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### ANARCHY 4: "Where the shoe pinches"

In the care of the young and the old, the delinquent and the sick, there is a recognisable trend towards "de-institutionisation"—the breakdown of institutions. What are the wider implications of this trend? What does it mean when applied to the institutions of life in general?

QUESTION: *I know that you are not a member of the Labour Party, or even an orthodox Socialist. But when you call yourself an anarchist, are you not drawing on the anarchist tradition within the Labour movement rather than associating yourself with anything like a formal Anarchist position?*

*Do you not, therefore, feel some kind of allegiance to the Labour movement? It is not just that other people think it important. Surely it is important for you too. You can hardly draw upon an anarchist tradition in the Conservative Party.*

ANSWER: I agree about that. I am somebody who comes very much from a Labour background: from South Wales, from a family that has always voted Labour and has known what Tory rule can be like. And yet I often find myself out of sympathy with the Labour movement. My sympathies are with the people not from the formal anarchist movement—I think it is a fair comment that the leading anarchist in this country should be a knight, and that the formal anarchist movement in this country is totally useless and an absolute disaster for any kind of serious anarchist thinking—but I have a sort of sympathy with what are called the 'emotional anarchists'—people like students, intellectuals, unattached people.

## Moving with the times ... but not in step

THESE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS are taken from a long interview under the title "Direct Action?" published in the March-April *New Left Review*. The questions were asked by Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel, and answered by Alan Lovell, a regular *Peace News* writer and a member of the Committee of 100. Although some good points are made, the interview as a whole is not particularly interesting—a clearer exposition of the strength and weakness of the Committee is to be found in the article by another member in this year's Aldermaston issue of *FREEDOM*. What is interesting for us is the view of anarchism held by Lovell and his interlocutors.

Three conceptions of anarchism emerge from the interview—emotional anarchism, formal anarchism, and the anarchist tradition within the labour movement. (There also emerges an alleged "leading anarchist", but how many of Lovell's anarchist acquaintances in the Committee of 100 or in DAC or CND regard Sir Herbert Read in this light?). Lest we should have here the beginning of yet another anarchist myth, it is worth while examining these categories.

Is there really a difference between the "formal anarchist movement" and the "anarchist tradition within the Labour movement"? Presumably, like ourselves, Lovell's questioners regard the Labour movement as something wider than the Labour Party, but if we do, where but in the Labour movement are the anarchists to be located? Where else, historically, would we place Proudhon, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, Landauer, or the Russian, Spanish, French, Bulgarian or Latin-American anarchists? Was it not in commemoration of the



Chicago anarchists of 1887 that the modern celebration of May Day as a labour festival began? Were Sacco and Vanzetti, Berkman and Emma Goldman, Durand or Durrutti, outside the Labour movement?

In this country, the "father of anarchism" William Godwin, was the intellectual father of such precursors of socialism as Francis Place, Robert Owen, Thomas Hodgskin, and you have only to read the history of the First International or the life of William Morris to see the extent to which the anarchists were, in the late nineteenth century, an integral part of the Labour movement.

The anarchists haven't changed, but the Labour movement, strait-jacketed into *one* concept of socialism, the Marxist one abroad, the Fabian one here, has changed—to its cost. For us, the most interesting characteristic of the trend we call the New Left today, is the way in which some of its adherents have been groping towards an anarchist approach, taking their cue from some older socialist thinkers like Arthur Lewis, with his declaration that

"Contrary to popular belief, Socialism is not committed either by its history or by its philosophy to the glorification of the State or to the extension of its powers. On the contrary, the links of Socialism are with liberalism and with anarchism, with their emphasis on individual freedom . . ."

or like G. D. H. Cole with his rediscovery towards the end of his life of the relevance of such thinkers as Bakunin and Kropotkin, and his re-affirmation of his early guild socialist principles.

Another rediscoverer was Iris Murdoch, in her contribution to *Conviction*, discussing the way in which the Labour Party has reduced every issue to a political formula, with a consequent starvation of the "moral imagination of the young" and a degeneration of socialist philosophy. The guild socialists, she said,

"were deeply concerned with the destruction of community life, the degradation of work, the division of man from man which the economic relationships of capitalism had produced, and they looked to the transformation of existing communities, the trade unions, the factories themselves . . ."

It is now time, she declared, "to go back to the point of divergence . . ."

Similarly Charles Taylor, examining the quality of life in contemporary Britain in *ULR* 5, demands "viable smaller societies, on a face-to-face scale" and "the extension of the individual's power over the collective forces which shape his life", and E. P. Thompson (who has come a long way in the last five years), writes in *NLR* 6, that

"we can only find out how to break through our present political conventions, and help people to think of socialism as something done *by* people and not *for* people or *to* people, by pressing in new ways *on the ground*. One socialist youth club of a quite new kind, in East London, or Liverpool or Leeds; one determined municipal council, probing the possibility of new kinds of municipal ownership in the face of Government opposition; one tenants' association with a new dynamic, pioneering on its own account new patterns of social welfare—play-centres, nursery facilities, community services for and by the women—involving people in the discussion and solution of problems of town planning, racial intercourse, leisure facilities; one pit, factory, or sector of nationalised industry where new forms of workers' control can actually be forced on management . . ."

Here he is talking what is very like our own language. Yet among the writers of the New Left there are also strange inconsistencies and hangovers from orthodox socialism and Marxism. Some of its ablest thinkers have learned nothing from the history of socialism in our time. Raymond Williams, whose book *The Long Revolution* is discussed at length in this issue of *ANARCHY* puts the formula thus:

"What is the alternative to capitalism? Socialism. What is a socialist culture? State control."

Such a mountain of analysis: such a political mouse! The New Left *needs* the lessons which it can draw from the anarchist approach; the question is whether it is capable of learning them.

The editor of *NLR* 6, discussing the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, writes of "*the anarchist case, which I believe to be a felt but unarticulated strand in CND politics, and which is weak largely because it has not been put. In any event, that anarchism and libertarianism has been a most fertile element in the Campaign . . .*" But the anarchist case has been *put*, for anyone who cared to read it. The point is that it does not appear to have been *taken*, and if the anarchist strand is weak, it is precisely because of the lack of what Lovell calls "serious anarchist thinking".

Like him we have a sympathy with the people he calls emotional anarchists—"people like students, intellectuals, unattached people", the people who have, as he suggested elsewhere in his interview, "an emotional bias towards anarchism, but it is very much of an emotional bias and completely unthought-out". We wish they *would* start thinking it out. We want in fact that serious anarchist thinking which the emotional anarchists aren't doing, and which, in his odd way, he thinks would be disastrous in the "formal anarchists", the people who actually call themselves anarchists, and who know the word's meaning, its history and its literature.

## WHAT IS ANARCHISM ABOUT?

ANARCHISM (from the Greek *an-* and *archia*, contrary to authority), is the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government—harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilised being. . . .

—ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA.

THE IDEA OF SOCIETY WITHOUT AUTHORITY has found expression throughout human history, from Lao-Tse in ancient China and Zeno of Kitium in classical Greece, to its first systematic formulation in William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* in 1793, and its elaboration in different directions during the nineteenth century by Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin. Today small and scattered groups of anarchists exist throughout the world, from Siberia to South America.



Their numerical strength is impossible to ascertain, for the anarchists are not a party, membership cards and voting papers do not appeal to them. Since they are seeking not power but personal autonomy, they are not concerned with counting heads or ballot papers, but in awakening men and women to personal and social independence and responsibility.

Looking at history, the anarchists see two recurring tendencies: the tradition of authority, hierarchy, the state, and that of liberty, free association, society. This distinction between the state and society, between the political principle and the social principle is crucial to anarchist thought. In Tom Paine's graphic antithesis,

"Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections; the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher. Society in every state is a blessing; but government even in its best state is a necessary evil . . . Government, like dress, is the badge of our lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise."

The anarchists go further than this, seeing the principle of authority as an *unnecessary* evil, and to the objection that anarchy, however desirable, would only be possible if all men were angels, they reply with William Morris's phrase that no man is good enough to be another man's master. It is precisely *because* all men are fallible that none should surrender their own power over themselves to others.

Three main trends can be seen in classical anarchism: that of *anarchist communism*, associated with Bakunin and Kropotkin, which beside the usual criticism of the state, its punitive and property systems, postulates the *commune*, the local association for the organisation of social amenities, as the basis of a free society through territorial and regional federations; that of *anarcho-syndicalism* which reached its greatest practical application in revolutionary Spain in 1936, which sees the struggle for workers' control of the means of production as the key to the transformation of society; and that of *individualist anarchism* which puts its emphasis on the autonomy or self-realisation of the person. In this trend several schools of thought can be discerned, one of pure individualism, represented by thinkers like Thoreau and the German philosopher of 'conscious egoism' Max Stirner; another developing from the American Josiah Warren whose ideas, blended with the *mutualism* of Proudhon and the individualism of Herbert Spencer, formed the basis of the anarchism propagated in 19th century America by Benjamin Tucker, while there is also an ethical or religious anarchism represented by Tolstoy, and, to some extent, by Gandhi.

