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THE MODERN SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

CURRENT radical manifestos are often less a call to arms than a call to understanding. There is plenty of disgust with the way things are, but also what seems an instinctive avoidance of monolithic identification of the "enemy." There is a much more experimental approach to the problem of social change. The demand for social justice is invariably linked with the demand for *meaning*, and this brings continuous reflective dialogue to the radical scene, with immediate suspicion of any hackneyed party line. In the *Nation* for Sept. 2, Norman Birnbaum, founding editor of the *New Left Review*, discusses the growing weaknesses of modern industrial society, resulting, he suggests, as much from recognition of its inner contradictions as from other causes. This society's overt ills are plain enough, but with loss of confidence its myth is also failing. This critical self-consciousness began, as he shows, in the universities:

> A list of recent student revolts reads like an international directory of institutions of higher education. In these uprisings, political and educational revolt were and are difficult to distinguish. Indeed, it is a question whether the distinction between political and educational revolt is really tenable. . . . the most articulate of the young want not training but an education, an opportunity to understand the implications for personal choice of the present requirements of culture. The modern American university denies, explicitly, that education in this sense is possible. . . .
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> An outraged sense of relevance, an unfulfilled demand for moral significance, are at the bottom of the educational revolt—even if the students' conceptions of the changed university are often proof in themselves that the education they have received is defective. . . .
>
> The student *avant-garde* is especially attracted to political activity in new forms. Maoism's ostensible refusal of compromise with the bourgeois enemy is no doubt a cause of its popularity among the European students, but they are profoundly drawn by the notion that routine itself is reactionary, that only the permanent and all-pervasive revolution can prevent a lapse into the rigidity they see as the ineluctable result of organization. The same traits mark the American SDS and account for its ineffectuality as a national organization but its potency on specific campuses. (Even the German SDS, contrary to national political character, has been touched by this tendency.) The international political character of the libertarianism of the student protest movement suggests one of its meanings: it is an expression of the students' rejection of the bureaucratic careers for which their education has been preparing them. It is at this point that the student revolt against society and the student revolt against the universities have become one.

Since the students of the West "regard the State Socialist societies as nothing but a variant of bureaucratic domination," there is no distinct ideological program, but a restless chipping away at specific objectives, with honest doubt as to whether "reason will find new historical forms." Mr. Birnbaum concludes:

> The present outbreak of generational conflict may represent the beginning of a new form of permanent revolution in industrial society: the avant-garde, erratically and crudely, may have grasped the implications of our historical moment. It is the tragedy of revolutions that they establish new legitimacies and, usually, new tyrannies. Almost paralyzed, morally, by the recent efforts at a total integration of industrial society we now have to live with a permanent process of disruption. In it, however, we may see our only chance to match our social practice to our human potential.

This seems almost resignation to perpetual guerilla conflict, which has the following justification:

> . . . we may interpret the political experiments of those opposed to ossification in industrial society as a new form of the pursuit of reason. The changes induced in our lives by the productivity of industry, by science and its applications, by the extension (real and potential) of higher culture, by the emergence of

> global society, can neither be contained nor mastered by our political and social traditions.

One other development of recent years, perhaps more far-reaching in some ways than the activities of student intellectuals, is the "loosening up" effect of a change in the popular arts appealing to the great mass of youth—a change, that is, in their origin and intent. Singers like Joan Baez and Bob Dylan in the United States, the Beatles in England, and similar figures in France, simply took over in the entertainment field (a field wider, of course, than "entertainment"), and the commercial operators have had to conform to "the new tastes of new buyers." All these performers had one thing in common:

> they spoke not alone of immediate and private concerns, but gave these general accents. They dealt with parents, with bosses, with the atomic bomb, with politicians. . . . For once mass culture had as its content neither total escape from routine nor an ignoble capitulation to it but a modicum of criticism of it. In brief, the student revolt was anticipated in somewhat less intellectual groups.

Could we; one wonders, get at the substance of these changes in some way besides defining their opposition to the status quo? They obviously represent deep-felt longings, warm, organic hungers for simple fellowship, and a new kind of "blues" in response to frustration. Radicals, naturally, take account of such developments in terms of their political potential, but their long-term effect will surely be to alter the character of far more human relationships than the merely political. This music marks the entry into the popular arts of a strong if rudimentary ethical consciousness. And instead of tough militance, there is the rustle of people going away, of not seeing at all—of not being able, any more, to see and feel—according to familiar habit and convention.

