in the lives of human beings, yet have no recognized place in the accepted conception of modern man. The first example is from the ending of a story of Alec Waugh—'"Ambition, Bevan," included in the collection published by Bantam under the title *My Place in the Bazaar*. Bevan is a man who, as a youth, was the most calculating social climber on record. He was always ill at ease, anxious, and therefore consistently miserable. At the end of the story, the narrator finds him in an unimportant administrative job in Malaya, married to the Eurasian daughter of an English planter. Yet now he is at peace, despite his low estate and manifestly unhappy marriage. Questioned by his friend, he explained:

> "It's like this, as I see it. . . . The fact that one person fails does not mean that there is no such thing as success. Because one is driven to do work one hates, that does not prove that there does not exist the work in which a man can express his nature. Some men have found it. In the same way there's such a thing as friendship even though your friend betrays you; such a thing as love though your wife deceives you, such a thing as talented intellectual society though your lot has cast you among boors. Those things do exist. And I wanted them so desperately. While there still seemed a chance that I might get them, that I might pick up what I see now is the thousandth ticket in a lottery, well, naturally, I was difficult. I saw things slipping from me that I couldn't bear to lose. It's hard to be philosophical when your life's in the making. But when it's once made, when it's spoilt irremediably, that's another thing."
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> He paused; then said about the truest thing that I have ever heard about the lot of human beings on this planet:
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> "It's quite easy to be happy, when once you know you never will be happy."

Now the question which must be immediately asked is: Is this man the victim of social conditioning? Is he in any sense a typical human being, or merely a member of some off-beat fraction which can be safely ignored by utilitarian philanthropists and social planners? Shall we say that in *our* good society, when we get it made, there will be no unhappy Bevans, because (*a*) the Bevans will all get what they want; or (*b*) a proper education will make the foolishness of social climbing evident and no one will disappoint himself in this way?

Other questions would be: Is the lesson learned by Bevan a true lesson? Has there been human growth in his case? Or shall we say that his philosophic solution is no more than sour grapes rationalizing?

When we proposed, earlier, that our culture has no living tradition about the inner life, we meant that it would be difficult to find serious, forthright examination of these questions in any contemporary source. Whether this impoverishment of thought is a consequence of the oversimplifications of Enlightenment expectations or, more broadly, a result of the materializing of both religion and science, is a question that need not be decided here. What is apparent is that this "philosophy" of once-born men is bringing us, through continued frustration, to consider the importance of "the ideas of the shipwrecked"—of the last-ditch wisdom of men who, like Œdipus, have finally found peace in their blindness.

It is a matter of some interest that in Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Modern Temper,* first

published in 1929 (now a Harvest paperback), we discovered a passage describing the temper of the Soviet society in a way that makes it useful as an account of the prevailing attitudes in *any* Western society. In other words, when it comes to the problems of the inner life, there is hardly a difference between Communist and Capitalist utilitarianism:

> Communist Utopianism is based upon the assumption that the only maladjustments from which mankind suffers are social in character and hence it is sustained by the belief that in a perfect state all men would be perfectly happy. Fundamentally materialistic, it refuses to remember that physical well-being is no guarantee of felicity and that, as a matter of fact, as soon as the individual finds himself in a perfectly satisfactory environment he begins to be aware of those more fundamental maladjustments which subsist, not between man and society but between the human spirit and the natural universe. . . . Thanks to the fact that the perfect Communist is not aware of the existence of any problems more subtle than those involved in the production and distribution of wealth, he can throw himself into the business of living with a firm faith in the value of what he is doing and he can display an energy in practical affairs not to be equaled by anyone incapable of a similar belief in their ultimate importance. . . .
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> Hence it is that to the good Communist, as to the good tribesman, any question concerning the meaning of life itself is in itself completely meaningless and he will live the complicated industrial life of today exactly as the tribesman lives the simple life of his tribe—not in thought but in action. He has a sort of God, but his God is in reality what anthropologists call a culture-god; merely, that is to say, the spirit which presides over and infuses itself with the germination of the seed, the ripening of the fruit, or the whirring of the machine.
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> Such a philosophy comes nearer than any other to that unformulated one by which an animal lives. It does not ask any of the questions which a weary people inevitably ask and it is as a matter of fact, less a system of thought than a translation into simple words of the will to live and thrive.