What unites these differing trends is their repudiation of the state and of the political struggle for the control of the state machine. Most would accept Marx's definition of the state as "the executive committee of the ruling class" but all would repudiate the Marxist metaphysic of the conquest of state power as the pre-condition of its "withering away". (And the history of the Soviet Union confirms Bakunin's

prophetic analysis of the future of Marxism in his disputes with Marx's faction in the First International in the eighteen-seventies). In other respects the teaching of the classical anarchists differ. Proudhon, for instance, first attacked the notion of private property in his famous dictum "property is theft", but later took the view that "property is freedom", though it is obvious that in the first instance he was talking of the private ownership of social assets, and in the second, of a man's possession of his house or small-holding. The important thing however, in the consensus of anarchist teachings, is not the notion of *ownership* but of *access* to the means of production. Similarly on the question of exchange: some anarchist thinkers have repudiated the idea of money, others have regarded money as the most convenient mechanism of exchange but have repudiated the notion of interest, others have evolved such ideas as that of 'labour tickets', while others have boldly proclaimed, like Kropotkin, that there is enough of everything for everybody, and have supported the principle of "to each according to his needs, from each according to his abilities."

Different stages in the social evolution of various countries during the last hundred years have reflected themselves in the changing emphasis in anarchist ideas. Free associations of independent producers, syndicalist movements among industrial workers, independent co-operative communities, campaigns of civil disobedience and war resistance, the formulation of social utopias, have all been responses to current social and political conditions, as were the desperate struggles of the anarchists in actual revolutionary situations in Russia and the Ukraine, Germany, Mexico and Spain.

## WHAT DOES ANARCHISM MEAN TODAY?

TODAY IT IS NOT POSSIBLE to speak with the confident revolutionary optimism of our predecessors. The experiences of our own century have given us a healthy suspicion of rhetoric and of universal panaceas. We have seen too many and we know too much.

What are we to say here in Britain in the second half of the twentieth century? We are a tiny minority of disaffected citizens in the centre of a disappearing empire whose economic structure is still geared to an obsolete rôle, an appendage to one of the two contending military and economic power blocs. What is the task of the anarchists in such a society? Can we draw up, not a programme, but simply a list of those fields where anarchist activity is useful and in which, according to personal predilection or opportunity, we can promote our ideas?

### War and Peace

One of the characteristics of governments is their maintenance of what Martin Buber calls the "latent external crisis", the fear of an external enemy, by which they maintain their ascendancy over their



own subjects. This has in our day become the major activity of governments and their biggest field of expenditure and effort, reaching the stage where they propose to decimate each others' populations at the touch of a button. War is the trade of governments, and obviously the anarchists support, in common with other factions of the left, all anti-war activities, but they can hardly be expected to see anything but illusions in calls for summit conferences or in the signing of petitions. The petitions go to the wrong address; they should be addressed not to governments but to people.

We have to build up a disobedient and unreliable public, widening and deepening the impulses which find expression in the three prongs of the nuclear disarmament movement. War is not the result of the H-bomb, the H-bomb is the logical outcome of the pursuit of war, which in turn is only possible because governments are able to harness their obedient subjects to it. But there are deeper causes; not merely the clash of ideologies, the division of the world into have and have-nots, but the dissatisfactions and frustrations which evidently make the idea of war acceptable for millions of people. Every day you meet people who look back to the last war not as a remembered horror but with a fond nostalgia. The general state of opinion on minor wars like the Suez invasion or the war in Cyprus which was switched off like a light when it suited the government, will tell you that war is tolerated because it is found tolerable. We have to uncover the dulled and muffled nerve of moral and social responsibility which will make it intolerable.

### The Person and the Family

The mass of mankind, Thoreau observed tartly, lead lives of quiet desperation. Is this why we tolerate war—as an exciting break in meaningless routine? And yet who but ourselves has decreed the situation in which work is drained of meaning and purpose except as a source of income or status, marriage and the family a trap, leisure a desperate attempt to stave off boredom? Look around you at the domestic resentments, the glum faces emerging from factory and office into the tedium of the rush-hour journey home, the frantic consumption at the behest of the hidden persuaders. How desperately we need to find different ways of life which will liberate instead of imprisoning the individual. And how we need the anarchists to experiment with new ways of living, a new assertion of individual values, more dignity and more satisfaction in daily life.

### Work and Industry

At one time, forty years ago, there was a strong syndicalist stream in the trade union movement, calling for workers' control of industry. It died away, as the industrial workers pinned their faith on the Labour Party's programme of nationalisation and concentrated on winning a bigger slice of the capitalist cake. One of the most formidable tasks before us is the re-kindling of the urge for responsibility and autonomy in industry: to put workers' control back on the agenda. (ANARCHY 2 was devoted to a symposium on this topic).

## Crime and Punishment

To anarchist thinkers from Godwin onwards, crime has been, not the manifestation of individual wickedness, but a symptom of material or mental poverty and deprivation. From Kropotkin with his study of *Organised Vengeance Called Justice* and his dictum that prisons are the universities of crime, to Alex Comfort's modern study of political delinquency, the anarchists have opposed the system of retributive justice which creates more criminals than it cures, and have sought the identification and avoidance of the *causes* of crime. A wealth of evidence has been accumulated, even officially which supports this view and there is here an immense field for anarchist effort in changing the social climate and public attitudes.

### Education

There have been in this century great changes in educational theory and practice, which represent a partial and incomplete, if unacknowledged victory for ideas which are libertarian in origin. We are however, now in a period when the more sophisticated educational theorists are almost joining hands with those who never got that far, in reacting against the alleged influences of the advocates of freedom in education. Social pressures and parental 'status-anxiety', are already impinging on those partial advances, (see ANARCHY 1). The anarchist movement, which has included some very astute educational thinkers, needs urgently to re-define and re-assert ideas, and to counter the counter-revolution in educational thought, pointing out that the trouble with 'child-centred' education is not that it has gone too far, but that it has not gone far enough, and in fact, in many schools, has not even begun.

### Decentralisation and Autonomy

The modern state is infinitely more centralised and ubiquitous than that of the time of the classical anarchists. It has also adopted or usurped many of the functions which are those of *society*, and which Kropotkin, for instance, in his *Mutual Aid*, listed as evidence of the innate sociality of man which makes the imposition from above of state organisation unnecessary. In social organisation and in industry, and consequently in the distribution of population, centralisation has been the great characteristic of modern life, and one which militates against the possibility of anything like an anarchist society. The tendency itself is, however, one which changes in means of communication and in sources of motive power have already rendered obsolete, and there is a great deal of sociological data to demonstrate its undesirability in human terms. The anarchists and those who think like them on this issue, have to change the centralising habit of mind for one which seeks decentralisation and devolution, pressing for more and more local autonomy in all aspects of life.

### The World Outside

Nothing stands still. The great monolith of the Soviet empire is by no means as monolithic as it was. A generation has grown up



which is bored and dissatisfied with the chanting of Marxist slogans and which is equally unimpressed by the "free enterprise" of the West. The workers' councils which sprang up in Poland and Hungary in the revolutionary period of 1956, Tito's fears that his officially-sponsored version of syndicalism from above might get out of hand and turn into the real thing, the "silent pressures from below" in the Soviet Union itself, indicate how tendencies which have more in common with anarchism than with orthodox socialism are ready to spring into life where we least expect them. The trends in India represented by the *Gramdan* movement as the successor to Vinoba Bhave's *Bhoodan*, and by Jayaprakash Narayan's advocacy of "village democracy", the moral example of Danilo Dolci's activities in Sicily, all such movements suggest a possible rôle for the anarchist, outside and independent of the struggle for power which canalises the activities of so many socially conscious people into sterile political posturing.

### A Different kind of Socialism

In the New Left, and among the people who have been roused into activity by the nuclear disarmament campaign, there is interest and concern for all these fields of activity. But as long as they ruefully give their support to the Labour Party as a lesser evil, or devote their energy to trying to influence its policies, they are simply evading the need to work out the implications and explore the possibilities of a different *kind* of socialism: the means of effecting social change without recourse to the conquest of the coercive machinery of the state.

## From a South African notebook

### MAURICE GOLDMAN

ON MY FIRST DAY BACK IN PRETORIA I drove up to the hills of Waterkloof which is now the fashionable residential area. It was nearly six o'clock and in the beautiful rolling valleys below, the city streets and suburbs were almost hidden by the winter dusk. Then the street lights came on and each little light seemed to glide in the valley like ships on a sea of darkness. Higher on the hill where it was still light, it began to grow dark very quickly. A White girl out for a walk with her dog began to run to her home several hundred yards away. Two minutes later an African girl also sprinted for the shelter of a house.

Things were like that three or four years ago when I was last

here, but how much worse today. The tension grips you even in Cape Town.