It seems obvious that the very changes in radical politics itself, so informingly described by Mr. Birnbaum, result partly from painfully learned lessons of history concerning the failures and miscalculations of past politics. Those lessons may add up, finally, to the conclusion that too much was expected of political power in the past. In a survey discussion, "What Is the New Radicalism?", Dimitrios Roussopoulos, editor of *Our Generation* (Vol. 6, Nos. 1 and 2), speaks of the change in view:

> The cleavage between old and new left is profound and in certain important areas unreconcilable. The major portion of the blame for society's contemporary crisis is assigned to the historic failure of Western socialism to evolve a theory and practice of democratic socialism. This is held to be so even though one does not proportion out an equal amount of the blame to such disparate vintages of politicos as the socialists, communists, eight varieties of Stalinists and neo-Stalinists, Trotskyists, democratic socialists and reformists, revolutionary socialists and leftwingers. The mechanistic socialism of the Communist parties which modeled themselves after Russian and more recently Chinese examples are partially responsible for the failure. But the "democratic socialists" whose capitulation before the centralising concepts and statist ideology of corporate liberalism, its mesh of technocratic manipulation and concomitant ravishing imperialism/colonialism are also responsible.
>
> The idea of the good community has led the new left to stomach many different tendencies, including basically reformist and revolutionary sections. There is a continuous tension between both, and each struggle resolves itself on the level of debate and action, only to be mounted again on another. It is a dialectical process that cannot be resolved except by suppression, which would have only a temporary effect of resolution. Hopefully the new left will have gained enough historical hindsight to understand the nature of this dialectic and learn the basis of its motion as a means of enriching its radicalism.

Not ideological orthodoxy, but the rejection of it, is intrinsic in the new politics. Elsewhere Mr. Roussopoulos says:

> The new politics must necessarily be a direct response to a situation which can be characterized as one of crisis in which there is no certainty of the outcome. The new left is now a movement within which there are various levels of sophistication and consciousness. The new radicalism is now still organic enough to allow people to enter its various stages of politics and permits free gradation. It is thus a self-sustaining set of currents constantly

> replenishing itself. It confronts a crisis which involves the very condition of man, the nature of his society, and the role human beings play in the world.
>
> The components of the embryonic ideology are the search for a *new theory* of history, human society, human nature, social change and the historical agencies of social change. It's a large task but the problem of history is the problem of consciousness.

The old radicalism claimed to have *settled* these questions. The new radicals insist upon keeping them open. This is an enormous difference, in principle, and it is not really begging the question to say that an important part of the difference consists in being conscious of it. Whatever the "new theory of history" turns out to be, it cannot possibly be as confining—or as self-deceiving—as the theories of the past.

Something might be said, here, of the psychological character of what is going on in China, since it involves the problem of consciousness in a different way, or at another level. The September *Trans-action* presents a long discussion of the Chinese "cultural revolution" by Robert Jay Lifton, research professor of psychiatry at Yale University. The analysis throws light on Mao's occasional popularity with young radicals in the West, by showing that it is the aging Chinese leader's concern for a *permanent* revolution in China which lies behind the directed turbulence of Red Guard activism. Revolutions typically relapse, and Mao resolved that this would not happen in China. Ironically, however, it is the "State" which sponsors the perfervid war of young Chinese "on the old world," in order, as Dr. Lifton says, "to clear the path for national rebirth." If the revolution does not become permanent—if bourgeois tendencies reappear, as they did in Russia—Mao will have failed. What are these tendencies?

> Much of the rhetoric during the Cultural Revolution and the Socialist Education Movement preceding it had been a reaction and an answer to ideas expressed during the preceding year of liberalization (1961-1962). Under attack at the philosophical level have been theories of "human nature" along with expressions of "humanism" (or even "socialist humanism") making their way into China from Russian and Eastern European intellectual circles. For such concepts deny that class origin is the ultimate moral and psychological determinant of behavior, the first by insisting that certain characteristics are shared by all mankind, and the second through a principle the Chinese contemptuously term "love for all people," under which even capitalists and landlords become worthy of sympathy.
>
> Ideas like these are dangerous because they could undermine the Maoist vision of revolutionary immortality by encouraging people to revert to alternative intellectual traditions that extol quests for truth and self-realization. Or in the somewhat more pejorative language of the Cultural Revolution, they lead to desires "to get on by politics, be really good at your specialty, and have a good life." These ideas emerge from post-Stalinist thought, from "modern revisionism," and express a rediscovery of the individual. But in Chinese media they are dismissed as a "philosophy of survival." Paradoxically, a humanist principle of "love for all people" becomes associated (in Maoist terminology) with "degeneration" into a "petrifying bourgeoisie," with traits that deserve to be "relegated to the morgue." Humanist principles extolling man's life are now seen as agents of death, as demons that must be exorcised lest their emanations destroy all.

