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THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

THE sense of being precariously balanced in the space between two stepping stones—between the past and the future—is now a widespread feeling. Men of sensibility take no satisfaction in either the past or the present, yet show little eagerness to get on to the future, since there is no clear and shining theory of progress to guide them, these days, and hardly anyone save blindly doctrinaire utopians has any confidence concerning where the next step will land us.

The insecurities of bewilderment and loss of orientation are not pleasant experiences, but there are compensations. For one thing, the intellectuals have stopped sharp-shooting at one another and conducting endless partisan polemics in the serious magazines. If you cannot easily choose a "side," it becomes difficult to find an Enemy, and when enemies are lacking, the mind is thrown back on itself, and an intenser sort of thinking may emerge.

Even political recrimination seems likely to diminish, in the immediate future. Since Stalin has become the "bad boy" of the Russian Revolution—the *reductio ad absurdum* of changes in the Party Line—the flow of denunciation of Western capitalism by Soviet propagandists will probably become less vigorous, for who knows what will come next? Name-calling in general may suffer a decline, since this practice is in large measure a function of mass political alignments, and the political movements of the present now have only a kind of bobbing motion, as though finally stalled in some ideological Sargasso Sea.

Ours is a time of maneuvers rather than movements in politics, and a period of strenuous if not very successful revaluation in letters and the arts. So far as literature is concerned, some comments in the Spring Books number of the *Nation* (April 14) will illustrate. Josephine Herbst, to give setting to her article of general evaluation of current writing, starts out: "What seems to be missing in a good deal of contemporary writing is a sense of the world. The world around us. For some time we have had so many writers trailing their own nervous systems, premonitions, fantasies and horrors that perhaps the time has come to dig up man, the guilty worm, and to see him in relation to an actual world." Miss Herbst suspects that the interest in Kafka, Melville, Hawthorne, and Henry James, which flourished in the forties, was something more than an appreciation of their literary stature:

> It signified also a genteel retreat from a period too complicated to confront easily. The writings of the detached past became a kind of smokescreen to conceal the present dilemma, and the ruins.

Another article in the *Nation*, this one by John Lehmann, editor of the *London Magazine* and founder and editor of *New Writing*, begins: "In a recent interview, Jean Anouilh, the French playwright, observes that he never read the newspapers because their constant preoccupation with the menace of war was bad for an artist's nerves. It seems to me a possible explanation of the present state of English letters that the young English writers have been reading too many newspapers."

Well, these critical estimates of writing in England and America are hardly in contradiction, even though one calls for a better "sense of the world," and the other for ignoring the newspaper version of it. Both comments seek some kind of restoration of the creative intelligence as the spectator of a comprehensible scene, and this, while a species of criticism, is more of a stock-taking than a complaint. The writer and the artist, as Lewis Mumford has so well pointed out, live in the cultural medium of their times. If the times

are merely hard, both may produce great work, and gain honor for their achievement. But when the times are such that they oblige the writer to live, as Max Lerner put it recently, "amidst an encompassing sense of doom," then what shall we say when they produce "journeys to end of night"?

The real problem is not "literary" at all, but a question of first principles, of basic assumptions for our culture to replace the ones that have taken flight. The Existentialists are no bizarre phenomenon of an erratic Bohemia in war-torn Europe, but the legitimate expression of those who are able to articulate the sense of loss of standards experienced by Western civilization. The last citadel of man is the inward feeling of dignity, which may stand whatever others may do, and whatever natural and unnatural storms beset. It takes a Tolstoy among writers to transcend the personal existentialist predicament, and a Gandhi among patriots to create new horizons for the international predicament. Our writers, with all their agonizing and their aimlessness, are projections of ourselves, having at least the wit to be unhappy in a world shaped for unhappiness by our forefathers and their descendants.

It is the writers, far more than their less sensitive and imaginative contemporaries, who feel the absence of first principles, the loss of something to believe in. And of all things that we may wonder about, one thing is sure: the finding of a new faith for the future will be neither a rapid nor an easy accomplishment. Cultures must be born from roots, and roots have need of a deep penetration in the soil of human life. What we are concerned with, here, is not the proposal of a "new faith," nor an examination of alternative creeds, but the all-embracing importance of the project of seeking a faith.