A century ago J. S. Mill wrote about the tyranny of social convention. And Whites in S.A. have learned to fear the whiplash of the majority will of Whites. The Nationalists, now at the receiving end of a Black economic boycott, have for many years exercised a boycott against the Indians. South Africans, the White ones, probably more so than many other peoples are born into a definite environment, a certain set of values. They have, for one thing, very definite ideas about the Blacks. Probably a lower proportion of them are mentally self-propelled on this subject than say, members of a Tory family are about trade unions and the Labour Party. The social pressure put on the Calvinist Afrikaner to conform to certain ideas on race is fiercer than the anti-homosexual pressure in Britain. Race in South Africa is translated into: "How would you like a Black man to marry your daughter?" Abuse that runs parallel to "queer" in Britain is *kaffer-boetjie* (brother of the Kaffir) in the Union.

There is also a set standard of behaviour towards the Indian. He is the coolie and must be treated with contempt and condescension. He's a sly fellow and a bit too clever by half at business. If he comes to live next door to you your property values go down with a bump. And how would you like your daughter to marry an Indian? A cinema manager told me that when Rita Hayworth married Aly Khan, as far as the South African public were concerned she had married a coolie and her box office sank right through the floor.

There was a time when you saw the White farmer chatting away amicably to Ishmail in some little country store. The Indian shopkeeper would turn a blind eye or a long-suffering grin on Meneer van de Westhuizen as his apples and bananas were sampled. Meneer would enquire about Ishmail's family at home and at the same time, with steady contemplative hand and eye, sample a strip of biltong on the country. Meneer had something of the attitude of a Brooklyn cop on beat taking an apple from the Italian immigrant's fruit shop every time he passed. Nowadays social pressures have intensified. It wouldn't be for Meneer to be seen talking to Ishmail. His attitude must be "send 'em all back to India."

Behaviour patterns have changed radically over the last few years. The behaviour pattern of the overlords has changed from the paternal contempt of a superior to an inferior, to aggressive fear. In its main aspect, I believe, apartheid is an attempt to push back the black oceans steadily encroaching on the white islands. These islands are the cities. But even in the cities it's only the inner fastnesses that belong to the

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MAURICE GOLDMAN, born in Natal, 1918, is a pharmacist turned writer (his South African novels have been translated into four languages). He studied economics and politics at Witwatersrand University and philosophy at Cape Town.



Whites . . . and then only by day. Walk up Adderley Street, Eloff Street or Church Street at the height of the rush hours and business hours and you might say to yourself, "Ha, here is a European land." But early morning and at night the streets belong to the non-whites. Even more so does this apply to the suburban streets. Only a fraction of the white population understand an African language. It's quite fantastic how two peoples, living a master-servant relationship side by side, can have so little human contact. To walk outside the gate of one's front garden is to find oneself in a world of strangers.

Now and then White strangers exchange nods like a fraternity of priests in a godless city. And now and then the Black buses pass, full to the brim. White buses pass, oh so often, with but a sprinkling of passengers. On the country roads the White man in his car is supreme. He may whizz along the excellent national roads at eighty miles an hour. But if he runs out of petrol or his engine fails he may find himself among a hostile people.

\* \* \* \*

When Bernard Shaw visited the shores of the Cape many years ago reporters went aboard the ship and plied him with questions. Of course the burning question has always been the 'native problem'. Shaw seemed such a know-all. "Answer this one," they challenged. "What should we do to solve the native problem?" "Marry them," Shaw replied. Throughout the country there was outraged indignation and contempt. If Shaw irritated the English, he infuriated the South Africans.

The warmth of touch of hand and eye is taboo in South Africa, and therefore the warmth of humility and humanity is absent in the everyday contact of masses of human beings. It is almost inborn in the White man to humiliate his fellow Black human being . . . so that often he doesn't notice it any longer.

When he sends to the butcher for meat, there is separate meat for the Africans called "boy's meat". It's not as good as ordinary meat and a bit better than dog's meat. Also there are two classes of dogs in S.A., Kaffir dogs and White man's dogs. The Kaffir dogs are curs, the others are noble—especially if they bite at the sight of a black skin. It's commonplace for dog-owners in South Africa to say, "No Kaffir can come near this place, Rex goes mad when they come along. They're scared stiff of him." Apartheid among dogs has existed ever since the days of *Jock of the Bushveld*.

There is something of a common mentality between the bomber pilot who indiscriminately scatters his bombs over enemy cities, and the South African who indiscriminately practises his apartheid and its pinpricks against all black skins. The bomber pilot can scatter his bombs because those below are absolutely impersonal to him, mothers, sweethearts, babies, pretty girls, their men. They are the enemy. They

are not human beings. I once saw a film about a pilot who was given an assignment to kill a spy in occupied France. He had to get to know the man and kill him in the privacy of his flat. Now the pilot who had been responsible for countless deaths, but whose imagination stopped with the bomb button that he pressed, found out that his victim was a very human man. He loved cats, children, life, and even to the pilot who had come to kill him, he showed great kindness and hospitality. The task of killing him became suddenly impossible . . . grotesque . . . horrible. But he kills . . . and afterwards he has not even the dubious refuge of knowing the victim is a spy. He turns out to be innocent.

It will turn out that the South African, "killing" humanity with apartheid, will no longer be able to salve his conscience with the condemnation that the Black man is a savage . . . but that he is innocent. If he does become inhuman towards the Whites, it will only be because he has never been allowed to find the soul of the White. White and Black will only become human towards each other when they are not kept a bomb's toss away from each other.

It is an interesting fact that if you speak to Mr. Average White South African about the inhumanities of apartheid, he will immediately tell you how good he is to his domestic servants—indeed how he likes them and how much they like the children. This is told in a believe-it-or-not tone. Then you will hear how Jim wouldn't work anywhere else but in the home of Mr. Average South African. "He's part of the family—almost". Probably Jim is the only African whom Mr. A.S.F. has remotely got to know. Not that he ever rubs shoulders with him or goes out to the "boy's room" except to see if Jim is keeping it clean.

That's where the personal part of apartheid comes in. The leaders of this new religion know very well the impersonalising effect of remoteness. They will do everything in their power to prevent the rubbing of black shoulders with white. For years and years Black, White and Coloured travelled on buses in Cape Town side by side. Then the Government stepped in to protect the susceptibilities of the Whites. Many, many Whites weren't happy about the "big brother Nationalist's" good intentions. They got together a great petition saying they didn't want segregation on the buses . . . but the big brother knew best.

\* \* \* \*

The impression I gained is that the White heart, like Pharoah's heart, is hardening, not softening. To be soft is to be weak, to be hard is to be strong. And the Whites know that they can only maintain their privileged position by being strong and hard. They are, in another sense, like small boys who have been holding bees in a jam jar and tormenting them. They dare not lift the lid of the jar for fear of the consequences. The bees will have to lift the lid by their own strength.



The Coloured people are for their part humming round angrily in the jam jar (with no jam) trying to attract the attention of other bees in the outside world to help them . . . and also other small boys who might be of better heart than the tyrants who are holding them down with such gingerish fingers. The bees in the free world live mostly in the new free states of Africa, the boys of goodwill live mostly in opposition parties, the free press and the United Nations.

How are bees going to get out of the jam jar? Are the boys with fear in their hearts for bee stings, going to have a change of heart? Secondly, are the bees, who are getting angrier and angrier, going to be content to stay in the jar? Thirdly are the bees of the outside world going to help them? Fourthly are the boys of goodwill going to help them? Fifthly are the little bees going to adopt the line that has been followed in Algeria, Cyprus, Ireland and Palestine, in believing that God helps those who help themselves, and use the sting in their tails? Or sixthly, are the bees going to agree with the boy's offer of a preserving jar instead of a jam jar?

There can be little doubt that the bees *want* to get out of the jar. Hold any creature in confinement and it'll struggle to be free. Life is strong. Even the tender plant has been known to break through concrete. Africans *will* be free. How will it come about?

## Africa and the future

**JEREMY WESTALL**

AFRICA TODAY CAN BE DIVIDED into two differing spheres: Africa that is struggling for independence and Africa that is struggling *with* independence.

There was a time when I was very involved in the Africans' struggle, but as the obvious facts about the newly independent nations were faced, one had to recognise certain unmistakable trends if honesty was to be preserved. From a genuine excitement over the independence of Ghana, my feelings developed a less vigorous tone, and slowly the truth began to dawn. Although it is quite evident that Africans—given the technical knowledge—are far better at running their countries than were their white rulers, it is also plain that the changes in Ghana only took place at a very superficial level. With a growing number of people on the Left I am finding that in all the African countries with new-won independence, the basis of their society and the pattern of authoritarian rule continues, with Africans instead of white men in positions of power. Where I had naïvely supposed that the African "revolution" was heralding a new dynamic society, in fact a bourgeois élite of African middle-class nationalists has taken over the reins and no fundamental

change has taken place. As far as the anarchist vision of a free society is concerned, the new ruling classes in Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea and the Congo are as much the enemies of freedom as are all other ruling classes.