Add to this description a note on the general disappearance of dissent in the bland, homogenized mix of modern Western culture, some comment on the Madison Avenue elaborations of the simplicities of "the will to live and thrive," and change the whirring of the machine to the whirring of the computer, and you have a fair account of the mood of our own "free" society. If the expression, "GNP Fetishism," coined by Walter Weisskopf, is recognized as the name of our "culture-god," then where is there an important difference between East and West in operative ideas about the inner life?

But let us seek further examples of the language of the inner life, as it may be found and identified, today. The following is by the editor of the *American Scholar*, Hiram Haydn, who in the Winter 1965-66 issue muses on the difficulties of a tranquil, humane existence in our time:

> I have spoken of the sometimes desperate need to learn to balance one's tensions. I dream of peace, of some ultimate tranquility, but I know I shall never find it: that is not within the reach of most of us. Indeed, when one considers the strength and ferocity of some of our compulsive drives, one might think of each of us as winding himself up early in the morning to follow the day's prescribed round.
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> . . . quite often, after one has spoken or acted violently, one is assailed by a sudden anonymous fear and may dismiss it as fear of retribution. But most often, I think, it is rather terror over the discovery of the predatory animal within oneself.
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> All these human miseries! With pride, false pride (the instinct for dominance), still the ultimate matrix. No wonder many people resign from life. How much to indulge, how much to control? How much to cajole or circumvent? It must be played by ear, with vigilance and flexibility and a striving after effective memory. These forces in us must have ventilation, lest they explode lethally, and that ventilation, most of the time, must take place within the narrow confines of the human skull. It is a difficult discipline.
>
> But then much of human life is painful. I once asked an octogenarian friend of mine to explain his almost youthful vigor. After playfully evading so grave a question for a little while, he looked up at me—grimly, I thought with surprise— and said, "I have lived with my pain."

What is this "pain"? One hesitates to call it existential —the explanation is too easy—yet this

may be the best identification for the present. It is certainly a pain that will not be abated by any of the familiar forms of Progress. Although, perhaps, it is a pain which may be temporarily displaced from the lives of those who are industriously engaged in *making* some kind of progress—like "winning the West," or starting a new business, or gathering food for one's family. Yet it returns like a homing pigeon to those who are only the beneficiaries of material progress. Let us say something here about the Russians once again. Mr. Krutch uses Soviet life in the twenties to illustrate the same point:

> The visitor to Moscow who sees how eagerly its inhabitants live under conditions which are still very difficult, how gladly they accept both labor and, when necessary, privation, cannot but realize that they are sustained by a fundamental optimism unknown anywhere else in the world. At the present moment the inhabitants of many European countries *have* much more but they *hope* much less, and they are incapable of any acceptance of life so vital and so complete.

In 1963, something less than half a century after Mr. Krutch made this comment, Michael Polanyi offered a very different view. In the first essay of *Science, Faith and Society* (Phoenix paperback), he wrote:

> Those who in our day brought into power governments exempt from the standards of humanity were themselves prompted by an intense passion for the ideals which they so contemptuously brushed aside. They had rejected the overt professions of these ideals as philosophically unsound, hypocritical and specious, but they had covertly injected the same ideals into the new despotisms which they had set up. Thus these ideals became immanent in the violence which ruthlessly rejected them. By virtue of this *moral inversion*, . . . the very immoralism of this power become a token of its moral purity. In view of its own internal structure it could honestly reject any accusations of immorality in the very breath of proclaiming its own immorality.
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> A regime thus constituted claims to embody, besides morality, the ideals of justice, of the arts and sciences—in short all manner of truth. But here it overreaches itself. The rebellious movement which has transformed the regime of most Communist countries since Stalin's death was stirred up by seething demands for truth. I shall quote here from the writings of Nicolas Gimes, a Hungarian Communist who, though he had shortly before been a faithful Stalinist, turned against Stalinism in the Hungarian Revolution of October 1956. The following passage was published three weeks before the revolution.

Gimes wrote:

> Slowly we had come to believe, at least with the greater, the dominant part of our consciousness . . . that there are two kinds of truth, that the truth of the Party and the people can be different and can be more important than the objective truth and that truth and political expediency are in fact identical. This is a terrible thought . . . if the criterion of truth is political expediency, then even a lie can be "true" . . . even a trumped-up political trial can be "true". . . . And so we arrived at the outlook which infected not only those who thought up the faked political trials but often affected even the victims; the outlook which poisoned our whole public life, penetrated the remotest corner of our thinking, obscured our vision, paralyzed our critical faculties and finally rendered many of us incapable of simply sensing or apprehending truth. This is how it was, no use denying it. . . .