Here is the repetition of utter Leninist contempt for the principles of traditional morality—so long honored by only lip-service in the West that their negation could become the partisan dynamic of the class struggle. This is the terrible and still open wound in Western civilization, and it will not be healed by a corresponding excommunication of Communists. A competition of nihilisms can only destroy all. Meanwhile, in China, a strange balancing principle—a declaration of almost incredible faith in the purified revolutionary spirit—reveals tendencies that would be called "supernaturalist," except for their materialist origin. Not even atom bombs, Mao insisted, three days after Hiroshima was destroyed, can defeat consecrated revolutionaries. Dr. Lifton quotes Mao's speech:

> Can atom bombs decide wars? No, they can't . . . . Some of our comrades . . . believe that the atom

> bomb is all-powerful; that is a big mistake. . . . What influence has made these comrades look upon the atom bomb as something miraculous? Bourgeois influence. . . . The theory that "weapons decide everything," the purely military viewpoint, a bureaucratic style of work divorced from the masses, individualistic thinking and the like—all these are bourgeois influences in our ranks. We must constantly sweep these bourgeois things out of our ranks just as we sweep dust.

The determination of a people successfully reborn in permanent revolution has been identified by Maoists as China's "spiritual atom bomb," which is claimed to be "much more powerful than actual nuclear weapons." This, one might say, embodies a faith which has less startling expression in the idea that modern ideological conflict is a war for men's minds, which weapons of physical destruction cannot win. The need, quite obviously, is to relocate this faith in man, where it belongs, instead of in the psychologically alienating mechanism of the class struggle. But this is a world problem and a world responsibility. Meanwhile, in China, the appeal to the heroic emotions proceeds on class lines, but with mythic dimensions: "Groups like the Maoists that so boldly defy human limitation are inevitably plagued in turn by images of supernatural enemies." The Cultural Revolution was a planned and executed death of the old gods, with the teen-age Red Guards as symbols of the new. Dr. Lifton says:

> One could in fact view the entire Cultural Revolution as a demand for renewal of Communist life. It is, in other words, a call for reassertion of revolutionary immortality.

Yet there is a terrible price to pay for this compulsive energy: "The psychological stage is reached in which one cannot dispense with one's hatred. One cannot give up one's enemies."

It is extremely difficult to comment on all this, except for wondering about the intensities of subjection and humiliation which would make a man—or, in some measure, a great nation or race—adopt so permanently partisan a revolutionary doctrine; while, at the same time, this doctrine, nominally materialistic, is wrenched into the form of messianic demands on the human will. In this case it is materialism and not idealism that has been stood on its head. Yet there may be profound truth in Mao's belief that the human psyche must be reconstituted before the good society can come into being—as much truth, at any rate, as there is in the claim that this reconstitution, if it is to be successful, must be done by each man for himself, and not "on orders" from an external political authority.

In a measured conclusion, Dr. Lifton says:

> One might be tempted to dismiss the entire cult of Mao and his thought as no more than sycophantic indulgence of an old man's vanity were it not for the life Mao has lived and the impact he has made upon the Chinese people. He has in fact come close to living out precisely the kind of existential absolute he has advocated. No twentieth-century life has come closer than his to the great myth of the hero—with its "road of trials," or prolonged death encounter, and its mastery of that encounter in a way that enhances the life of one's people.

The point is that, in more general terms, the claim made in behalf of committed human consciousness is no empty thing; it is not something to laugh at; and the distortion of this power in terms of Chinese Communism and Mao's fear of its failing dream in no way reduces the fact of the power.

Why this power, until now, has seemed to be more accessible to political pathology and desperation than to communitarian vision is a question that needs answering.

REVIEW
A STRANGE INTERLUDE

DAPHNE DU MAURIER'S story, *The Scapegoat* (Penguin), is an exquisite restoration to modern literature of a theme which once had mainly a theological meaning—that of the Paraclete or Comforter. Among the Cathari, and before that the Montanists, there was the conception of men whose moral development had reached a point where they were able to serve as vehicles of the Holy Spirit, and to exercise a beneficent influence on all who came their way. There is no hint of this peculiarly religious significance in Miss du Maurier's tale, but what is lost—if it is a loss—by the secularization of the idea is amply regained by the wonderful fidelity to human nature the author gives this role, taken on accidentally and spontaneously by a middle-aged Englishman.

The time is a few years after World War II. The Englishman is in a small French town, not much enjoying the last few days of a vacation. He is at loose ends in many senses. Overtaken by rain, he enters a nearby church:

> It was empty, save for an old woman praying, tears like pearls in each corner of her wide staring eyes, and later a girl with high pattering heels came briskly up the hollow aisle to burn a candle before a blue-washed statue. Then, like a gulf of darkness swamping reason, I knew that later on I must get drunk, or die. How much did failure matter? Not, perhaps, to my small outside world, not to the few friends who thought they knew me well, not to the persons who employed me nor the students who listened to my lectures, not to the officials at the British Museum, who, benign and courteous, gave me good morning or good afternoon, not to the smooth, dull, kindly London shadows among whom I lived and breathed and had my being as a law-abiding, quiet, donnish individual of thirty-eight. But to the self who clamoured for release, the man within? How did my poor record seem to him?
>
> Who he was and whence he sprang, what urges and what longings he might possess, I could not tell. I was so used to denying his expression that his ways were unknown to me; but he might have had a mocking laugh, a casual heart, a swift-aroused temper and a ribald tongue. He did not inhabit a solitary book-lined apartment; he did not wake every morning to the certain knowledge of no family, no ties, no entanglements, no friends or interests infinitely precious to him, nothing to serve as goal and anchor save a preoccupation with French history and the French language which somehow, by good fortune, enabled him to earn his daily bread.