In so far as the struggle for independence in Kenya, Rhodesia and Nyasaland gains my enthusiasm, it is because I recognise that the assertion of African independence must come before the possibility of a free society can even be considered. Yet the opportunity of turning the struggle for independence into a revolutionary struggle is being ignored by African politicians like Mboya in Kenya and Kaunda in Rhodesia because they only desire a political change of black for white rule. Dr. Banda in Nyasaland, in fact, only speaks English and is admired by his obsequious supporters for his "European" ways. Jomo Kenyatta was the only African leader with courage enough to inspire his supporters to revolutionary action but it seems that he is now attracted to political action, which is at least understandable after over seven years' incarceration.

Yet whatever one says or thinks of the African nationalist politicians, it is good to see a people throwing off the yoke of colonialism. To me the thought of one nation forcing its customs and culture on to another is so despicable that I rejoice in the fact that the Africans want to make their own way. This is what gains my qualified support for the various struggles for independence. What I do emphasise however is that the struggle is *only* for independence and is, sadly, nothing to do with freedom.

In South Africa the position is somewhat different: here I really feel involved in the anti-apartheid campaign and I believe that this is a radical movement of importance to libertarians. This is mainly because parliamentary action is out of the question for any real opposition to Afrikaner fascism. Direct action, passive resistance and civil disobedience are all leading South Africa in a revolutionary direction. And the Africans there, faced by the manifestly pernicious nationalism of the Afrikaners, and noticing the appearance within their own ranks of its African equivalent, are recognising the evils that nationalism must bring.

Racial integration is a desperate issue in South Africa and racial conflict is now more or less certain. Although I am not a pacifist I argue for a completely non-violent anti-apartheid movement because in any violent conflict the Africans would inevitably suffer very heavy losses. In fact there have been obvious examples of the South African government seeking to instigate violent action among the Africans. Racial integration is a world-wide problem, difficult to solve in any competitive society. I am quite convinced that racial harmony cannot result from legislation or from moral pronouncements; it can only come

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from a deep respect for the culture and people of another ethnic group. Libertarians, people who don't care about "getting on" have here a vital part to play, for it is only possible to be truly comradely with people who are not viewed as competitors or as potential competitors, but as friends who are likely to be interesting and who will widen one's outlook. We should be encouraging cosmopolitanism for the sake of the increased variety and added depth that it always brings to life.

For myself I always find it easier to sympathise with the coloured person who sees little to respect in our white civilisation than with the European who finds nothing of value in the heritage of non-European peoples. African culture is fascinating: the new writers who are emerging and have emerged since the war, the new music that is being played throughout the continent as well as traditional music, the sculpture, the vastly intriguing African history that is being unearthed. The writers of the French-speaking part of Africa, represented by the *négritude* school with its outlet *Présence Africaine* impress me a great deal, yet two men Ezekiel Mphahlele and Jumo Kenyatta, from South Africa and Kenya respectively are of even greater interest, Mphahlele as the author of that most anarchic book *Down Second Avenue* and Kenyatta as Africa's first and foremost African anthropologist. Nigerian sculpture and the wood carvings that one finds all over Africa have always attracted me, as well as the basket weaving at which many tribes excel.

But the real art at the heart of Africa—the dance—is the finest and most warming attribute to come from Africa. It is thought-provoking to note the popularity of jiving in all Westernised countries, and of course, the overwhelming influence of jazz on the musical scene everywhere. The force of the Negro on European writers is very marked—the influence on Norman Mailer in America or Colin MacInnes here, are but two examples. In fact the whole movement of dissent both here and in America is impregnated with a desire to understand and get along with coloured people—not because of a sense of duty to the Great Democratic Institutions, but purely because young dissenters want to.

In this connection the differences between the characteristic European outlook and the African conception of life are of great importance, for they point to certain attitudes of mind which are taken for granted in the Western world and which we must consider critically if we are to appreciate the African outlook. In his book *The African Mind in Health and Disease*, J. C. Carothers writes:

"It was previously argued that the peculiar features of European mentality derived from a total personal integration which the African does not achieve. Yet, in another sense, the latter uses his *whole* brain *more* effectively than does the former; he uses phantasy *and* reason. European integration is essentially a conscious one and depends on a cleavage between conscious and unconscious elements of mind which is far less sharp in Africans. Advantage does not lie wholly with the former. The European technique depends upon the denial, in adult

conscious life, of desires and phantasies which are thus relegated to a world of darkness and of dreams, but which emerge only too often, to determine patterns of thinking and behaviour which are incomprehensible or even incapacitating from the subjects' point of view. There is internal conflict, and a sacrifice of personal to social peace and happiness. There may be other sacrifices.

"Fromm says: 'Dreams can be the expression both of the lowest and most irrational *and* of the highest and most valuable functions of our minds.' The African is not asleep, but he does seem to live in that strange no-man's-land 'twixt sleep and waking where fact and fancy meet on equal terms. If the hypnotic state is one in which awareness is heightened though restricted, then monoideic consciousness is a pre-hypnotic state; and it may be that certain mental powers of a social type—intuition, hypnosis and telepathy—are seldom fully realised except by those who spend their lives in that ill-surveyed land."

One begins to feel that Western man has done the most arrogant of acts in the process of acculturation in Africa: the teachers should have been taught by their "pupils". The concept of a White Negro may seem odd to some, but I feel that we have much more to learn than to teach. It all rather depends on your set of values.

The probable future of Africa is depressing. The probability is that Africa and Asia will ignore the best in their cultures and tend towards the worst. They will perhaps turn into imperialist powers seeking to dominate the world (always supposing there is one left to dominate). What *could* always happen is that proletarian revolutions will take place in the newly independent African countries when their peoples recognise their leaders for what they are. However it does seem likely that those very things that are so vital to Africa, the things that attract us in the West because of the lack of them in our own society—the throbbing vitality and the deep mystery of experience—will be snuffed out as the African continent becomes dictatorial, totalitarian, and then imperialistic, as it becomes industrialised and westernised.

Yet what would an anarchist hope might happen? What would he encourage an African who holds anarchist views to try to do in his country? For myself, I would encourage the preservation of the cultural heritage manifest in the tribe, yet the tribal system itself needs to be infused with a libertarian spirit. In some tribes before the European invasion, there were no chiefs. The Ibo in Nigeria, the Kikuyu of Kenya and the Tonga of Northern Rhodesia are three examples where we have already the basis for a fundamentally decentralist society. I should also emphasise the worthiness of African village life, and the evils of industrialisation, even though the rejection of all things Western would be a great mistake. I should encourage a *critical* absorption of those things considered worthwhile and important *by Africans*. Technical assistance, though valuable should not be allowed to infringe on the freedom of choice of the people concerned. Africa *could* have a truly magnificent future from a libertarian point of view. Yet whether it *will* be a magnificent future is another matter.



# Culture and Community

NICOLAS WALTER

## Three Traditions

RAYMOND WILLIAMS BELONGS TO THREE TRADITIONS—puritanism, cultural investigation, and socialism. It shouldn't be misleading to call him a Puritan since the trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* last autumn, when Richard Hoggart and E. M. Forster both rightly insisted on calling Lawrence one. It is a bad mistake to suppose that Puritanism must necessarily take a religious form—social and political dissent spring from the same source as specifically religious dissent, but have grown away from it. Liberalism looks back to Paine and Milton; socialism to Owen and Lilburne; anarchism to Godwin and Winstanley. All three attitudes belong to the honourable tradition of British Puritanism; as Hoggart put it, "the distinguishing feature of that is an intense responsibility for one's conscience," and Williams, like Lawrence (and Forster and Hoggart too), comes at the end of the line reaching from the Puritans of the Great Rebellion down to our own day. He is a modern Puritan, with what Forster called "this passionate opinion of the world and what it ought to be, but is not".

He also belongs to another honourable tradition, that of cultural investigation: he is what might be called a modern "ethologist". In this tradition the great names—many of them Puritans as well—are Cobbett and Coleridge, Carlyle and Arnold, Ruskin and Morris, Wilde and Shaw, Tawney and Orwell, Richards and Leavis, Eliot and Read, and Lawrence and Hoggart again. It is probably in this rôle that Williams is best known. His previous books included an essay on *Reading and Criticism* (1950), an account of *Drama from Ibsen to Eliot* (1952), and then a brilliant examination of contemporary attitudes to *Culture and Society* since the Industrial Revolution (1958). This detailed and most interesting book, after dealing with the work of his predecessors from Burke and Cobbett to Orwell and Cauldwell, ends with a conclusion giving Williams' own ethological theories. His contribution to *Conviction* (1958) was a summary of his position, and *The Long Revolution*\* is essentially a very much expanded restatement of it.