Mr. Polanyi observes that Gimes was executed in Budapest in 1958 at the orders of Moscow; then continues:

> Since 1956 every successive report has made it clearer that the demand for truth is the motive force of renewal throughout the Soviet empire. It revives the great tradition of the intellectuals which originated in the Enlightenment. Marxist revisionism is an attempt to restore the original humanism of the Enlightenment and to stabilize it against the kind of self-destruction which led to Stalinism. Western writers have ascribed this movement of liberation to a higher level of industrialization. They are still prisoners of the philosophic corruption which has plunged man's hopes into darkness. Nicolas Gimes and his comrades fought to redeem man's faith in truth from this corruption.

What we have here, if we accept Mr. Polanyi's analysis, is an account of what must happen when continued denial of the inner life becomes an explicit political dogma. The breakdown of this system comes first, apparently,

not so much from the insistent claims of an independent moral consciousness as from overt distortions of truth about simple objective matters and facts. We may hope that Polanyi's prognosis is accurate, and that a return to the original inspiration of the Enlightenment is an early possibility for the Soviets.

For the West, however, the decisions which lie ahead are subtler in character and probably, therefore, more crucial. These have to do with acknowledging the inner life of human beings as an autonomous reality—a course of experience and a promise of development which have never had —have not now, and never will have—a one-to-one relationship with either political arrangements or economic advance, although that *some* relationship exists is obvious enough. What would this recognition mean, in practical terms?

It would mean, at the outset, working out tentative meanings for the values of the inner life, in almost total disregard of both politics and technology. Such terms as integrity, self-actualization, vision, creativity, love, independence, self-reliance, wisdom, self-knowledge, and their various opposites in psychopathology, need to become variables in a general conception of human development which takes its direction from basic intuitions of the good of men as subjects, and which has its course calibrated according to values on a scale of self-discovery rather than by external measures of achievement.

It would mean a practical merger of religion, philosophy, and psychology, with the criteria obtained from educational experience made the standard of both means and ends— ends, in this case, being regarded as successful growth-processes, without any thought of finality. And it would mean the careful development of safeguards against any form of indoctrination, authority, or ideological overtones. It would mean, in short, a Humanism unhedged by denials of high spiritual possibility, and unmarred by a supernaturalism which would remove from the individual both the initiative for living his inner life and personal responsibility for how he lives it.

It may be said that such a program is filled with paradox, if not impossibility. Quite likely. But the inner life of man finds its greatest fulfillment in resolving paradoxes and achieving impossibilities. It is this which the long process of externalization of human good has totally ignored, to the point of filling human beings everywhere with an unexplained desperation. The lost truths of both Humanism and the Enlightenment must be restored.

REVIEW
"EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY"

SOME reading in a paperback (Random House) of this title, edited by Rollo May, suggests the value of a general and more thorough investigation of the work of such men as May, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. *Existential Psychology*, a brief anthology, appeared in 1961, and since then we have reviewed such works of major influence as Roger's *On Becoming a Person*, Maslow's *Toward a Psychology of Being*, and noted synthesizing essays by Dr. May. The point is that, in studying these writers more or less concurrently, one finds among them no significant divergences of emphasis, and the impression is gained that May, Maslow and Rogers, both independently and interdependently, have arrived at a basic perspective which has not been challenged by need of fundamental revision. This is not to say that we have here a "school of thought" seeking attention or defensive against criticism. Rather, these and other existential psychologists have clearly embraced and revitalized an Emersonian ethic—drawing a large enough ideative circle to include diverse but never incompatible views.

In any case, *Existential Psychology* is a useful volume, and cannot be regarded as dated. As editor, Dr. May writes on "The Emergence of Existential Psychology," proposing six characteristics or principles which, from the standpoint of existential psychotherapy, "constitute the patient as an existing person, which constitute this self as a self." We condense from his enumeration and explanation:

> 1. Neurosis is not to be seen as a deviation from our particular theories of what a person should be. Is not neurosis rather, precisely the method the individual uses to preserve his own center, his own existence? His symptoms are ways of shrinking the range of his world in order that the centeredness of his existence may be protected from threat, a way of blocking off aspects of the environment so that he may then be adequate to the remainder.