No culture, of course, loses its faith suddenly. That would be a more lethal execution than death by atom bombing. Faiths wane, receive anxious transfusions from priests and politicians, and scores of odd grafts and painted decorations are offered to distract from the depression of disillusionment. J. Edgar Hoover recently announced that, in his opinion, every child in the United States should be *compelled* to attend Sunday school. The newspaper story didn't explain whether Mr. Hoover meant compelled by the State, or by the child's parents, but even if we allow him the benefit of the doubt and assume that he meant the latter, the idea is a desperate one. The news-stands, meanwhile, reveal the fantastic variety of substitutes for religion—the endless display of self-help magazines, lurid promises of astrology, and the mechanized utopianism of science fiction.

Well, there's no use in beating a dead horse, and we've probably had enough of surveys of the shallowness of mass culture, and the expansion of cosmetic techniques into every phase of existence. We are probably saved from mass hysteria only by the fact that recognition of all this multiform self-deception comes very gradually, and that belief, since we want so much to believe, dies hard.

One question that naturally occurs, in these days of painful self-consciousness and self-examination, is this: How "rational" can a faith be? This depends, of course, on the meaning of "rational," and whether the question relates to a single individual or to an entire civilization, but there is no denying the fact that the dominating presence of critical, rationalistic intelligence has made short work of most of the faiths of our time. We don't set up to be psychoanalysts, but there is also the matter of the "unconscious," which seems to be the foundation and support of life throughout crisis and disaster. There are wells of resources in man's nature which we are far from understanding, from which we gain courage and strength. How do these resources relate to our faith, and can they be exhausted, and if exhausted, replenished?

How shall we join the spontaneous, the intuitive and the mystical with the rational and the critical? Do we need a theology for this? Or is there a secularism or humanism deep enough in its

implications to afford hospitality to the thus-far unknown in human character?

Are there any rules for finding a faith to live by? Ought there to be any Do's, Don'ts, Musts, and Shall-Nots? Can there be a faith without a cosmology? What shall we do about the question of immortality?

What sort of faith is possible without certainty? If so, what is it faith *in?* If not, what are the sources of certainty?

Are we the first human beings to think in this way? It hardly seems possible. Yet the requirements at least *sound* new: a faith which is both gnostic and agnostic, which represents a trans-rational rapport with nature, yet violates no principle of reason.

One thing seems plain: These questions should have gradual and tentative answers. A faith that is living will have to be organic to living processes—be born, that is, from experiences which shed light upon the presentments of the mind. The great advantage which we of this time and generation may have over our predecessors is that, living in an age of disillusionment, we are freer of prejudices than the men of other periods. The pain of decision is perhaps the price we pay for our freedom and the opportunity to continue to be free.

Letter from **FLORIDA**

TO THE EDITORS: The various articles which have recently appeared in MANAS about the role which the sciences and scientists should play in resolving the confusion about values, in which even the most thoughtful and concerned of today's men and women are groping, tempts me to do what I have not done for years—write a letter to an editor.

We who are organizing the University of Melbourne are concentrating upon a specific approach to the resolution of this problem. In effect, we have asked ourselves, "Why hasn't science, and why haven't modern scientists, been able to resolve this problem?" And to this question we have answered: "Because no adequate frame of reference has been developed within which to integrate and synthesize what not only science but philosophy, religion, and the various arts can contribute to the creation of conviction about other values than those which are essentially sensate."

Before I try to outline the idea which inspires us in our venture at integration, let me call attention to the fact that the failure to face this preliminary problem—the problem of an adequate frame of reference—has rendered abortive effort after effort in this field. The unsatisfying result of the various "Conferences" on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, you have already recognized in the March I4 issue of MANAS. But I believe that the final outcome of the work of the Institute of Religion in an Age of Science will prove similarly unsatisfying.

Mr. Ralph W. Burhoe, in his "Scientific Invitation," makes the nature of the confusion in which we are floundering clear, but so did the organizers of the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion. Mr. Burhoe, however, tells us nothing which would indicate that the frame of reference in which the institute is going to deal with the problem, is any way different from that of previous efforts to produce a synthesis by simply inviting philosophers, theologians, and scientists to meet together. The result can hardly be any different from that of the survey courses, orientation courses, and "core" courses with which various universities have tried to integrate all modern knowledge, ostensibly for the purpose of lessening the confusing fragmentation amid which their students are trying to equip themselves for living during this age of irresolution. Each participant in these conferences, like each specialist in the integration and orientation courses in our universities, talks in a different frame of reference, and each uses a vocabulary of his own.