Neither *Culture and Society* nor *The Long Revolution* can be considered without the other, so the Pelican edition of the earlier book is doubly welcome and should certainly be read first. Richard Crossman evidently and significantly failed to do so before writing his *Guardian* review of *The Long Revolution*, which hailed as "a new break-through on the Left" a book following closely and explicitly what the author

\**The Long Revolution*, by Raymond Williams (Chatto & Windus, 30s.).

has been saying for years, and managed not to mention *Culture and Society* at all. One wonders just how much old socialist leaders are interested in new socialist ideas which won't win any votes in the next election but might make socialism a living force again.

It is here that we see Williams in yet another honourable British tradition: he is a modern socialist. He was a working-class scholarship-boy from rural Wales—the background of his moving autobiographical novel *Border Country* (1960)—who won high academic honours at Cambridge, moved into and out of the Communist Party, and has been engaged since the last War in adult education and "committed" literary criticism, chiefly of modern drama. Hoggart's background is oddly similar, except that he comes from Leeds and began as a critic of modern verse (nor was he ever a Communist, as far as I know). The conversation between the two men printed in the first *New Left Review* shows how close they are; and Hoggart's book *The Uses of Literacy* (1957) is the ideal Pelican companion to *Culture and Society*.

Williams' strong but undogmatic brand of socialism is typical of the New Left, and he is in fact one of its elder statesmen, sitting on the editorial board of *New Left Review* and contributing frequent articles (including several chapters from his books) to it and to its predecessor, *Universities & Left Review*. He provides a valuable counterweight to the dialectical rhetoric of Edward Thompson and the youthful enthusiasm of Stuart Hall, and helps to give the New Left a certain air of academic respectability.

It is possible to examine what some writers say without bothering much about what they believe. This is quite impossible with Raymond Williams. He is the sort of writer whose whole work is deeply informed by his principles: the sort of ethologist whose view of culture is ultimately based on a moral attitude to people, on "an intense responsibility for one's conscience" and a "passionate opinion of the world and what it ought to be, but is not"—on puritanical socialism.

## Three Questions

Raymond Williams is trying to find the answers to three questions: What is culture and how is it related to the community? What is wrong with our culture? How can it be preserved—and, more important, extended—for the common good?

His technique is always to use a great deal of material gathered by patient research to support his arguments. In *Culture and Society* he examined what other people had said about the problem during the 150 years before him; in *The Long Revolution* he examines English cultural life during a period about three times as long. About 80% of the earlier book was devoted to quotations from and comments on several dozen writers, and about 80% of the new one is devoted to a study of the ideas of creativity, culture, society and class in Parts One and Three, and to seven historical essays in Part Two. These essays



in particular are meant to make the point of the title, which comes from a passage at the end of *Culture and Society*:

The forces which have changed and are changing our world . . . are industry and democracy. Understanding of this change, this long revolution, lies at a level of meaning which it is not easy to reach.

At the beginning of *The Long Revolution* he points out that as well as the industrial and democratic revolutions there is a third force changing the world—the cultural revolution; and each of the seven essays attempts to reach a level of meaning that can help us understand at least some of its aspects. As he says, “we have no adequate history of our expanding culture,” and he has therefore set himself a twofold task:

Partly to get the record as straight as I can; partly to bring the questions of value involved in the history to the point where commitments can be open.

So this book is meant to provide some of the groundwork to a so far unwritten history, within the terms of Williams' own open commitment:

I see this cultural history as more than a department, a special area of change. In this creative area the changes and conflicts of the whole way of life are necessarily involved. This at least is my starting-point: where learning and communication are actual, and where through them we see the shapes of a society. What we see in this way we can then try to put to use in a much wider area. We can try to say how, where we live, we see growth and change, perhaps in new ways that are decisively altering our received social thinking.

It is “received social thinking” above all that Williams is attacking—what Matthew Arnold called “stock notions” and Professor Galbraith calls “conventional wisdom”. His chief concern is to refute several fashionable but dangerous “formulas” used to describe our culture. He tries to reconcile popular pairs of opposites—such as “creation” and “perception”, “individual” and “society”, “culture” and “diversion”, “work” and “leisure”, “producer” and “consumer”—and to obtain a useful synthesis in their place. Thus he quotes Coleridge and J. Z. Young (but not Berkeley) to show that perception is itself an act of creation, and argues that the basic factor in culture is the mutual act of communication. Then he quotes Rousseau and Fromm (but not Aristotle) to show that we are essentially social animals, and argues that this communication between individual people is the expression of our “social character”. From this it is a short step to an expression of political faith:

If man is essentially a learning, creating and communicating being, the only social organisation adequate to his nature is a participating democracy, in which all of us, as unique individuals, learn, communicate and control.

It is in the light of this attitude that we should consider his historical essays.

These show how far we are from a participating democracy in

cultural as well as political and economic life. Williams points out, to begin with, that our system of educational *apartheid*, which is now dignified by the formula of “equality of opportunity” (as racial *apartheid* in Rhodesia is by that of “partnership”), is derived from the deliberately class-aligned school system established during the last century to preserve the *status quo*. We have not moved far from the situation described by Crabbe many years ago:

*To every class we have a school assigned,  
Rules for all ranks, and food for every mind.*

He also points to the grave defects of the conventional syllabuses in which our children are still examined—no social studies except paternalist “civics”, no non-literary arts except a little drawing and music, living languages carefully disguised as dead ones (and, he might have added, little genuinely experimental science)—and to the complete failure to solve the problems of “teenagers” and of further education. He is rightly disturbed by this situation:

It is a question of whether we can grasp the real nature of our society, or whether we persist in social and educational patterns based on a limited ruling class, a middle professional class, a large operative class, cemented by forces that cannot be challenged and will not be changed. The privileges and barriers, of an inherited kind, will in any case go down. It is only a question of whether we replace them by the free play of the market, or by a public education designed to express and create the values of an educated democracy and a common culture.

I wish that he had taken into account at this point Michael Young's idea of the Meritocracy, but I suppose there isn't room for everything.

He similarly points out that the response to the coming of universal literacy during the last century or so has been a largely class-conscious one—above all, “the fear that as the circle of readers extends, standards will decline”, which leads straight to the formula of the “deluge”. He lists the deluges that have successively overwhelmed traditional reading habits and have all been greeted with cries of alarm—printing around 1500, popular drama around 1600, popular novels and magazines around 1700, radical newspapers around 1800, “mass” newspapers around 1900 (now we have television). In fact the cultural standards of most people have risen pretty steadily for about 500 years and look like continuing to do so, if the process is not halted by some external agency.

Then he describes the growth of the popular press over the last three centuries, showing in passing how the authorities tried to suppress the radical periodicals for the first two and the advertisers finished off most of the survivors in the last one. He also makes it clear that newspaper publishers have nearly always been speculators rather than leaders of opinion, and that the popular idea of the “Northcliffe Revolution” is yet another false formula:

The true “Northcliffe Revolution” is less an innovation in actual journalism than a radical change in the economic basis of newspapers, tied to the new kind of advertising.



Once more, he is disturbed by the present situation:

Is it all to come to this, in the end, that the lost history of the press in Britain should reach its consummation in a declining number of newspapers, in ownership by a few very large groups, and in the acceptance . . . of the worst kinds of journalism?

Then comes an interesting account of the growth of "Standard English", in which he traces the decline of dialect into accent and disposes of yet another formula—the belief that the language spoken by any class at any time is more "correct" than that spoken by any other class or at any other time. He shows how arrogance and deference have elevated various forms of vocabulary and pronunciation into a temporarily superior position, how fear of vulgarity and affectation has tended to preserve each form, and how social and cultural change has nevertheless pushed each form into the background—as post-war usage is doing to pre-war "Received Standard" speech now. "Thousands of people have been capable of the vulgar insolence of telling other Englishmen that they do not know how to speak their own language," and they still do so; but they do not speak like their parents, nor will their children speak like them. Unfortunately, whatever the prevailing standard may be, we can always be sure that it will continue to be "impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman despise him". I am sorry Williams doesn't quote this fine Shavianism, and also that he doesn't deal with the strange practice of swearing; in fact this chapter provokes more questions than it even tries to answer.

The next chapter is a summary of what looks like a Ph.D. thesis—an investigation of the social backgrounds of about 350 writers born between 1470 and 1929. This confirms what one might expect to find, such as the continuing importance of Oxbridge, the rising proportion of alien writers (coming either from outside England or from alienated groups within the country), and the increasing economic insecurity of professional writers as writing becomes increasingly professional. It is significant that the established social pattern always breaks at the same time as the established literary pattern—so that the Romantic Movement and the Industrial Revolution coincide not only with each other but also with a remarkable diversity in the origins of the writers involved. The chief lesson Williams draws is that writers' social backgrounds are always closely linked with social movements in general and with literary traditions in particular. I wish that this chapter had been much more detailed—and also that the statistical information given in pp. 231-239 had been represented on a simple table. This sort of quasi-Marxist analysis can be extremely valuable when it is done intelligently, and I hope Williams publishes fuller results of his investigation in the near future.