An adjustment is exactly what neurosis is; and that is just its trouble. It is a necessary adjustment by which centeredness can be preserved; a way of accepting *non-being*, if I may use this term, in order that some little *being* may be preserved. And in most cases it is a boon when this adjustment breaks down.

2. Our second principle, thus, is: every existing person has the character of self-affirmation, the need to preserve its centeredness. The particular name we give this self-affirmation in human beings is "courage." Paul Tillich's emphasis on the "courage to be" is very important, cogent, and fertile for psychotherapy at this point. He insists that in man, being is never given automatically, as it is in plants and animals, but depends upon the individual's courage, and without courage one loses being. This makes courage itself a necessary ontological corollary. By this token, I, as a therapist, place great importance upon the expressions of the patients which have to do with willing, decisions, choice.

3. Our third principle is: all existing persons have the need and possibility of going out from their centeredness to participate in other beings. This always involves risk; if the organism goes out too far, it loses its own centeredness, its identity—a phenomenon which can easily be seen in the biological world. If the neurotic is so afraid of loss of his own conflicted center that he refuses to go out and holds back in rigidity and lives in narrowed reactions and shrunken world space, his growth and development are blocked: the human being cannot be understood as a self if participation is omitted.

4. Our fourth principle is: the subjective side of centeredness is awareness. Such awareness is present in forms of life other than human; it is certainly observable in animals. This awareness of threats to being in animals, Liddell calls *vigilance*, and he identifies it as the primitive, simple counterpart in animals of what in human beings becomes anxiety.

5. The fifth principle refers now to a distinctively human characteristic: self-consciousness. The uniquely human form of awareness is self-consciousness. Awareness and consciousness should not be identified. Awareness certainly is what is going on in an individual's neurotic reaction to threat.

Consciousness, however, is not simply my awareness of threat from the world by my capacity to know myself as the one being threatened, my experience of myself as the subject who has a world. Consciousness, to use Kurt Goldstein's terms, is man's capacity to transcend the immediate concrete

situation, to live in terms of the possible; and it underlies the human capacity to use abstractions and universals, to have language and symbols. This capacity for consciousness underlies the wide range of possibility which man has in relating to his world, and it constitutes the foundation of psychological freedom. Thus, human freedom has its ontological base and I believe must be assumed in all psychotherapy.

6. We now come to the sixth and last characteristic of the existing person: *anxiety.* Anxiety is the state of the human being in the struggle against that which would destroy his being. It is, in Tillich's phrase, the state of a being in conflict with nonbeing, a conflict which Freud mythologically pictured in his powerful and important symbol of the death instinct. One wing of this struggle will always be against something outside one's self; but even more portentous and significant for psychotherapy is the inner side of the battle, the conflict within the person as he confronts the choice of whether and how far he will stand against his own being, his own potentialities.

Consciousness itself implies always the possibility of turning against one's self, denying one's self. The tragic nature of human existence inheres in the fact that consciousness itself involves the possibility and temptation at every instant to kill itself. Dostoevski and our other existential forebears were not indulging in poetic hyperbole or expressing the aftereffects of too much vodka the night before when they wrote of the agonizing burden of freedom.

These postulates are philosophic descriptions of stages through which all human beings must presumably pass. The existential psychologist is dealing with what Herbert Fingarette terms "the self in transformation." As therapist, Dr. May is concerned with characteristic neurotic defenses which block natural growth, but it must also be realized that the average person, who is hardly "autonomous" or "self-actualizing" as yet, stumbles over the same obstacles. Dr. May concludes:

I trust that the fact that existential psychotherapy places emphasis on these tragic aspects of life does not at all give the impression that it is pessimistic. Quite the contrary. The confronting of genuine tragedy is a highly cathartic experience psychically, as Aristotle and others through history have reminded us. Tragedy is inseparably connected with man's dignity and grandeur and is the accompaniment, as illustrated in the dreams of Oedipus and Orestes, ad infinitum, of the human being's moment of great insight.

