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This is surely bound to fail, but the need to attempt to make some connections has become irrepressible. In this first article, then, I want to use Perry Anderson's recent critique of the present state of British culture to introduce some quotations from *The Dialectics of Liberation*. What I am getting at here can emerge, if ever it does at all, only as we proceed. The point is that there is something wrong with British culture: what Anderson refers to as its ataraxy, its imperviousness to certain disturbing ideas; and there is a chance that the utopian dimension evoked once again by some recent thinking may prove quickening and liberatory. In a second article I want to bring out the ambivalent connections between the work of Herbert Marcuse and that of Martin Heidegger. Finally, in a third article, it should be possible to relate all this to the English literary-critical tradition and to the classical moment in Catholic theology.

§1—*The Real Two Cultures*

Ernest Gellner's *Words and Things*, first published in 1959 and now widely available as a paperback, has recently been hailed as a 'classic', to which 'all critics of English philosophy owe a great debt'. This salutation of another orthodoxy (that by the standards of a revolutionary and internationalist political consciousness English philosophy is trivial, after all) comes in an important essay by Perry Anderson in the fiftieth issue of *New Left Review* (July-August 1968). This is the most persuasive and thorough-going offer of new bearings for the critique of contemporary British culture that has so far been made. It is obviously necessary reading for everybody concerned, already a point of reference, and no doubt fated to be defused into just one more cliché of *kulturkritik*.

Actually, it is not entirely accurate to say, as Anderson does, that nobody from the Oxford side has ever attempted to answer Gellner's case. Writing esoterically enough in *Blackfriars* (March 1960), Michael Dummett did in fact go for Gellner pretty savagely, but his scornful criticisms, effective as they seem in detail, admittedly lose their force when he concedes the main point: 'What is indeed common to almost all the philosophers Gellner attacks, and to many others—Ayer, for example—is the view that philosophical problems mostly arise from misunderstandings of certain concepts, and are to be resolved by giving a correct account of those concepts.'

Gellner complains that this excludes the possibility of a philosopher's enunciating any substantive truths. I think that most Oxford philosophers would not be dogmatic on this point (thereby eliciting Gellner's accusations of evasiveness). They would not reject the possibility that philosophy could arrive at substantive truths: they would merely say that they do not see how this is to be done.' Dummett adds that a Catholic philosopher could not rest with this position: 'Natural theology is certainly part of philosophy, and the existence of God is not just a fact about concepts.' But, while allowing that there might be fruitful criticism of Oxford philosophy from a Wittgensteinian point of view and also from the standpoint of mathematical logic, Michael Dummett rather gives the game away, in the following terms: 'I believe that future generations will regard Wittgenstein as a great philosopher. I do not believe that they will look back on 1945-1959 in Oxford as a Golden Age in philosophy, though I think philosophy in Oxford is very much healthier than it is, say, in Paris.' It depends what you mean by philosophy. 1960 was the year in which Sartre's *Critique de la raison dialectique* came out: Merleau-Ponty was still lecturing in the Collège de France; Paul Ricoeur, teaching at the Sorbonne, published *Finitude et culpabilité*; and so on.

The point is, anyway, that, whether fairly or not, a certain discrediting of Oxford-style philosophy is becoming common. This is part of the crystallization of what one might call the *real* 'two cultures'. Developing Gellner's line, Perry Anderson is now assailing contemporary philosophy in such terms as these: 'The main effect of Wittgenstein's later philosophy was simply to consecrate the banalities of everyday language. . . . The duty of the philosopher . . . was to ensure the identity and stability of the system, by preventing unorthodox moves within it. This novel notion amounted to a massive, undifferentiated affidavit for the conceptual status quo. Its logical product was a mystique of common sense, and the ordinary language which reflected it. . . . The cult of common sense accurately indicates the role of linguistic philosophy in England. It functions as an anaesthetic ideology, blotting out the very memory of an alternative order of thought'; and so on. The charge is, of course, familiar enough. Anderson cites David Pole's book, *The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein*, with approval, and he might also have referred to Herbert Marcuse's case in *One-Dimensional Man*. J. N. Findlay, as he was making the break from London to Yale, bore similar witness, though without the overtly political interpretation (*Cambridge Review*, 4th February, 1967): 'What makes British philosophical life a difficult thing for some few persons is one thing and one alone: its extraordinary monolithic restrictiveness. It is a restrictiveness that most of those who breathe the philosophical air of Britain do not feel at all, and would be astonished to hear mentioned or complained of. No article of faith is more devoutly held than that there