The last two historical essays are called "the Social History of Dramatic Forms" and "Realism and the Contemporary Novel". Both are interesting, but both tend to become rather abstract essays in literary

criticism and to obscure the implications of what they say—which is, more or less, that recent plays and novels have usually been confined by aesthetic formulas that make them socially dangerous or futile; so that drama and fiction should somehow be re-opened to contemporary life and thought. This is of course a moderate plea for social realism, not according to any ideological formula but in response to the urgent needs of society. In fact examples are more eloquent in this sort of situation than exhortations can every be, and the sort of work described in ANARCHY 1 ("The 'New Wave' in Britain") is more effective than anything said in these two chapters; Williams has indeed made a more effective plea himself by writing *Border Country*. I always feel suspicious of appeals for this or that kind of art or literature, but Williams does manage to put the case for social realism fairly well, and as usual anything he says about cultural problems is worth listening to; most of us will probably agree with him over this particular point, though I think he is unfair to work that is not "committed" in the way he likes.

### Three Answers

Raymond Williams finds the first question relatively easy to answer. Culture, he said in his *Conviction* essay, is not just "the arts and learning" (the usual idea), and is certainly not "the outward and emphatically visible sign of a special kind of people" (the idea of culture as a sign of grace or a status-symbol), but "a whole way of life". He admitted that "there is an English bourgeois culture, with its powerful educational, literary and social institutions in close contact with the centres of power" (the idea of culture as class ideology), but denied that this is in any real sense English culture as such. He has followed Eliot—who said: "Culture . . . includes all the characteristic activities and interests of a people"—in turning from the traditional ethologists to modern anthropologists and sociologists for a wider and more satisfactory definition of culture. (He has, however, rejected the modern psychologist's idea of culture as ritualised release from unconscious tension, and ignores the modern zoologists' idea of culture as highly organised play altogether).

In *The Long Revolution* he moves from "a whole way of life" to the vague phrase "structure of feeling". What he seems to be getting at is that culture is the collective activity of a community: culture is what society does, rather as the mind is what the brain does. It is culture that makes a human community more than either an aggregation of individual units or an instinctive association of big-headed two-legged ants. England is more than the sum of its inhabitants; and the difference is English culture, the *structure of feeling* of the English community.

Thus culture is the "pursuit of perfection" (Arnold's phrase) only to the extent that one of the functions of society is the pursuit of perfection—or the Good, or what you will. And similarly culture is the preserve of "a special kind of people" (the élite, or intelligentsia) only



to the extent that the uncultured majority has been unable or the cultured minority unwilling to share it. For a long time, of course, the majority of mankind *has* been unable to share culture in any meaningful way; hunger, oppression and ignorance make up an infallible prescription for resentful apathy. What was wrong with English culture 500 years ago was that most people were scarcely members of English society at all, except as glorified slaves; what has been wrong with English culture since then is that the people who have gradually won a certain measure of life, liberty and happiness have been excluded from both culture and society by their former masters; and what is wrong with English culture today is that though we have nearly all the ingredients of a free and open society of equals we are still not prepared to get down to mixing them.

So the answer to the second question is that England could and should be one nation, and is still two nations—or is it three? A century ago Arnold said that English culture was divided into three parts—Barbarians, Philistines and the Populace. These classes have merged into each other, perhaps, but they have divided again. Hoggart has commented on “the strength of our sense of class”:

We don't need to feel it consciously, but simply to accept the notion of grades seeping all through society. We seem to have three-tiered minds: upper, middle and lower class; high, middle and lowbrow; Third, Home and Light.

As Tawney was complaining thirty years ago:

Here are these people . . . who, more than any other nation, need a common culture, for, more than any other, they depend on an economic system which at every turn involves mutual understanding and continuous co-operation, and who, more than any other, possess, as a result of their history [and their geography, he might have added], the materials by which such a common culture might be inspired. Yet, so far from desiring it, there is nothing, it seems, which they desire less.

So the first two questions have been answered. It is the third question—What must be done?—which is the most important one to ask and the most difficult one to answer.

There are two kinds of answer that are usually given—the nostalgic and the optimistic. The nostalgic answer is that there was once a common culture and our task is to revive it; the optimistic answer is that there is already a common culture in embryo and our task is to bring it to birth.

Nostalgic ethologists—including people like Cobbett, Ruskin, Morris and Lawrence—have in the past tended to relapse into rustic medievalism, but the modern version of cultural nostalgia can be seen in what Leavis and Denys Thompson said in *Culture and Environment* nearly thirty years ago:

Literary education . . . is to a great extent a substitute. What we have lost is the organic community with the living culture it embodied . . . Instead of the community, urban or rural, we have, almost universally, suburbanism.

They do not, it is true, share the reactionary passion of many of their

predecessors, but even so their qualifications are not wholly convincing:

We must . . . realise that there can be no mere going back, but the memory of the old order must be the chief incitement towards a new, if ever we are to have one.

A closely similar attitude can be seen in the guild socialist, Penty, just after the end of the first World War:

Whereas a false culture like the academic one of today tends to separate people . . . a true culture like the great cultures of the past unite them. The moral is obvious: “The recovery of such a culture is one of our most urgent needs.”

I am sure it is simply an evasion of our cultural difficulties to hope for a solution through a return to a golden age somewhere in the past—even more so when it seems on investigation to be a largely imaginary golden age. Leavis and Thompson put it in the last century; Cobbett put in the one before that; Goldsmith even further back; and most of the nostalgics, like Ruskin and Morris, have gone right back to the Middle Ages. It would help rational discussion of this idea if we knew when this “Merrie England” existed and what it was like. I don't believe it ever existed at all. I think that the *Urkultur* is sheer fantasy. People are always remembering the “good old days” with affectionate regret, even when there is ample evidence that they were really very bad old days indeed (consider the current vogue for the Edwardian Era). Remember Lucky Jim, who began by writing a lecture about “the instinctive culture of the integrated village-type community” and ended by saying: “The point about Merrie England is that it was about the most un-Merrie period in our history.”

So we turn to the optimistic ethologists. These are of two kinds—“right” and “left”. The former include Coleridge, Carlyle, Maurice, Mill and most socially conscious Victorians—above all, Matthew Arnold:

Culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even greater—the passion for making them prevail. It is not satisfied until we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of a few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light.

He was careful to deny that he was being patronising about the masses or snobbish about culture:

It does not try to reach down to the level of inferior classes . . . It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas . . . freely—nourished and not bound by them. This is the social idea; and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality.

This is all very well, but the trouble with the all-embracing benevolence of “levelling-up” is that it easily turns sour, as it had done with Carlyle and Arnold's own father, as it tended to do with Arnold himself, and as it has done since with Lawrence and Orwell and Eliot and Read and dozens of others. It is difficult to go on loving men if you expect too



much from them in the first place, and no one is more bitterly misanthropic than the disappointed philanthropist.

The pattern is simple. The right-wing optimist expects the uncultured majority to take culture readily and gratefully from the cultured minority; when this doesn't happen, he blames not the élite or the class-system, but the masses, and either retired into an ivory tower of indifference or relapses from paternal humanism into open authoritarianism. In both cases the last stage is snobbery and contempt. Hence Bloomsbury; hence the "posh" papers; hence Reith and the BBC; hence the repeated reinforcement of the old view that the living culture of the leisure class should be not shared but preserved intact; and hence the continued and even strengthened polarisation of English culture. In practice, Coleridge's "clerisy", Carlyle's "writing and teaching heroes", Arnold's "aliens", and so on down to Eliot's "élite" and Read's "artists", always tend to become a band of "top people" combining to keep precious "culture" out of the grubby hands of the masses. And this tendency is made even stronger when there is a class of professional "top people" with its own vested interests to protect, as we have now and as was prophesied by Adam Smith two centuries ago:

In opulent and commercial societies, to think or to reason comes to be, like every other employment, a particular business which is carried on by a very few people who furnish the public with all the thought and reason possessed by the vast multitudes that labour.

Incidentally, who are these "vast multitudes"? What are the "masses"? Williams demolished this cherished formula in *Culture and Society*:

The masses are always the others, whom we don't know . . . To other people, we also are masses. Masses are other people. There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses.

And he added an important corollary:

The whole theory of mass-communication depends, essentially, on a minority in some way exploiting a majority.

"Mass" is really just a new word for "mob", and we can see how right-wing optimists come to feel about the mob when we turn to Eliot:

A mob will be no less a mob if it is well fed, well clothed, well housed and well disciplined.

There is a strong strain of authoritarianism leading on to frank despotism in this kind of search for a common culture, and in the end it often does more harm than good by raising hopes that cannot be fulfilled.

The other kind of optimistic ethologists are the socialists who believe, after Marx, that proletarian culture is the living culture and will become the common culture when the proletariat destroys the bourgeoisie. This is the theory that elevates folk-songs and folk-stories into an absurdly superior position and consigns most of recorded European culture into a limbo of decadent formalism. I take it that we agree to dismiss the implications of this theory, even in its more

subtle forms, while recognising of course that folk-culture is just as valid and valuable as another other aspect of cultural activity. Williams certainly entertains no illusions about the necessary superiority of working-class life in general or art in particular. The real tragedy is that any aspect of culture should be judged in terms of class labels rather than of intrinsic merit and social worth.