The existentialist view may also be focused on the whole spectrum of attitudes toward death: death *may* be regarded as a fact which, as May elsewhere puts it (in *Existence,* Basic Books, 1958), "makes of the present hour something of absolute value." "The core of the existential approach is the taking of existence seriously." Death, however, has symbolic content far beyond the inevitable dissolution of the body, for the threat of destruction is present in the psyche in countless other guises. From the existentialist standpoint, the therapist does his patient a disservice "if he takes away from him the realization that it is entirely within the realm of possibility that he forfeit or lose his existence and that may well be precisely what he is doing at this very moment." Further: "The tendency prevails in much therapy to water down anxiety, despair, and the tragic aspects of life. Is it not true as a general principle that we need to engender anxiety only to the extent that we already have watered it down? Life itself produces enough, and the only real, crises; and it is very much to the credit of the existential emphasis in therapy that it confronts these tragic realities directly. The patient can indeed destroy himself if he so chooses. The therapist may not say this: it is simply a reflection of fact, and the important point is that it not be sloughed over."

Study of the consequences of various attitudes toward death, might be further pursued with the help of Herman Feifel (in *Existential Psychology*), by reference to *Counseling the Dying* (reviewed in MANAS for Oct. a8, 1964), and by use of material in Rollo May's Basic Books volume, *Existence.*

COMMENTARY
THE QUESTION OF ENVIRONMENT

THE psychological complexity of the human situation is illustrated by Bevan's (see page 2) back-door access to wisdom-in-reverse. His personal balance comes when he stops trying to get worthless things; but he stops only because he realizes that he cannot have them; his curious "success" results from deciding that he is a total failure. Life's bludgeoning helped him to outwit his follies, but he hardly recognizes this, although he knows he has found happiness of a sort. What the narrator calls "about the truest thing I ever heard" is for Bevan only an acknowledgement that he has won some kind of booby prize.

It is not easy to imagine how Bevan might think of his life, had he been born in a culture with norms very different from the acquisitive, status-conscious society in which he spent his youth. Instead of being defeated by his competitive inadequacy in combination with fear of failure, he might have engaged, quite early, in some kind of moral struggle against these spurious goals. He might have suffered lifelong ambivalence as a result—after all, he had a real problem, not just a superficial tendency obtained from his times—but in the end, if he had had some small success in getting rid of his longings to dominate, he would perhaps have felt that the resulting contentment was indeed the savor of the good life.

Who can tell about these things? Yet it seems that the opportunities for growth afforded by what Peter Viereck calls "the ancient, lasting archetypal values shared by all creative cultures" might have enabled Bevan to grow into another sort of man, had he had a little help toward realizing them.

There is an obvious paradox here. We argue at great length in these pages that the environment does not make the man, yet now, considering Bevan's career, we wonder if his understanding of himself might not have been greater had he had better surroundings. Maybe the trouble lies in words. A good cultural environment ought to be defined as an environment which continually reminds those it affects that the true values and goals are *not* environmental. The best environment is a non-environment! This may not be a contradiction for self-conscious beings, and it may present no paradox to those who, in any situation, gravitate to its *openings* to free decision. You could say that the truly "creative" culture is one which is continually being redesigned to create more and more such openings. It is a culture which faithfully reflects the problematic aspect of human life.

In Rollo May's list of the six characteristics of existential psychology, the last one is concerned with *anxiety.* Of what is anxiety the negative? Of daring? Heroic intent? Dr. May writes: "Consciousness itself implies always the possibility of turning against one's self, denying one's self." He speaks also of the "agonizing burden of freedom."

It seems evident enough that self-affirmation, in its full meaning, is a heroic stance. The climactic expression, then, of lasting archetypal values would indeed be found in the hero, and the social matrix for the realization of those values would be modeled according to appropriate preparations for heroic action.

There is an enormous difference between demanding that everyone behave like a hero and insisting upon the vitality and preservation of the heroic ideal. A really open society, therefore, would be one which gave every possible encouragement to the individual who differentiates himself in the direction of heroic action. If we make this definition of the ideal society, we find it easier to understand the intuitive rejection on the part of artists and other creative people of the regimenting effects of utilitarian ethics and technological processes. There may be another way than the one we know to adapt technology to human life, but at present Viereck's analysis stands as accurate:

> When a mechanized society makes the individual part of the mass, it does not thereby

> increase his sense of organic belongingness but replaces it with two things; first, the mutually isolating cash nexus; second, the synthetic, mechanical, inorganic belongingness of external stereotypes, mass-produced by the entertainment industry or by statist engineers. It is a liberal oversimplification to see the contrast as the free individual versus the shackles of traditional unity. The real contrast is between an archetypal, organic unity of individuals and a stereotyped, mechanical unity of the masses.