What will he do—this man with such undefined longings in him? He cannot, it seems, go on, but he has no feeling of other capabilities. He needs a good turn from fate, and Miss du Maurier provides it a few moments later when he meets in a buffet a man who seems the exact duplicate of himself. Both are fascinated by finding a personal double; they go for a drink together and exchange confidences. The Frenchman quizzes the Englishman, obtaining information he will use later, and explains that he is Jean de Gue—as it develops, the Count of the chateau in that region. The Frenchman, too, admits to having personal problems. "My one trouble," he-explains, "is that I have too many possessions. Human ones."

The jaws of a new destiny close on the Englishman, whose name in John. He is awakened the next morning by the polite chauffeur of the Count. Still dull from too much brandy, it takes a while for him to realize that he has been left by the Frenchman, who has disappeared with all his possessions, including his car, without a scrap of evidence to prove who he is—that he is now inevitably identified as the local nobleman who lives in the chateau. The story moves swiftly. The chauffeur, obviously a loyal friend as well as servant, thinks he is a little addled by drink when he tries to explain that he is not Monsieur le Comte. So he is dragged into the new role, both horrified and intrigued. His own self-disgust and passivity are part of the conspiracy. His blunders—like not knowing the road home—do not seem to matter. He hardly cares.

At the chateau, he finds himself equipped with a complete family—wife, nine-year-old daughter, bitter, unsmiling sister, invalid *grande*

dame mother, a smarting younger brother, and a sister-in-law with whom he is involved in an affair. This is his first encounter with his family.

> Three women were sitting in the room. As I entered they looked up, and one of them, tall as myself, with hard, clear-cut features and a narrow mouth, her hair strained back and twisted in a bun, immediately rose to her feet and left the room. A second, with dark hair and eyes, handsome, almost beautiful, yet marred by a sallow skin and a sullen mouth watched me without expression from the sofa where she sat some sewing or embroidery beside her, and when the first woman left the room she called over her shoulder without turning around, "If you must go, Blanche, please shut the door. I mind draughts, if nobody else does."
>
> The third woman had faded, rather colourless blonde hair. She might have been pretty once, and perhaps was still, with small, delicate features and blue eyes, but her expression of defeat, of petulance, destroyed the first impression of charm. She did not smile. She gave a little laugh of exasperation, as the man Paul had done, and then, rising to her feet, came toward me across the polished floor.
>
> "Well," she said, "aren't you going to kiss either of us?"

Slowly the action tilts from the phase of the Englishman's having to find out how to excite no suspicion—he soon gives up on the idea of revealing himself—to his involvement in the sufferings and needs of his adopted family. He bumbles along, making what seem to him awful mistakes, yet somehow he finds explanations. The history of the family slowly unfolds, a patch here, then there, and fugues of meaning come in upon him as various people—a neighbor, a servant, an employee of his bankrupt glass factory—recall with colorings of their own some incident in the past. He has, it seems, a mistress in town. He has a reputation as a devil of a fellow, and he fought in the Resistance. He has also, he finds, been "using" people all his life, and some of them have not liked it. His mother is his fierce partisan, who embarrasses him by cruelty to others in support of his vanity. Then there is his precocious, neurotic daughter, whose pain starts flowing unexpected springs of compassion in him.

So, from an almost somnambulant wanderer through life, he turns into an awkward knight errant, hardly conscious of the role that is growing on him. Meanwhile, the efforts to preserve his incognito give way to opening doors to a new life for the members of his family. He saves the glass factory to help the workers and the town. He makes capital of his most ridiculous gaffes, turns his dissimulations into a game of secret good-doing, and slowly it dawns on him that he *loves* these people. They are not really special—no more than he—but their happiness becomes his mission. And in only a week—during which there is much action, including the death of the Count's wife—the small world of the chateau is almost completely changed.

Then the Count comes home—still the same old Count. Filled with opportunism, not quite evil but hardly good, he returns to resume his place because the death of his wife will release a large sum of money to his control.