But at its best left-wing optimism is something very fine—often an integral part of puritanical socialism—and while Williams does not in fact share such an attitude he has certainly been influenced (as I hope we all have been influenced) by the sort of thing felt by Morris eighty years ago when he was looking forward to

The victorious days when millions of those who now sit in darkness will be enlightened by an Art made by the people and for the people, a joy to the maker and the user.

So the first answer to the third question is a negative one—the common culture will *not* be created by a return to the past or a gift from above or an eruption from below. How *will* it be created? The second answer is also negative—it won't be *created* at all. Williams agrees with Eliot that culture cannot be forced—"These activities are probably by-products for which we cannot arrange the conditions"—and hopes that the coming of socialism will somehow involve the spontaneous growth of a common culture as the living expression of a free and open society of equals. This was already expressed in *Culture and Society*:

If, in a socialist society, the basic cultural skills are made widely available, and the channels of communication widened and cleared, as much as possible has been done in the way of preparation, and what then emerges will be an actual response to the whole reality, and so valuable.

In Part Three of *The Long Revolution*, which is hopefully entitled "Britain in the 1960's", he attacks the idea of culture as a market in which kicks of varying strength and sophistication are sold by shrewd speculators to faceless morons; and then he attacks the idea that private and public responsibility are separate categories. This is an ancient line of argument among social critics—the famous phrase Galbraith uses to describe the modern Affluent Society was used by Sallust to describe Rome two thousand years ago: *Habemus publice egestatem, privatim opulentiam*—but it is none the less relevant for that. The point of Williams' argument is that we all care about our unhealthy community with its private opulence and public squalor and our unhealthy culture with its private satisfactions and public apathy—but what are we, as members of our community and participants in our culture, prepared to do about it?

At the very end of his book, after a long and rather derivative discussion of contemporary economic and political problems, Williams says what he thinks we ought to do for the sake of a common culture. He proposes some sort of decentralised public ownership of the media of drama, cinema and broadcasting, and some sort of public councils for the book and periodical trades. At the same time, he calls for



increased public patronage and informed criticism of the arts, more adult education and "new forms of education" for teenagers, and a public consumer service; and elsewhere he has also suggested an advertising tax and council. So we are presented with a programme of Fabian nationalisation and/or municipalisation, which is rather disappointing.

Williams' defence is that the long revolution must be continued and will die of atrophy if it is not pushed forward by decisive common action. The immediate danger he sees is that the "Establishment" will become more firmly entrenched and the people who are called "masses" will accept the title—then the "massification of society" (an American phrase) will take place and "I'm all right, Jack" will be the true national anthem. We are back where Matthew Arnold began, when a revolution has reached a crisis and the choice is between culture and anarchy (which means chaos, not this magazine!). Our society, says Williams, is a changing organism, and our culture is similarly dynamic, not static. It is going to move in any case—which way do we want it to go? The only way he can accept is one of "conceding the practice of democracy, which alone can substantiate the theory". Hence his unappetising blue-print.

### Three Criticisms

Before dealing with Williams' specific proposals, I should like to make two other criticisms of this book. The first is that its scope is far too narrow. It is insular, considering British culture only as a monad living in splendid autarky among other monads; foreign cultures are scarcely mentioned. It is insular even within the British Isles, taking no account of the variations that exist in Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and in the North and South-West of England. It is limited in its treatment of even English culture—despite his repeated insistence that culture is "a whole way of life", Williams confines his investigations to verbal culture as expressed in speech and literature, and says almost nothing about such other aspects of our cultural life as films, broadcasting, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, museums, town and country planning, transport, clothing, sport, holidays, hobbies, hygiene, eating and drinking, sex, crime and religion. He pretty well ignores the problem of Snow's "two cultures" and the relevance of the scientific and technological revolutions that have accompanied the industrial and democratic ones; numeracy is as important as literacy. The book looks too much like a collection of essays on subjects that happen to interest the author. What is lacking is any hint of the breadth of view we find among English writers like Wells, Russell or Aldous Huxley, or among anarchists like Kropotkin and Rocker.

My second criticism is that *The Long Revolution* is nearly unreadable. I do not ask Williams to try to be a great writer like some of his predecessors, but I do ask him—and anyone else who wants to be heard—to say clearly what he means so that he can be readily understood. No doubt culture is a difficult and important subject, and no

doubt Williams is more interested in saying exactly what he believes than in coining clever phrases (though I am sure the Long Revolution will now join the Affluent Society and Meritocracy and Organisation Man and Lonely Crowd in the modern pantheon of social criticism), but there is no need to write so that every sentence has to be read twice before it makes sense. Reading this book is like running hurdles across a ploughed field in pitch darkness.

This is a serious enough matter for any writer; for one whose whole subject is the problem of communication it is unforgivable, and it has already done Williams harm. One reason why so many reviews have been unfair to the book is that the reviewers haven't managed to get through it (goodness knows how the general reader will fare), and in their irritation they have poked fun at the author's solemnity and apparent self-righteousness—which is bad manners, perhaps but he does ask for it. Williams and his publishers are guilty of giving bad service to their customers—incidentally, there are no notes at all, the bibliography is scrappy, and the index is quite inadequate; otherwise the book is beautifully produced. If the opacity and verbosity of the prose had been dealt with properly, it would have been possible to get the important ideas across more effectively, to back them up with more relevant material, and to discuss the controversial issues at greater length. Style isn't everything, but it is still important, and a writer ignores the technique of communication at his peril.

My third criticism is that Williams has been betrayed by his socialist allegiance into making some unfortunate positive proposals for and some false assumptions about our culture. He outlines his programme so abruptly and briefly (on pp. 335-347) that its details will probably become objects of dispute rather than subjects for discussion. It is not simply that it is authoritarian and not libertarian; Williams' idea of socialism is probably as libertarian as anyone's—though I think he would prefer the word "communitarian" (we can't use "communist" in this sense any more), since his aim is neither liberty nor authority but true community. No, the trouble is that they seem to be the products of a formula (public responsibility=public ownership) in defiance of reality (public ownership=state control). Williams prefers bureaucrats to plutocrats in theory, but in practice I prefer America to Russia. The point is that we are trying to change existing society, not to create a new one from scratch. Ideally, a community should obviously control its own culture; but the inevitable result of public control of a class culture like ours is the reinforcement of the position of the ruling class. We have already seen public control of some of the means of production and distribution failing to improve our community and even, in some ways, making it worse. We seem to be caught in a dilemma: we cannot change the quality of society unless we change its structure, we cannot change the structure of society unless we change its quality, and if we try to change both at once we run the risk of upsetting the whole thing and being more badly off



than before. (Perhaps it is impossible to make improvements by design?)

Williams is so anxious to persuade us that "the ordinary people should govern; that culture and education are ordinary; that there are no masses to save, to capture, or to direct" that he misses the mystery lying at the heart of culture. We need an equal society not because all men are equal but because some men are more equal than others. There are enormous differences between people, and these differences become more important as the community becomes larger. In the old days societies were small, or condemned most of their members to slavery, or both. Today we are committed to large societies with no slaves, but it will take more than wishful thinking or public ownership to make them work. We must recognise our differences as well as our similarities; we are individual animals and social animals at the same time. And it is when we are most different and most individual that the unique and inexplicable act of creation takes place, whether its purpose is communication or simply self-expression. Williams never seems to take this existentialist or romantic assertion into account. He is always honest and sincere—indeed this is one thing no reviewer has doubted—but he is seldom original or profound, as some of his admirers claim. He is not nearly as impressive when he turns to philosophy and politics as when he asks concrete questions about culture; when he does this he should certainly be listened to. We should not turn from what he says because we are bound to disagree with his conclusions. As he himself has said in another connection, "If Eliot is read with attention he is seen to have raised questions which those who differ from him politically must answer or else retire from the field." It is now up to us to find our own answers.

## Removal of guilt

### ANTHONY WEAVER

EDWARD GLOVER a few years ago condemned D. H. Stott's *Delinquency and Human Nature* because it was not peppered with the word guilt. He praises L. G. Lennhoff's book *Exceptional Children* (Allen and Unwin 21s.) because it is so garnished, and he seizes upon it to parade a theory which in a sense adds a missing dimension to the work. But it is questionable whether the theory fits the facts, and whether Lennhoff would not be wiser to carry on trusting to his intuition and the empirical deductions upon which his work has been based hitherto, without on the one hand being saddled with an ill-fitting and limiting philosophy, and on the other, in trying to formulate one for himself, being dragged back into the framework of thinking in which he was brought up.