is a wide spectrum of amicable difference of opinion and outlook in all British philosophical departments. . . . Yet all this is not so at all, and there is no environment which more pervasively, yet more subtly, restricts true variety of opinion, than the philosophical atmosphere of Britain.' And Findlay goes on: 'And the same is possibly true, though in lesser degree, in all fields of intellectual effort in our country. Subtle repression and exclusion are, and regrettably always have been, the true *vice anglais*.' This is precisely what Perry Anderson wants to demonstrate. If you refuse to concede meaning to anything but what ordinary educated people in our society might say, then it would certainly seem that you could merely be endorsing the categories of the dominant class and obediently submitting to the norms of the ongoing, uncriticizable conceptuality. And to accept a theory of meaning is to acquiesce in a theory of man, which means then a theory of society and of action as well as a theory of art and of religion (politics, ethics, aesthetics, theology).

What makes Perry Anderson's version of the case attractive is the verve with which he constellates whole areas of culture, to let the innate conservatism repeatedly emerge. He is offering, for the first time, tentatively and in the hope that others will correct and amplify the thesis, what he describes as 'a preliminary inventory of the problems involved in considering the total "set" of contemporary British culture'. The case, very summarily and somewhat cryptically, is as follows: it is no coincidence that we have a style of doing *philosophy* (Wittgenstein, J. L. Austin) which sanctions and celebrates the possibilities of meaning in (only) 'ordinary language', a style of teaching *political theory* (Isaiah Berlin, Karl Popper) and of writing *history* (Namier, A. J. P. Taylor) which minimizes the importance of ideas, a theory of *economics* (Kaldor, Balogh) which is isolated from any political consciousness, a brutally reductionist and aggressively positivistic *psychology* (Eysenck), an *aesthetics* which has gone over to psychology of art (Gombrich), an *anthropology* which is brilliant but concerned on the whole with non-British societies (Evans-Pritchard, Edmund Leach), a *literary criticism* which is equally brilliant but finally elitist-reactionary in its presuppositions (Leavis), and a *psycho-analysis* which stands out as entirely incompatible with the pattern (Melanie Klein, Laing). One of the subordinate themes in this picture is that whole areas of British culture have been taken over and dominated by right-wing expatriates from pre-1914 Europe: 'The crucial, formative influences in the arc of culture with which we are concerned here are again and again emigrés.' However this may be, what Anderson is making out, in fact, is that, with the significant exception of psycho-analysis (he has a good discussion of the puzzled efforts by various English philosophers to deal with the phenomenon), there is a profound mistrust of *ideas* in every area of British culture. It is, for instance, even the case that

Marxist intellectuals in this country will quite often pretend not to be intellectuals at all: a game that could not be played anywhere else in the world. Ideas are disruptive, and the alliance of brilliant refugees who have suffered from the social and political upheavals which ideas (Marxism) can cause, with the great majority of the unthinking, educated classes who simply want to prolong the unique stasis of the imperial moment (the stasis of the heat-drunk viceroy under his punkah, the obverse of the torpor of Oxford afternoons), has produced the present situation: 'Britain, the most conservative major society in Europe, has a culture in its own image: mediocre and inert. The ataraxy of this culture is manifest in any international context.' Ataraxy is the refusal to be disturbed, a nonchalant indifference to the impingement of reality. Perry Anderson's point is that it is high time we allowed ourselves to be disturbed: 'The chloroforming effect of such cultural configuration, its silent and constant underpinning of the social status quo, are deadly. British culture, as it is now constituted, is a deeply damaging and stifling force, operating against the growth of any revolutionary Left. It quite literally deprives the Left of any source of concepts and categories with which to analyse its own society, and thereby attain a fundamental pre-condition for changing it.' The shuddering at strange ideas, particularly if they are of continental or American provenance, while it is the characteristic gesture of English common-sense, indicates that it is usually no more than complacent imperviousness, self-congratulatory immurement in a continuum of unexamined assumptions.