John has only one confidant, the wise mistress in the town who alone had guessed his secret. He knows he must go; the Count is back, and too clever to be defeated by a plain, plodding Englishman. Bidding goodby to this woman, he speaks his heart:

> "I love them," I said. "I'm part of them now, forever. That's what I want you to understand. I shall never see them again, but because of them I live."
>
> "I understand," she said, "and it could be the same for them. Because of you they also live."
>
> "If I could believe that," I said, "then nothing matters. Then everything is all right. But he's gone back to them. It's going to be as it was before. It will start all over again—the carelessness, the unhappiness, the suffering, the pain. . . . I want them to be happy," I said. "Not his sort of happiness, but the kind that is buried inside them, locked up, that I know is there . . . I've seen it, like a light or a hunger, waiting to be realised."
>
> I stopped, because, what I said was perhaps nonsense. I couldn't explain myself. "He's a devil," I said, "and they belong to him again."

> "No," she said, "that's where you're wrong. He's not a devil. He's a human ordinary man, just like yourself."
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> She rose and drew the curtains, and then came back to me again. "Remember, I know him," she said, "his weakness and his strength, his good points and his bad. If he were a devil I shouldn't waste my time here in Villars. I should have left him long ago."

Then:

> "He loves them already," she said. "I want you to believe it. It wasn't just the money that brought him back." . . .

This is a beautiful story, faithful to life where it is important to be faithful, with deft improvisation where it is the artist's necessity and right.

It is a vision of man without any urging of virtues and nobilities. These come out of the grain of ordinary life, as they should. Yet the feeling of *paraclete*, of comforter and friend, comes through more strongly than anything else.

One other work of literature in this genre might be recalled—the play of Nicolas Evreinoff, *The Chief Thing*, produced in New York in the 1920'S by the Theatre Guild, and published as a book by Doubleday-Page (1926). The level of this play is intermediate between the religious conception of the Cathari and Miss du Maurier's rare "naturalism." Something of the medieval wonder-worker is involved, but Miss du Maurier's story seems more successful.

COMMENTARY
A PUZZLED GENERATION

IN the *Atlantic* for October, Nicholas von Hoffman reports on the 25th reunion at Harvard of the class of 1943. Nearly 500 Harvard men (and their wives) came to share their bewilderment at the behavior of their children and to recall "old times." Mr. von Hoffman's portraiture is skillful, and not deliberately unkind, but his sympathies are clearly with the two seniors who were there to talk to the returning classmates. After one of the students said—

> "that Harvard should come out against the war; if drafted I would not fight, but I don't think I'd go to Canada . . . you feel threatened because you are losing your power, not that I'm suggesting that you will end up in camps for people without power"—

the chairman said: "I want to thank you for your forthrightness. It's a shame there's nobody to defend our lousy generation." A Kentucky lawyer, however, expressed himself:

> "We have a tremendous commitment to liberty in Vietnam. I even resent I'll have to pay taxes for these fellows' upkeep in jail."

A Los Angeles businessman, Al Casey, president of the Times-Mirror Company, also recorded his disturbance:

> The class of '43 was just as involved in politics, he argued, but it recognized a debt to the community that had nurtured it and paid that debt by accepting the will of the majority. "I accept the debt," one of the students answered him. "I accept it up to a point, but after that point, if there is a conflict between my will and the majority, I will not shoot someone to pay back what I owe to the community. And in some cases the majority will is irrelevant. Is it the majority will that people in the ghetto pay higher prices for food than you do?"

The students, Mr. von Hoffman remarks, "had moved the discussion into a perspective the classmates felt uncomfortable about." At one point, the Chief Marshall of the Reunion said musingly, "We were all thrown into a war that was relatively easy for us to participate in; we didn't have the doubts and hesitations that some of this generation does."

The class of '43 went home "almost depressed." Some were upset. One said to the seniors: ". . . you should stop and think, what if our fathers and mothers had allowed us all this self-examination and analysis you have today? I doubt we could have won World War II."

"I hope to God," a student replied, "you were as analytical about Pearl Harbor as we are about Vietnam." No one, apparently, felt like pursuing this question.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGNER EDUCATION

II

As early as 1859 there were already cries in the wilderness. William Morris was the leader of a revolt in England among designers who realized that the disappearance of the independent handcraftsman had removed the guardian of good taste and creative vitality from the field of design. The machine, in order to justify itself aesthetically as well as commercially, was falling over backwards to imitate hand-made products in any hodge-podge of historical styles that would be mechanically possible.

An example of the kind of deception that Morris detected and protested against can be seen in the following statement in a booklet discovered by Giedion, written in 1856 by the American architect, James Bogardus. It says: "Mr. Bogardus first conceived the idea of emulating [the rich designs of antiquity] in modern times, by the aid of cast iron." This is the same Bogardus who was the first to introduce iron columns as a substitute for the heavy masonry which traditionally supported the outer walls of buildings. Bogardus introduced this principle as early as 1848. It took seventy years for this principle to fight its way through the æsthetic concepts embodied in Bogardus' own statement to creative freedom.