It seems to me hopelessly naïive to assume that modern man, and modern religion, can find a basis for the re-establishment of conviction by simply turning to science. None of the sciences today—physical, biological, psychological, or social—have any convictions to offer about values. They have successfully undermined those of traditional religion, but they have none with which to replace those which they have riddled with relativism. Good and evil, and beauty and ugliness, are variable geographic concepts. Not values, but either *pure* knowledge or technical progress, is the goal of modern science.

When the sciences are confronted by a demand for an answer to the question of how man should act now—since he cannot postpone action—they have only one answer: "Be patient. Science is young. It hasn't yet built a scientific basis for dealing with action." Yet the physicists who produced the atom bomb have, to their horror, discovered that man cannot wait; that he has to act, and that his action may be horrible in the absence of clear convictions about what is right and what is wrong in human action.

It is true that science has enormously important insights to offer bearing on this problem. But, then, so have religion, philosophy, and all the arts. The question is, how are these insights to be brought together so that the end-result will be an organic synthesis which inspires to conviction, and not a mechanical admixture of isolated facts?

Thus far, even though a few religionists like Mr. Burhoe are willing to pay whatever price may be necessary to buttress their values with science, there is no evidence that the majority of scientists, philosophers, humanists, and religionists, are willing to pay that price. The situation calls for a self-discipline from which everybody seems to shrink.

What is that price?

It seems to us a willingness to do two things: (1) to properly formulate the problem—or rather the complex of problems—to be dealt with, and (2) to agree upon a common vocabulary in dealing with it. No group which jumps across these two preliminary steps will, in our opinion, succeed in even beginning to provide mankind with convictions and with devotion to values other than material ones. Both steps are essential ones. Yet the first

is usually disposed of with a few glittering phrases; the second, by the fatuous hope that communication and synthesis are possible without it.

Our studies of the matter—of what I have referred to as the frame of reference—indicate two things: that a sufficiently accurate vocabulary can be adopted (without waiting for perfection), if an adequate number of "specialists" who have real knowledge of the various specialties into which knowledge is today divided, were willing, at least for the purpose of conference, to surrender their emotional attachment to their own specialized vocabularies. Since no such number can, in all probability, be persuaded to pay this price, some group—avowedly initiative—must make the effort, hoping for representatives from every great field of knowledge, of perfecting a vocabulary with which they can not only communicate with each other but by means of which they can communicate their findings to all mankind.

The second thing we have learned about the construction of an adequate frame of reference is: that the formulation in words of the problems calling for solution is infinitely more difficult than is realized by those who are already aware of the importance of what is involved.

It is a fatal error to assume that the answer to some one problem, capable of facile statement, is the key which will unlock the door to moral conviction and to devotion to its realization. Every problem in the complex of problems to be dealt with in living, is simply a different but interrelated aspect of the whole problem with which existence and living in the modern world confronts us all. To see the problem as a whole, it must be seen—not in all, but—in a sufficient number of its major aspects. Our own efforts in this direction have already led to the conviction that there are three fundamental problems—(1) the problem of belief, (2) the problem of values, (3) the problem of action—with various important subdivisions.

What has also been abundantly clarified is the fact that it is not necessary to scientifically validate answers to each and all of these problems. Really adequate answers to the problem of what is to be believed about the nature of man, about what value to attach to the various great goals to which life can be devoted, and what moral values are to be observed in trying to realize goals, are already at hand and can be used to furnish a basis for dealing with any and all problems.

My purpose in writing this letter has not been that of outlining the particular course of study which we of the University of Melbourne are developing. It is limited to pointing out that unless MANAS, and every conference or institute which is concerned about the tragic plight into which modern man has been plunged by the moral inability to use science and technology wisely, is willing to first construct an adequate frame of reference for examining our dilemma, it will do no more than call attention to our plight, without furnishing a clear direction as to what we might do about it.

If the devoted following which MANAS has managed to create for itself, small though it may be, were to concentrate on the problem of this frame of reference I believe that they would become influential enough to blaze a path for all mankind out of the wilderness in which it is at present floundering.

What mankind needs, individually and collectively, is obviously conviction about *how to act* in this age of crisis, but conviction is impossible in the absence of imperative *values*, and values of this kind are impossible in the absence of right *beliefs*. Science, and religion, and philosophy, and the humanities, can furnish us these, but they will never do so until each pays the price of putting its insight into a common frame of reference.