Three points may be made briefly here, perhaps for elaboration on another occasion. In the first place, while there can surely be no doubt that the dominant style of doing philosophy in this country is in effect a refusal to undergo the experience of being disturbed by ideas, it is not so clear that Wittgenstein himself can be so easily placed. In an important paper reprinted in George Pitcher's recent collection of essays on Wittgenstein, Stanley Cavell surely demolishes David Pole's interpretation of Wittgenstein's work and puts forward the illuminating suggestion that it is not unlike Freud's in its effect (the context here is Pole's complaint that Wittgenstein attracted a coterie of pupils and connived at some mystifying about what he was doing): 'But I do not see that the faults of explicit discipleship are more dangerous than the faults which come from subjection to modes of thought and sensibility whose origins are unseen or unremembered and which therefore create a different blindness inaccessible in other ways to cure. Between control by the living and control by the dead there is nothing to choose. Because the breaking of such control is a constant purpose of the later Wittgenstein, his writing is deeply practical and negative, the way Freud's is. And like Freud's therapy, it wishes to prevent understanding which is unaccompanied by inner change.' It is one thing

to get up Wittgenstein's 'conclusions', to accept or refute them; it is another matter altogether to expose oneself to what he is saying. One thinks here of Adrian Cunningham's remark that those who talk most about communication are often those who are most secretive in their self-disclosure. . . . As Cavell concludes, of Wittgenstein and Freud: 'Both thought of their negative soundings as revolutionary extensions of our knowledge, and both were obsessed by the idea, or fact, that they would be misunderstood—partly, doubtless, because they knew the taste of self-knowledge, that it is bitter.'

What Wittgenstein was up to, is surely to be understood only by those who are prepared to approach him as a non-English philosopher. In the recently published shorthand notes by Friedrich Waismann, made of conversations with Wittgenstein and Moritz Schlick between 1929 and 1931, there is this astonishing *trouville* (my translation): 'I can well imagine what Heidegger means by *Sein* and *Angst*. Man is somehow driven to run up against the boundaries of language. Think, for instance, of the wonder that anything exists at all. This wonder cannot be expressed in the form of a question, and there is certainly no answer to it, either. Anything we might say, can *a priori* only be nonsense (*Unsinn*). In spite of that, we continue to run against the boundary of language. This Kierkegaard also recognized and he even described it in a similar sort of way (as running up against the paradoxical). This running up against the boundary of language is *ethics*. I certainly regard it as important that one should put an end to all the twaddle about ethics—whether there is knowledge, whether there are values, whether the good may be defined, and so on. In ethics one is always trying to say something which does not and cannot touch the nature of the thing. This is certain *a priori*: whatever one may offer as a definition of the good, it is always just a misunderstanding to think that what one really means is in accordance with the expression (Moore). But the urge, the running up against, *points to something*. Augustine knew this when he said: 'What, you want to speak no nonsense? Just speak nonsense, it doesn't matter.' This compulsion, *gegen die Grenzen der Sprache anzurennen*, is not only what makes it possible for Wittgenstein to understand what Heidegger means; it is surely also plain that he understood what it means to run one's head up against the boundary of language. As he says elsewhere (*Investigations*, §119): 'The results of doing philosophy are (1) the discovery of one or other piece of pure nonsense and (2) bruises that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limit of language. It is the bruises that make us see the value of the discovery.' Wittgenstein had no time for philosophers who see the nonsense without getting the wounds.