In the United States, where there was no indigenous antiquity to turn to, eclecticism in architecture dominated the mushrooming industrial environment. Out of a welter of the period styles and gingerbread façades that covered up the inventions and advances of our engineers, there began to appear in Chicago in the late eighties industrial structures where sensitive and humanized architectural design frankly accepted and expressed the new structural discoveries. Louis Sullivan and the Chicago School represent the beginning of a creative approach to modern realities, an approach that we in design education are trying to grasp and develop. The following excerpts from an address by Louis Sullivan in 1899, to the Chicago Architectural Club, hold great significance for us. Speaking to young architects, he said:

> I urge that you cast away as worthless the shopworn and empirical notion that an architect is an artist—and accept my assurance that he is and imperatively shall be an interpreter of the life of his time. If you realize this, you will realize at once and forever that you, by birth and through the beneficence of the form of government under which you live—that you are called upon, not to betray but to express the life of your own day and generation. That society will have just cause to hold you to account for the use of the liberty it has given you and the confidence it has reposed in you. You will realize in due time as your lives develop and expand and you become richer in experience, that a fraudulent and surreptitious use of historical documents, however suavely presented, however cleverly plagiarized, however neatly repacked, however shrewdly intrigued, will constitute and be held to be a betrayal of trust. It is futile to quibble, or to protest or to plead ignorance or innocence, or to asseverate or urge the force of circumstances. Society is, in the main, honest—and why should it not be?—and it will not ask and will not expect you to be liars. It will give you every reasonable and legitimate backing, if you can prove to it by your acts that artistic pretension is not a synonym for moral irresponsibility. If you take the pains truly to understand your country, your people, your day, your generation, the time, the place in which you live—if you seek to understand, absorb and sympathize with the life around you, you will be understood and sympathetically received in return. The greatest poet will be he who shall grasp and deify the commonplaces of our life—those simple normal feelings which the people of his day will be helpless otherwise to express:—and here you have the key with which, individually, you may unlock the portal of your art.

We can take heart and guidance from these brave words, but at the same time we must realize that in spite of the inarticulate preferences of the society in which Sullivan rightly placed such great faith, the leaders of industry and of his own

profession created under his very nose a virtual city of cultural regression in the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. With few exceptions this exposition was a wild conglomeration of imitations of well-known historical prototypes. Sullivan himself said of the Fair that the damage it wrought would last half a century. Half a century brings us to 1943. Proof that we are still not out of the woods lies in the inescapable relevance, in the present, of Sullivan's admonitions. We should never forget that Sullivan lost, and that the rebirth of these lost objectives in pre-Hitler Germany under the leadership of Walter Gropius and the Bauhaus, and in France under Le Corbusier, and subsequent developments throughout the world, could be smothered by the same forces of eager and easy imitation that buried Sullivan under the Chicago World's Fair.

Twenty years after the Sullivan era Walter Gropius was to make the following statement:

> For the last century the transition from manual to machine production has so preoccupied humanity that, instead of pressing forward to tackle the new problems of design postulated by this unprecedented transformation, we have remained content to borrow styles from antiquity and perpetuate historical prototypes in decoration.
>
> That state of affairs is over at last. A new conception of building, based on realities, has emerged; and with it has come a new conception of space. These changes and the superior technical resources we can now command as a direct result of them, are embodied in the *very appearance* of the already numerous examples of the New Architecture.
>
> Our fresh technical resources have furthered the disintegration of solid masses of masonry into slender piers, with consequent far-reaching economies in bulk, space, weight and haulage. New synthetic substances—steel, concrete, glass—are actively superseding the traditional raw materials of construction. Their rigidity and molecular density have made it possible to erect wide-spanned and all but transparent structures, for which the skill of previous ages was manifestly inadequate. This enormous saving in structural volume was an architectural revolution in itself.

To the design educator there is a significant historical relationship between Bogardus, Sullivan and Gropius, each separated from the others, by at least a generation. Remember that Bogardus had already achieved the first stage of the technical revolution of which Gropius speaks. The invention of the iron skeleton gave architecture the way to new dimensions through the substitution of the glass wall for the solid wall. Here already in 1848 are the means to the new architecture which Bogardus himself and those to follow him, with a few rare exceptions, never reached. What was stopping them? The clue can be found in Bogardus' evaluation of his own contribution, which took less pride in the new means he had invented than in his talent for giving these means back to old forms. Remember that he proudly describes himself as being the first to conceive "the idea of emulating the rich architectural designs of antiquity in modern times by the aid of cast iron." In the decades that followed, the withdrawal of creative aesthetic courage from our ever-expanding technical advances gave us the backward-looking concept of design which in many quarters still remains with us today. With the exception of Louis Sullivan and his equally great disciple, Frank Lloyd Wright, no movement was strong enough to overcome this international inertia until the Bauhaus made its appearance.