He was brought up in Germany by a somewhat frightening father and a warm-hearted mother. That he came to this country as a refugee, without money, and has succeeded in establishing a school of his own is no mean achievement. Autonomy gives a rare quality to a man. Lennhoff confines himself to a description of his practice, and in so doing provides for the uninitiated an introduction to the symptoms and treatment of maladjustment and delinquency. Understandably for one not using his mother tongue, the writing is nowhere as lucid, systematic or humorous as that of other laymen who have described their community therapy. Indeed there is no index, no full case histories, and the contents of one chapter could just as well go in the next. Furthermore there is no bibliography: the writers mentioned in passing are Winnicott, Bettelheim, and the Underwood Report.

Shotton Hall is Lennhoff's demonstration of what he considers should be the rôle of an extremely enlightened father who devotes himself to the benefit of his family. He gets his thirty-five boys to call him Daddy and his wife Mummy. In his scheme of training an important section is reserved to the *Family and its members*: its foundation for healthy child development, analysis of the family, family structure, the family and the home, the family at work and leisure. He presents the facts about Shotton as objectively as any man immersed in this all-demanding work could be expected to do. Glover, in his Foreword, explains that "Lennhoff teaches us that an ounce of moulding is worth a pound of correction and that we cannot mould material that has become petrified. Moreover he proves to us that with patience, care and understanding the petrified minds of deviant children can once more be rendered plastic," and further, that "throughout his work he applies the touchstone of 'transference', a concept of repetitive attitudes and patterns of conduct which we owe to Freud and which Aichhorn was the first to apply in institutional work with the maladjusted. The friendly transference at first so difficult to elicit with anxious or anti-social children, he nurses carefully to the point where they offset, cancel out or liquidate the hostile transferences which are responsible for so much refractory conduct. Once this has been achieved the way is open for education, or in other words for the development of a comparatively stable, realistic and adaptable ego. And Mr. Lennhoff is quick to seize these opportunities".

Lennhoff himself, theorising in an off-guarded moment says (p.29) that "a young child has no social conscience and if no incentive to social

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development nor the example of a moral code is given, chaos sets in from the start. Normal development requires a constant interchange of demand and fulfilment and if this is lacking, so is the foundation of social education." And he explains that the methods of Shotton are first analysis or gaining of insight, secondly Transference or Identification, and finally Re-education.

Aichhorn believed that Re-education was a means of modifying the super-ego and was therefore adequate in those cases whose problem arose from having a too compliant super-ego. Not merely however do we need to be clear which areas of a child's problem it is wise to attempt to tackle by this means, but also by what other means of therapy. Suttie for example in *The Origins of Love and Hate* showed that the success of a so-called transference and identification amounts to a cure by love, not due to the mumbo-jumbo of psychoanalysis.

The method advocated by Glover, but to which Lennhoff only gives lip service, is the authoritarian, totalitarian one, carved out of the family situation. It is through this that many generations of human beings have had their characters moulded, and knowing no other condition, have accepted and perpetuated it, much as they do a restricted diet.

Discussing Adrian Stokes' *Three Essays on the Painting of our Time*, Herbert Read explains the need of identification with the *object*. "The work or art," he says, "is the best kind of self-sufficient object with which we can identify ourselves and at the same time hold commerce. In fact the work of art is unique in this respect, and essential for individual sanity and social order. In painting a picture the artist is performing an act of integration that has a threefold significance. In the first place, he creates an object which resolves the contradictions of his own psyche, calms his nerves, as we say. In the second place, the work of art is part of a patient construction of what the psychoanalyst calls the ego: a coherent idealization of existence in an apparently absurd universe. Finally, by these means the artist helps to create a civilisation or culture, a general body of symbolic objects to which a community can give its admiration and allegiance. Moreover, whatever philosophers and theologians may say to the contrary, it is only art that can perform this service for the community."

This argument leads to the particular doctrine associated with the name of Melanie Klein, a doctrine which is based on the analysis of the infant's early reactions to the breast. However far-fetched and improbable this doctrine may seem to those who have not followed Dr. Klein's analyses in all their patient detail, it must be said that it fits the facts of aesthetic experience in their widest range. The work of art can always be explained as a concrete object that saves us from the abyss—the nothingness that threatens us when we are deprived of the breast, and continues to threaten us unconsciously unless we find a substitute object we can love, and in whose concreteness we can find security.

Lennhoff does not seem to realise the truth he has stumbled upon. "We must arrange," he says (p.64), "that suitable teams work together. For instance, if Jim, who simply cannot start work in the mornings and is inclined to lounge on a radiator and 'just think', is teamed with Bill, who works quickly and well, Bill will see that Jim is doing his share. Help from the staff is often of great importance. Duties shared with people one loves and respects are part of the early maturing process, and this aspect is often worked out during tasks tackled with the help of the staff."

The process by which we are induced to share a common ideal, Read has shown, is none other than the creation of an emphatic relationship with our fellows by means of imitation of the same patterns—by meeting, as it were, in the common form or quality of the universally valid work of art. And it is with great ingenuity that Lennhoff provides a welter of activities for expression. These take mainly two forms. The first of these is *craft* (woodwork, gardening, puppet-making, book-binding, material-printing, basketry, leatherwork, modelling). The significance of much of this he explains as therapeutic—"the creation of craft work can be of great encouragement to children whose rôle in life has often been to destroy rather than to create . . . when a disturbed boy feels safe enough, he paints into his picture much of his own emotional situation, working through some of his difficulties as well as informing the adult of the precise nature of some of his feelings. Paul, for instance, shows his aggression clearly in his pictures. Frequently in the scenes he paints is the burning and torture of a woman. The woman is undoubtedly a symbol for the mother who has caused him so much unhappiness." This function of painting, demonstrated by Cizek, Aichhorn's contemporary in Vienna, is none the less valuable for being well-known. But it is only the beginning of the act of integration outlined by Read in the passage quoted above.

The second form of activity is work. The therapeutic value of this is also well-known, and has been used by Makarenko, Homer Lane, and by Henrietta Szold in the Youth Aliyah Children's Villages in Israel. However, Lennhoff has had the nerve to buy a 60-acre farm eight miles away, which, on top of everything else, he administers from Shotton. That boys may get away there, to work *as volunteers*, has incidentally reduced absconding to negligible proportions, and provides an essential contact with animals. He tells the tale of a boy whose mother went off to buy some magazines at a railway station just as they were setting off on an outing, and never returned. "Life had nothing more to offer him and his personality went to pieces. He began to steal and to withdraw from human contacts. After a long period of 'don't care' attitudes he regressed to early childhood: his most marked expression of this being the time when we found him underneath a cow, feeding from her udder. This enabled one of our staff to break through to him. . . ."

Lennhoff understands that freedom is no negative state of existence but a qualitative one which makes demands upon the child. He and



his colleagues show remarkable persistence in keeping up these demands and providing opportunities. The first period at Shotton is a bewildering and testing time of learning what is right and wrong, and this means choice. In a more rigid system you can always blame someone else for what goes wrong, but where responsibility is shared (albeit not in the clear-cut and formalised David Wills method) the child slowly learns to make decisions for himself, and then to cope with the reality situation that his own action has created.

Lennhoff insists that it does not matter in what direction the child widens out, as long as he is successful and can be encouraged to go a step further. Not only is this far from Glover's claim of moulding character, but Lennhoff has the frankness to admit that some children, with whom they never succeed in making a relationship, nevertheless cure themselves. For example the boy Barnie writes about Shotton: "I never really found any particular adult could help me, but everyone was kind enough and understanding and somehow I felt trusted for the first time and so I could sort things out for myself. I'd never felt like that before in my life."

There are many examples in the book of the trust that is placed in the boys—they help to run the office, for example, and if insistent will be shown their own files: "the hunger for knowledge is generally centred on details about family background (mainly in the cases of illegitimate children), or to find out whether their misdeeds at Shotton are registered, which incidently they are not."

Similarly in dealing with parents the attempt is not made to tell a mother exactly how to manage her child, but how she can broaden and be more mature in her view of life.

Lennhoff's demonstration of Re-education in the present writer's opinion, deserves the highest praise. It complements, and reveals his understanding of, Aichhorn's exposition of the abreaction of his aggressive group and the working of individual transference. If he can extend the significance of art, that is to say dance, painting and drama as well as craft, in education and indeed in his whole scheme of things, as Lyward does, he can be spared Glover's backhanded compliments.

Ownership by Lennhoff (he calls himself "we") though giving him autonomy, marks him off from his colleagues who appear as his instruments. Can he shed his authority over them, as the nurses quoted at the Henderson Social Rehabilitation Unit have shed their uniforms? Will he allow himself to be supported emotionally by his fellow workers and thus remove a central figure upon which the children will otherwise identify themselves.

SOME OTHER BOOKS ON RESIDENTIAL WORK WITH DISTURBED CHILDREN:

E. M. Bazely: *Homer Lane and the Little Commonwealth* (Allen & Unwin).

Bruno Bettelheim: *Love is not Enough* (Glencoe, Illinois).

Michael Burn: *Mr. Lyward's Answer* (Hamish Hamilton).

A. Makarenko: *The Road to Life* (Foreign Languages Publishing Ho. Moscow).

David Wills: *Throw Away Thy Rod* (Gollancz).

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