In the second place, it would be easy to show how theology, too, fits into Perry Anderson's scheme. British culture, as it is now constituted, deprives God-folk of any source of concepts and cate-

gories with which to understand themselves and their relation to society, and thus operates against the growth of any revolutionary-eschatological God-movement. The really seminal work, such as Herbert McCabe's *Law, Love and Language*, issues from the Hiberobritish proletarian fringe and not from the official resources of the theological establishment. And that is the third point. The importance of Perry Anderson's analysis is that, whether or not it can be substantiated all through, it must become a turning-point in the growing movement against British culture *in the sense in which he has defined it*. There is, in fact, the anti-university, and what the anti-universities are about is not so much student participation in how things are run (organization) but what people should learn and teach (ideas!). The question now is whether the opposition, or oppositions, to the official culture, constitute, or could constitute, a real alternative.

§2—*The Alternative*

A sense is spreading of the possibility of some alternative to the ongoing society and its official culture, and some new paperbacks are to hand which carry the argument further.

Penguin Books have recently brought out a collection of the principal speeches made at the Congress of the Dialectics of Liberation held in London in July 1967.¹ This was a unique experiment, a convocation of existentialists, Marxists, anarchists, hippies and anybody else who cared to go along, accommodated in the Round House, once a steam-train basilica. The project was to unveil and demystify as much of the violence in our lives as possible and to create a consciousness to work on the problems of liberation from it. The book thus contains Stokeley Carmichael's speech on Black Power; two Marxist analyses, one by John Gerassi on American imperialism and the other by Paul Sweezy on the future of the capitalist system; a piece on the function of literary criticism by Lucien Goldmann (a Marxist who has written a remarkable book about Pascal); an account by Jules Henry of how economically and psychologically dependent American society is on preparing for war; an opening address by Ronald Laing and a conclusion by David Cooper; and three papers by Paul Goodman, Gregory Bateson and Herbert Marcuse.

The speakers, of course, disagree among themselves: it is not to be expected that there could ever be a single uniform opposition to the present state of things. And a great deal of what is said, especially the broadly Marxist analysis of the military-industrial structure of capitalist economy, is consonant with what a Christian should think (*Populorum Progressio* and all that). One theme emerges, however, which it seems worth exploring here and developing a little, simply because this might help towards the recrystallization of Catholic

¹The proceedings of the Congress are also being made available by Intersound Records Ltd on 23 different long-playing gramophone records.

consciousness which is so pressing a need and so necessary a risk at the present time.

Gregory Bateson is an anthropologist now working with dolphins in Hawaii. His paper deals mostly with problems in ecology: that branch of biology to do with the habits and modes of life of living organisms, and their relations to their surroundings. 'Today', he says, 'the purposes of consciousness are implemented by more and more effective machinery, transportation systems, airplanes, weaponry, medicine, pesticides and so forth. Conscious purpose is now empowered to upset the balances of the body, of society and of the biological world around us. A pathology—a loss of balance—is threatened.' He speaks of the individual human being, the culture and the natural world each as a 'system', and his main point is that 'conscious purpose' too often ignores the 'systemic' nature of things: the reach of our control distorts our sense of the whole ('man commits the error of purposive thinking and disregards the systemic nature of the world with which he must deal'). Bateson asks for a certain 'humility', not as a moral principle but as an epistemological desideratum, as a 'truth-condition', instead of what he denounces as 'scientific arrogance': 'occidental man saw himself as an autocrat with complete power over a universe which was made of physics and chemistry', and so forth. We have to learn that the part cannot dominate the whole: our 'excessive purposiveness' must yield, for our survival and sanity, to the 'systemic view'. Bateson allows that 'the best of religion' might help, along with art and poetry and such things, to 'relax that arrogance in favour of a creative experience in which the conscious mind plays only a small part'. The 'systemic view' is identified as 'wisdom'. In a retelling of the Adam and Eve story, Bateson invokes the cogency of myth to substantiate his reiterated and unargued generalizations. His hesitant language contrasts remarkably with the confident eloquence with which D. H. Lawrence used to make a very similar point, forty years ago: something we shall come back to. Let it suffice for the moment simply to register Bateson's antinomies: arrogance/humility, conscious purposiveness/the systemic view. How these may be unpacked, what philosophy of history they contain, will emerge as we proceed.