What then is a free society? It is, initially, a society in which it is possible to institute the reforms which are implicitly advocated here. And how does one begin? You begin by behaving *as if* the free society already exists. Only in this way do people make room for the freedom they want. In time, even technology will stand up and salute.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
RELIGION AND THE UNIVERSITY

RECENT quotations here from an address by Robert Michaelsen may be supplemented by reference to his recently published volume, *The Study of Religion in American Universities* (Society for Religion in Higher Education, 400 Prospect St., New Haven). In this book the emphasis is on the effort to close the gap between divinity schools, seminaries, and studies in the Humanities. The intent in ten pioneering programs on various state campuses is not indoctrination but rather to invite *study* of religion as a spiritual quest, this being as necessary to an understanding of man as biology, anthropology, psychology and sociology.

An organization with this general view was incorporated in 1962 as The Graduate Theological Union, which now seeks to relate "theological seminaries and other institutions of higher learning in cooperative programs of study, and to grant such academic degrees and honors as are customarily granted in universities and seminaries of learning, either in its own name only, or in conjunction with another such institution." Students wishing to specialize in particular areas of study may do so in fields such as Biblical (Old and New Testament), Historical, Philosophy of Religion, Systematics, Religion and Society, etc. The Union also encourages comparative religious study in synthesis with philosophy and psychology. A GTU announcement states that such programs "may be approved, provided they meet the criteria of coherence and of encouraging adequate competence," in the hope of stimulating "increasing scholarly interest in the areas of religion and theology at the University."

Concurrently, among professors of the Humanities, there is evidence of a new "excitement over the study of religion." University Extension programs are now offering to both graduate students and the general public religious studies which feature cross-fertilization between theology, psychology and history. The "Man's Religious Quest" lecture series inaugurated eighteen months ago by the University of California at Santa Barbara has already stimulated interest and a desire for further reading and study in three California communities. Paul Tillich, who helped design the program, suggested its keynote:

> Religion is the aspect of depth in the totality of the human spirit. . . . Religion opens up the depth of man's spiritual life which is usually covered by the dust of our daily life and the noise of our secular work.

The brochure of the UCSB Lecture Series calls it "A study of man's search for spiritual beliefs and religious values, and of the forces shaping this quest. Distinguished scholars and leaders in contemporary religious and philosophic thought explore the conflict of the religious ethos with materialism, science, and mass civilization, the business ethic and the existential philosophies. They examine significant developments in traditional beliefs, the relationships of Eastern and Western religions, and the religious impulse in modern intellectual, political and artistic movements."

The foregoing serves as introduction to some quotation from papers by persons who attended the Lecture Series for graduate credit. In the following selections, the opening of new perspectives for individuals of various backgrounds is clearly evident:

> I don't suppose that there was a person in the class who did not enter it with his religious thoughts and values pretty well crystallized, and wanted a verification of his beliefs, more than a change of values. Something which carried through all of the lectures, however, and which I must be more conscious of in the future, is the element of change. I must no longer wish for the "good old days," and wonder how we can go back to them, but realize that great new forces have engulfed us, and that we cannot go back. Things can never be the same, although perhaps Organized Religion is one of the slowest to realize it and start making changes.
>
> Moral codes, too, are changing whether we wish it or not, the more reason for our teaching not only moral codes, but also developing ethical thinking to make self-actualizing young people to lead our next generation of citizenry. We, as parents, should do a better job of ethical thinking ourselves. (I was brought up on the "What would other people think?"

bit, and I was much too old before I stopped caring, as long as I didn't involve anyone else.)

Of the religions I read about, the one which appealed to me most is the way to God through Knowledge in Hinduism— except for living as beggars after having arrived at their goal. I liked the term God-head instead of God, because so much of my religious training as a child impressed upon me that God was a personal God and everything I read still refers to God as He. For many years this has disturbed me, so arriving at Nirvana—an enlightened reality—and looking inward to the true Self appeals to me. I much prefer reason as the path to Truth over faith.

What I want to point out is that although I have felt that my thoughts concerning life were different . . . most of what I [have thought] I found somewhere in one or the other of the religions I have been reading about, although there is no complete parallel in any one of them.