Sincerely yours

Melbourne University
Melbourne, Florida

RALPH BORSODI, *Chancellor*

REVIEW
CAPTIVE ARTISTS

THERE is one aspect of the war on reason to which we heartily subscribe—William Blake's war, which was against the confinement of the imagination and the enslavement or suffocation of the artist. In an unusual pamphlet devoted to William Blake (Pendle Hill Pamphlet No. 86, 35 cents), Harold C. Goddard examines the flaming paradoxes of Blake's verse, finding the eighteenth-century poet continually at odds with reason. Blake's bright god is Lucifer, the Light-bearer, who, in falling, becomes the rationalizing principle, and, according to Blake, the Prince of Darkness. Mr. Goddard explains:

> Now do not fancy, as is so easy, that all this is just a bit of old mythology or outworn superstition. Nothing so venerable is just superstition. No, it is around us, here and now. All history is little else. Religion begins in revelation, and falls into dogma and ecclesiasticism. Art begins in inspiration, and falls into slavery to rules and technique, into propaganda. Society begins in neighborliness, and falls into law and the state, and finally into war. Education begins in love of the child, and falls into methods and regimentation. "I'll bring the boy to reason," Blake's father probably said as he got out his whip (literal or metaphorical) when the child reported the tree full of angels; "I'll bring him to his senses." How wise words are! But Blake's mother intervened. Perhaps that's what mothers are for: to prevent fathers from bringing little boys to their reason, to their senses.

Blake, like other masters of the poetic imagination, had a hatred of tidy systems. He suspected the eighteenth century's god of Reason. Reason attempts to confine or outlaw what it cannot understand, and as a result, the imagination becomes a subversive force which insists upon revolt. Grasping this, Blake was able to explain what many have puzzled over:

> Why did Milton, without intending to, make Satan a sublime and magnificent figure, and God in comparison a pale and ineffectual one? Blake's answer is the profoundest comment ever made on *Paradise Lost.* "The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it."

A similar theme is developed in a passage from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell,* to which Goddard adds this comment:

> God's account is that Lucifer fell and formed a Hell in the Abyss of what he stole from Heaven. But the Devil's account is that Messiah fell and formed a Heaven of what he stole from the Abyss. In Milton Satan is a divine criminal who is flung out of Heaven for his pride, establishes a kingdom of evil and tempts Eve, and through her Adam, to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But in the Greek myth, Prometheus is a sort of divine Robin Hood who steals fire from Heaven and at the price of being crucified by Zeus bestows the gift of the gods on suffering humanity. Plainly these are opposite versions of the same story. It is the greatness of Blake that he accepts both and reconciles them. "Heaven, Earth and Hell henceforth shall live in harmony." Indeed, the moment we translate them into living biological and psychological terms we see they are both true, and that either alone is false.

Blake is the advocate and impassioned defender of the soaring, Platonic imagination which creates the real world of ideas and values. It is this imagination which is at home with paradox and has no fear of disaster in multiple vision. The makers of mechanical utopias and the lovers of fixed definitions are horrified by the possibility that a "reasoned" version of reality may be as false as it is true; or, to change the image, that the serpent who appeared in the Garden of Eden was the bearer of wisdom as well as the tempter of Eve. Yet Blake was a determined rebel against all that he saw about him. Something of his genius pervades Mr. Goddard's pamphlet, who quite plainly spent a lifetime absorbing the impact of Blake's vision:

> "That system will live to be hanged," Blake, with . . . prophetic insight, said, in effect, of modern industrial capitalism. He saw its evils more clearly while it was still in its infancy than many of us do now that it has become a giant, and denounced them in terms that leave nothing for a Karl Marx or a Lenin to desire.
>
> I wander thro' each charter'd street,

Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning Church appalls;
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the newborn Infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

It was not just the factory system, the Mills of Satan as he calls it, that Blake wrote of so penetratingly, but war, ecclesiasticism, the tyrannies of family life, wrong conceptions of love and marriage. On all these he anticipates astoundingly the criticism of our own time. Hard-headed critics who scorn Blake as a harmless idiot and dreamer should remember this. But while his diagnosis is identical with ours, his prescription is totally different. Don't you think the remedy of a man who foresaw the course of the diseases so clairvoyantly is entitled to attention?