The most remarkable essay, on the whole, from the critical-theological point of view, is the one by Herbert Marcuse. He is the 70-year-old German philosopher who emigrated in 1933 and settled in the United States. As everybody who reads the quality newspapers now knows, the subterranean influence of his work over the years suddenly broke out in the world-wide student revolt last year: he was cited constantly along with Marx and Mao. He speaks here, indicatively and hopefully enough, not of revolution but of qualitative change: 'I say intentionally "of qualitative change", not "of revolution", because we know of too many revolutions through which the continuum of repression has been sustained,

revolutions which have replaced one system of domination by another.' Marcuse is concerned primarily with change in the advanced industrial societies (Stokeley Carmichael makes the point that it is the white man who is sick and that we need to cure ourselves). The problem is to see how there could be liberation from a repressive system: liberation from within, liberation by virtue of the contradiction generated within the system. Repression/liberation is Marcuse's heuristic antinomy. His assumption is that a socialist society, 'according to Marx, would conform with the very *logos* of life, with the essential possibilities of a human existence, not only mentally, not only intellectually, but also organically'. He is seeking a *total liberation*: 'I believe that we (and I will use 'we' throughout my talk) have been too hesitant, that we have been too ashamed, understandably ashamed, to insist on the integral, radical features of a socialist society, its qualitative difference from all the established societies: the qualitative difference by virtue of which socialism is indeed the negation of the established systems, no matter how productive, no matter how powerful they are or they may appear.' This is what Marcuse declares to be the utopian dimension, idealistic and metaphysical, something which does not have to be kept quiet, something which is, on the contrary, the driving force of the whole matter—'if socialism is indeed the rupture of history, the radical break, the leap into the realm of freedom—a total rupture'.

The most illuminating paragraph in Marcuse's essay runs as follows: 'Let us give one illustration of how this awareness, or half-awareness, of the need for such a total rupture was present in some of the great social struggles of our period. Walter Benjamin quotes reports that during the Paris Commune (1871), in all corners of the city of Paris there were people shooting at the clocks on the towers of the churches, palaces and so on, thereby consciously or half-consciously expressing the need that somehow time has to be arrested; that at least the prevailing, the established time continuum has to be arrested, and that a new time has to begin—a very strong emphasis on the qualitative difference and on the totality of the rupture between the new society and the old.' On this, in his conclusion to the book, David Cooper comments: 'I was very impressed with a story that Herbert Marcuse told us. During the Paris Commune, before they started shooting at people, the Communards shot at the clocks, at all the clocks in Paris, and they broke them. And they did this because they were putting an end to the time of the Others, the time of their rulers, and they were going to invent their own time.' A break with the past which will put an end to time: this certainly sounds like a secularization or a prefigurement of Christian eschatology; but that is to anticipate what we must try to say later.

Marcuse's thesis is that the necessary institutional changes must be carried out by people who are already freeing themselves from the repressive and aggressive needs of our society, people who are