The essence of the problem confronting today's teachers of design lies in the problem of Bogardus and Morris, of such nineteenth-century European architects as Van de Velde and Victor Horta, of our own Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright and H. H. Richardson, of the more recent Europeans Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Sert and Le Corbusier. The problem in effect is this: How to meet the technical challenge of our machine age, how to accept and make creative use of its tools and techniques and its materialistic blessings, and at the same time to maintain the tradition of taste and truth in design without reliance on traditional forms which are already infused with the standards we seek through the hard-earned

originality of other times. Of them all, Bogardus personifies our own dilemma while Gropius and the Bauhaus have pointed out the way that, if carried farther, may lead us out of it. There will pass through your classrooms hundreds of young people who have thrilled to the sight of the George Washington Bridge and who would consider the Kaufman house at Bear Run by Frank Lloyd Wright an abomination. Our job is not primarily to convince these children that design in the modern idiom is better than the familiar traditional forms. It is rather to awaken their æsthetic sensibilities and their God-given inventiveness through simple tools and materials and by guiding them with the basic elements that are, and always have been, intrinsic in good design of any age.

How does this heroic background relate to principles that should guide us in setting up a workshop program for the preparatory stages of design education? If we have learned anything from history, and if we have examined our own social and economic and cultural patterns, we can see at once that we are confronted with certain pressures that, like Morris, Sullivan, Wright, Le Corbusier and Gropius, we must resist. What are these pressures? First, there is the pressure to evade moral responsibility for the products of industrial production. Second, there is the pressure to provide narrowly educated specialists who know little beyond their special skill, and who will accept uncritically any perversely designed product as a whole because they are concerned with nothing beyond their job of making a part. Third, there is the pressure to train young people to study history in order to filch from it rather than to better understand their own era and, of course, the other pressure to study their own era in order to discover what borrowings from history can be sold to it. Fourth, the pressure to separate life from art, and art from industry and technology, and lastly the pressure to incorporate life and industry into a self-contained entity whose hard shell protects it from the critical eye and sound taste of people who have experienced art and design in a broad and related way, both historically and actually.

What are the immediate objectives with regard to the student? First, there is the job of reawakening in him visual and tactile awareness of the physical world that surrounds him, not just special and conventional aspects, but the whole of it.

Second, there is the job of arousing in him a full sensory response to the organic, textural, and visual quality of all possible materials, at first uncatalogued and later with relation to design.

Third, there is the job of introducing him to the tools of design and to the fundamentals of their application to materials.

Fourth, there is the job of introducing him to the elements of design free of specialized application, and in such a way that these elements will always be freely related to each other and to any field of design, whether two- or three-dimensional.

Fifth, there is the job of liberating his innate inventiveness and creative curiosity by tasks which cannot be resolved by reference to stereotyped and familiar solutions, but which, for the time being, he alone can solve.

Sixth, there is the job of giving him the means of developing his native facility by an ever-increasing mastery over his first free exercises, leading gradually to a preparation for continued practice, which in due time will merge with special and professional skills.

This is the foundation of a design education which can meet the industrial world without being swallowed up by it or, on the other hand, without taking refuge in history.

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FRONTIERS

The Influence of an Idea

IT is common enough, when people speak of non-violence, to think of it as simply a better means to ends than violence. Violence is used to stop people from doing what they are doing—to change their behavior. Non-violence, it is said, is a better way. It is an unharming way which touches—or is supposed to touch—the springs of action at a deeper level of human nature. Through the sometimes dramatic endurance of pain, and by sacrifice, it demonstrates that the dignity of man and the struggle against injustice do not require people to attack other people and harm or kill them.

This is in many ways a new idea. Fifty years ago, it was a practically unknown idea. Fifty years ago it was an idea just getting born, through the midwifery of Gandhi in South Africa and by the gradual spread of the conceptions of Leo Tolstoy. Today non-violence is well-known and often in the foreground of discussion and debate. Those who think it is silly feel obliged to *argue* against it, and to defend the use of force.

For this idea of an alternative to violence to have gained the prominence it now has, in only half a century, is an extraordinary historical achievement. That it comes as a concomitant of equally extraordinary development in the techniques of violence may be no coincidence, but a wholly natural response of human beings to anti-human forces in history.

The question of whether non-violence "works" is of course a major issue. But this has to do only with nonviolence as a substitute for violence in influencing other people. Non-violence may have equal or even greater importance in another way. A man who adopts non-violence as a rule of life may be saying something about his own behavior before he says something about the behavior of others. He may be saying that he can no longer "react" in a customary manner. He may be revealing a change in his conception of himself, of what he must be, instead of a new method of influencing others. If taking that stance has an effect on others, well and good, but adopting the principle of *Ahimsa*—of harmlessness—may be primarily a declaration of one's own being. In all serious discussion of non-violence, this dialectic between its meaning as an end and its meaning as a means is continuous and fruitful.