* * *

I hope to convey in this paper the growth that has taken place in my thinking and reflection by thinking through the impact each of the lectures and films [Ingmar Bergman: "The Seventh Seal," and "Through a Glass Darkly"] has made upon me.

The vastness of scope of this course really hit home toward its conclusion. I was glad to have read *The Religions of Man* early in the course. I was constantly amazed at Smith's clarity of presentation and apparent deep appreciation of each religion. As a Christian who looks to Christ as the norm of all understanding, Huston Smith's rendering made me acutely aware of God's working with the whole human family—that Christ's spirit has been able to penetrate and stimulate various centuries and religions even without contact with the embodiment of Christ Jesus.

I was suspicious of anyone trying to do justice to such a variety of religions, but his insightfulness into Christianity and Judaism, though brief, made me want to trust his interpretation of the others.

Another helpful book which I've half finished reading, which took this course to get me to read, was William James's *Varieties of Religious Experiences.* This was a real eye-opener, though it spelled out much of my feelings. I've also recently read several of C. G. Jung's works, which helped me to appreciate the variety of individual temperaments. These works have helped me to understand what I have already known existentially—the varieties of interest, susceptibilities, and understanding by individuals of religion.

* * *

The course has changed my thinking professionally as well as personally. I'm a high school teacher of journalism and history. In journalism it helped only in the sense that every writer should know as much as possible about anything, but in history it helped tremendously.

In one of my courses I teach a unit on comparative religions, a rewarding subject in that many teenagers, including quite intelligent ones, believe there are but two religions in the world: Protestant and Catholic. And, of course, an oddball group quaintly labeled pagans. It's interesting to see their reactions to a wider view.

However, despite long-ago exposure to several courses in comparative religions, I now find that I have been veering more and more to superficial observances, rather than spiritual content of the "un-American" beliefs. At first this was intentional, in an effort to engage attention by stressing differences and then tying them to an ultimate goal.

This was a laudable idea, or teaching technique, in a required course, I still think, but I have obviously strayed from my original intention too greatly, and in getting attention, have focussed class thought on unusual instances and "foreign" customs, rather than upon a spiritual power. Huston Smith's book, a most valuable adjunct to the course, showed me my error in a glaring fashion. A teacher need not be spectacular to achieve interest.

The fact that I needed to be taught tolerance was the newest idea the course offered me. Because I have taught courses which explored religions, races, nationalities for ten years and have, I hope, conveyed my beliefs in equality and fraternity, it comes as a surprise that I have lacked the discernment of tolerance—a word which I have usually despised, because, as someone else expressed well, "Who wants to be tolerated?"

And yet there is another meaning—one which contains no derogation, no superiority, but rather a pleasant acceptance that people and ideas are not alike, and, therefore, much more interesting than the narrow-minded, conventional beings who agree completely with our own inherited or adopted certainties.

In short, as Hinduism teaches, there are many roads to God.

FRONTIERS

An Epic Life

WHILE Joan Bondurant's *Conquest of Violence* (first published in 1958 by Princeton University Press and now available in paperback from the University of California Press, $1.75) is by no means a life of Mohandas K. Gandhi, it may, in the final analysis, give more insight into who or what Gandhi was than volumes filled with biographical detail. There are some men whose achievements begin mainly in the world of imaginative synthesis and whose being, therefore, can be understood only by a corresponding use of the mind. In such cases, a lot of particulars about their personal lives may diminish their stature instead of adding to it. It is for this reason, no doubt, that thoughtful men often observe that myth contains more truth than history, since myths provide summations of meaning that are easily lost in the foliage of historical fact. So with Gandhi's lifework.

Miss Bondurant's volume has been called a "political theory book." It is certainly this, but the work has a flow of living meaning which plainly outshines any technical classification. Quite apart from its subject-matter, we would judge a major value of the *Conquest of Violence* to be in its practical restoration of vitality to scholarship. Its pages, despite the restraint of the writer, are suffused with her admiration of Gandhi, and this engages the susceptibility of the reader with a like emotion. Individual *engagement* in behalf of justice and freedom will undoubtedly seem a much less unlikely personal course for anyone who studies this book.