therefore, at least potentially, the bearers of essentially different needs, goals and satisfactions, people (to anticipate again) with a different understanding of *finis* (end) and *beatitudo* (happiness). It is important to notice that Marcuse is not falling into the trap of accepting the liberal separation between individuals and institutions. He is simply saying, against a certain kind of Marxist, that there can be no destruction and renewal of institutions which will be liberating unless it is carried through by people who are, in the very process, changing their attitudes and responses. It is difficult for us to think except in terms of the dichotomy, and to say either that hearts must change first or that structures must change first; but in fact the complexity of the relationship between the individual and the institutions which form him is such that we must think in terms not of an option but of a dialectic, not of a choice of priority but of a process of simultaneous growth. This is the only way in which we can avoid reproducing, in the new revolutionized situation, what Marcuse calls the continuum of repression. This is the very practical outcome of defining socialism in the most utopian terms. As Marcuse says: 'To give sensitivity and sensibility their own right is, I think, one of the basic goals of integral socialism. These are the qualitatively different features of a free society. They presuppose, as you may already have seen, a total trans-valuation of values, a new anthropology. They presuppose a type of man who rejects the performance principles governing the established societies; a type of man who has rid himself of the aggressiveness and brutality that are inherent in the organization of established society, and in their hypocritical, puritan morality; a type of man who is biologically incapable of fighting wars and creating suffering; a type of man who has a good conscience of joy and pleasure, and who works, collectively and individually, for a social and natural environment in which such an existence becomes possible.' What this means, comes out a few sentences later when Marcuse speaks of the obsolescence of 'the entire work discipline on which Judaeo-Christian morality has been based'. That is the key quotation, it points to the centre of Marcuse's whole thesis, and it obviously invites the theologian to come into the discussion and say his say.

The contention of this series of articles is that Christianity is not a discipline of work at all, that it is not what Marcuse calls an 'inner-worldly asceticism'. But what must be admitted, and accounted for if possible, is the fact that Christianity continually degenerates into a religion of works, a works righteousness. This means that the morality does produce and reflect an anthropology, an idea and experience of being human (and hence social, political, aesthetic and theological), which is repressive and aggressive in structure. The understanding of behaviour in the classical tradition of Catholic theology is, however, totally different from this. It should be possible to show that there a sense of conduct (*actus*

humanus) that centres on loving the good (*amor boni*), translates and instils an understanding of being human which makes the break with the continuum of repression.

Sphere Books have recently brought out paperback editions of *Eros and Civilisation* and *One Dimensional Man*, and Marcuse's idea of the alternative to our way of life is thus widely accessible now. The contradiction in our society is becoming more and more obvious. We know that we could be freer than people have ever been before, we know too that we are still repressed and trapped in a circle of mutual aggression. We are being invited by Marcuse to take seriously what he calls the transcending, antagonistic values. This is the utopian dimension. It is what a theologian would call eschatology, the sense of an ending. While we find it hard to accept the efforts of our predecessors at sense-making, what we do, what happens, in our finest poetry, in music, in many films, in science fiction, in all sorts of ways, is that we evoke whatever it is that gives meaning to all that we do and say. Politics, our experience and sense of the *polis*, the city, the community, with all that this means, always presupposes and exhibits some 'eschatology', some sense of ultimate meaning. This is inevitably also an 'anthropology', some sense and experience of the significance and possibilities of being human. Art is perhaps how best, in Marcuse's words, 'to make the established language itself speak what it conceals or excludes, for what is to be revealed and denounced is operative *within* the universe of ordinary discourse and action'. Perhaps philosophy cannot be much help here. 'Morals in practice', Herbert McCabe says, 'is the attempt to live out our lives in terms not only of the more obvious but also of the deeper forms of communication with others . . . and in this matter we probably get more help from novelists and dramatists and perhaps preachers than we do from philosophers.' He is thinking, no doubt, of English-type philosophers. The possibility remains, however, that we may learn something from Herbert Marcuse's kind of philosophy; but if we look at it in detail we find, I think, that it points us back to the work of Martin Heidegger. To show that, and to suggest some of the implications of it, will be our next task.

So far, then, we have suggested that some of the contributors to *The Dialectics of Liberation*, and particularly Herbert Marcuse, have something to offer in the opposition they represent to the established order of things in our society. We have taken up Perry Anderson's idea of the ataraxy of our culture and tried to connect it with a philosophy of the utopian dimension. It remains for us to work out that philosophy in more detail. We should then see that Gregory Bateson's arrogance/humility and Herbert Marcuse's repression/liberation are ways of stating the central intention of Martin Heidegger's philosophy, or anti-philosophy, which ought in turn to open out the latent theological implications of the whole enterprise.

(*To be continued*)