Meanwhile, at the practical level, the advocacy of nonviolence has brought out important distinctions between different kinds of violence, as, for example, the contrast between the spontaneous violence of a man pressed personally to the breaking-point, and the "programmed" violence which uses advanced technology along with sophisticated applications of the psychology of fear. In a BBC broadcast in January, 1968, Paul Goodman made some of these distinctions:

> My background is psychoanalytic, and psychoanalytically, we feel that face-to-face violence, like a fist fight, is natural, and it does damage to try to repress it; that it's better to have the fight out. Therefore on that level I have no opposition to violence. Naturally I don't like to see people punching each other, but anger is a rather beautiful thing, and anger will lead to a blow, and there you are. When people are under a terrific oppression, as say Negroes in the United States or the Parisians, let's say, during Hitler's occupation of Paris, it seems inevitable at a certain point they are going to blow up and fight back. And that seems to me like a force of nature. You can do nothing about that, and therefore I don't disapprove. That kind of warfare, guerilla warfare, partisan warfare, brutalizes people, of course it does, but it's human and I would make no moral judgment.
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> As soon as warfare, violence, becomes organized, however, and you are told by somebody else, "Kill him," where it's not your own anger and hatred pouring out, but some abstract policy or party line, or a complicated strategic campaign, then to exert violence turns you into a thing, because violence involves too much of you to be able to do it at somebody else's direction. Therefore I am entirely opposed to any kind of warfare, standing armies as opposed to guerilla armies and so forth. Therefore all war is entirely unacceptable because it mechanizes

> human beings and inevitably leads to more harm than good. Therefore I am a pacifist.

Well, there is a lot more to be said on this subject—especially in relation to blanket permissiveness respecting personal violence, and also the dubious "beauty" of anger—yet the general validity of these moral gradations seems clear enough.

Part of the problem involved in thinking about nonviolence comes from having, today, to look at the issues of the eighteenth-century sort of revolutions against a background of horror and withdrawal from the ruthless violence of twentieth-century Power States. It isn't that the *scale* of violence should determine one's attitude, but that the cold, technologization of methods of killing makes the evil of violence unmistakable, tending to turn individual moral decision into historical or absolute decision. Meanwhile, people who have not lived in the atmosphere of a technically advanced society and lack such pressing reasons to reject military means, may think about violence more in terms of personal reaction, under the conditions described by Goodman. To understand this is not to waver in support of non-violence, but rather to grasp how differently the integrities behind human behavior may emerge in differing historical situations. To ask a man to jump far ahead of his historical experience in time is like asking him to be a Christ. And there is considerable difference between holding up an ideal, and trying to practice it, and *specifying* it for others.

In an article in *Liberation* for July-August, Carl Oglesby considers the tensions which have to be faced by those unable to separate the struggle for peace from the struggle for social justice throughout the world:

> The black people and the Vietnamese are on the spot. Their fight is for survival, and I don't see how anyone who does not live out with them, in their historical mode, that encompassing emergency, can do much more than accept their wisdom in the matter. . . . I consider that my fundamental obligation is to support what they choose in pursuit of their own liberation. For a host of reasons, I might hope that they will choose non-violence. If they do, good. I can understand, admire and relate to that. If they do not, good again. That choice will not bewilder or demoralize me. My practical, central task, in any case, is to explain and defend them, to deprive white America of that insufferable moral self-assurance by means of which it licenses its genocides. . . . Everybody harps at Stokely and puts down Rap. The least white radicals can do is contribute a bit of silence to this noisiness which they have to endure. . . . What criticisms I may have are reserved for private conversations and will never take the form of demands. . . .

Moving to a more general view, Carl Oglesby continues:

> Which is not to say that we have no right to condemn. We do. Our profession, in fact, is that of the accuser. But we must always understand that history itself, our time and place is not the proper target of our accusations. . . . All one can do about history is try to understand and explain it and then enter into it in the pursuit of one's chosen objectives. In the current question, this means: understand and explain why what Dellinger calls the "counter-violence of the victim" occurs.
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> Someone will say this is a trap. I will agree. I think I have nowhere tried to glamorize violence. . . I do not hang posters of Che on my walls. It is sad that there must be Ches. Sadly then, I try to find a way in which I can lend myself to Che's purposes, choosing therefore among the world's inexhaustible supply of traps the one in which I find the finest people and the closest approach (a distant one) to the best. "Tell me this," says Melville, "who ain't a slave?"

The point of this quotation from Carl Oglesby is its illustration of the kind of responsibility and the sense of moral direction which the idea of non-violence has brought into the thinking about social change.