It soon becomes obvious that Gandhi's fundamental purpose, like Plato's, was the complete ethicizing of politics. The sources of his ethical ideas lie deep in the grain of Eastern religious philosophy—mainly Hinduism and Buddhism —and what Gandhi shows above all is that these principles can have direct application to human affairs through the disciplined actions of imperfect men in grossly imperfect social situations. The body of his theory—concerned, so to speak, with the "firing line" of nonviolent action—exhibits an extraordinary adaptation of "organic" conceptions of human development and good to remedies for the failures and breakdowns of contractual arrangements. While Western politics takes cognizance of the importance and rights of the individual, the latter remains, under Western law, a discrete particle with only external definition in the social compact. In Gandhian thought, the individual is conceived as a moral force engaged in an Odyssey of cosmic dimensions, and the social forms are thought of as temporary, even transitory, vehicles of this long cycle of individual growth. The strategy and tactics of *Satyagraha* (nonviolent action) are, in Gandhi's view, practical applications of the principles of this search for truth, made operative under adverse social conditions.

Even the comparative "failures" among Gandhi's nonviolent campaigns begin to seem unimportant when it is realized that his inspiration tapped resources in the Indian masses far beyond his expectations. This became evident during the opposition to the Rowlatt Acts (measures designed to punish more severely seditious and anarchical acts against the Government of India). The change from passive inertness to action on the part of the people, in response to Gandhi's appeal, was described by Motilal Nehru (Jawaharlal's father):

> A new force was suddenly introduced into our politics, a force with the most tremendous potentialities. India's masses were suddenly awakened and the message of Satyagraha entered the humblest home. Some of us did not entirely agree with the wording of the Satyagraha pledge, many were of opinion that the time had not come for civil disobedience. But few, I imagine, can disagree with the essentials of the doctrine. These, as I conceive them, are truth, fearlessness and non-violence.

The failure, then, lay in this "embarrassment of riches" in popular support. The people, Gandhi later pointed out, "had found a new force but they did not know what it was and how to use it."

Thereafter he laid even greater stress on the need for preparation by the participants in India's struggle for justice and freedom.

Prof. Bondurant quotes Gandhi on how he deliberately sought to make his movement grow out of Indian thought and daily life:

> After much thinking I have arrived at a definition of *Swadeshi* that, perhaps, best illustrates my meaning. *Swadeshi* is that spirit in us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote. Thus, as for religion, in order to satisfy the requirements of the definition, I must restrict myself to my ancestral religion. This is the use of my immediate religious surrounding. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects. In the domain of politics I should make use of the indigenous institutions and serve them by curing them of their proved defects. In that of economics I should use only things of my immediate neighbors and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting.

What are seen as "oddities" by Gandhi's critics can almost always be found to embody a deep consistency with some basic principle of Indian philosophy, brought up to date and freshly applied to a contemporary situation. In this way, by his own personal conviction, he gained access to the underlying convictions of the people. As Prof. Bondurant says:

> An understanding of the success Gandhi achieved in mobilizing the Indian masses can be advanced by analyzing the concepts basic to Hindu social and religious thought and their exploitation in the Gandhian appeal. What were the elements in the social milieu of all India which allowed for the impressive response of a people to an appeal to defy the Salt Acts by reliance on peaceful, persuasive tactics? . . . Some of the answers to such questions emerge in the course of examining the philosophical concept of *satya*, the popular meaning of the Jain, Buddhist and Hindu idea of *ahimsa*, and the changing notion of *tapasya* in the Indian ethos. The essential elements of satyagraha—truth, non-violence, and self-suffering—had, for the Hindu, roots in their corresponding traditional precepts. . . . Gandhi went to the people of India with teachings phrased in terms reminiscent of the Vedas, with Upanishadic reminders, with quotations from the *Gita* and with exhortations familiar from the time of Manu. Indians responded to an appeal presented in the currency of Jain and Buddhist and Hindu ethics. *Satya* [Truth], *ahimsa* [Harmlessness] and *tapasya* [regulated austerity] were common coin. But, into these traditional precepts Gandhi introduced considerations unfamiliar to Indian tradition and reminiscent of the rationalist, humanist tradition of the West.

Conquest of Violence pursues systematic inquiry into the philosophic foundations of the Gandhian theory and practice of non-violence, provides illustrations of the practice in modern history, relates Gandhian conceptions to Western political ideas, and exhibits the resulting body of thought and report of action as a major challenge to the West.