It is easy to fall willing captive to Blake's magic, as disclosed by Harold Goddard. (Mr. Goddard taught English at Swarthmore College for thirty-seven years, and died in 1950, his monumental work, *The Meaning of Shakespeare*, being published by the University of Chicago Press in 1951). The matter of "captive artists," while of a humbler sort, is a theme not really alien to Blake's. In many walks of life, but particularly in fields of endeavor which employ words, communications, and some application of the arts, are men of delicate perceptions who feel constrained by the means of their livelihood to dull and forget the meaning of the arts. They are not *really* constrained, of course. They can starve in garrets or, perhaps, become great, and so command even the assent of this commercial civilization. But the grain of the times is against them. There are poets declining in advertising agencies, generating a false enthusiasm for a new "selling idea," and losing, eventually, their touch with the muse. There are painters who try to learn the vocabulary of hucksters, and composers who hope that there is a Tolstoyan justification for pop.

The corruption of the arts lies in the ulterior motive with which they are practiced, and the corruption of art, in Blake's terms, is the corruption of man. Endless "reasons" can be given for the service of the arts to commerce and merchandising. The advent of industrial design has brought the pattern of "gracious living" to many who had neither the wit to want it nor the taste to appreciate it, yet, in some mechanical way, their lives have been bettered. Classical music fills the ether, and good drama, now and then, can be seen and heard through the calculated subsidy of some large manufacturer who sees a pleasant link between culture and profit. And in all these industries, crafts, and arts which subserve the purposes of business are honest laborers making an honest living of sorts, enabled to practice their skills.

But what a completely denatured and secularized interpretation of the arts! They are servants, not masters, of the men who employ them. Not that the arts ought to be regarded as ends in themselves. Art is a form of vision, and the end is what is seen. Or, again, art is the efflorescence of life, and a conscious celebration of its divine unity. It is or can be a testament to a web of correlated significances which bring into one grand scheme of meaning the infinite diversities of life. As Richard Hertz wrote in *Man on a Rock:*

Chinese peasants, moving into the mountains every morning to gather tea, sang a hymn in honor of their enterprise, which they compared to a pilgrimage to the Western paradise. The Volga boatman "accepted the universe," and the women of Madagascar acted, when they cultivated the rice-fields, like bayaderes trying to please a god.

Miguel Covarrubias, in his book on Bali, describes the bandjars, or cooperative societies as we

> would call them in our dry idiom; they watched the magic of work unfold with proper art and majesty in their Indonesian eden; when night fell they sent the arpeggios to their tireless orchestras through fragrant vales. . . .
>
> The medieval fraternities of workers in Flanders and Lyons, toiling in the frozen music of crepuscular cities, rolled the stone from the tomb of their narrow space; their triumph over the refractory material of the world was not mere routine, but was understood by them in its vast metaphysical connotations. Work interpreted as spiritual discipline gave these people a superhuman patience, detached from results.

Art is all this, and much more; it is, as Blake held, the language of the imagination—by which "the divine in man communicates with the divine in man." It would be a great pity if this should be forgotten by our captive artists, whose employers think of art as a special technique in the seduction of the national pocketbook.

COMMENTARY
ON THE THRESHOLD

MR. RALPH BORSODI, author of *Flight from the City*, *This Ugly Civilization*, and *Education and Living* (1948), and who is now chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Florida (see Frontiers, MANAS, Jan. 18), writes a letter from Florida to propose a systematic attack on the problem of synthesis between science, religion, philosophy, and the arts.

Since Mr. Borsodi's personal achievements in synthesis have not been negligible (see *Flight from the City)*, he speaks with some authority, and no one will deny that his letter reviews some of the major weaknesses threatening any endeavor toward synthesis which fails to take account of the tenacious hold of past tradition, assumption, and methodology—and, of course, vocabulary—on the human mind.

We feel confident that the University of Melbourne will contribute to the fresh approach to the problem that is needed, and that a deliberate effort of the sort Mr. Borsodi outlines is bound to be rewarded by useful discovery.

Mr. Borsodi, however, would probably be the first to admit that wisdom—and it is wisdom we seek—involves something more than well-designed techniques. And we, at any rate, do not feel quite ready to confine the attack on the problem in precise definitions, however broadly and sagaciously conceived.

Ours is a culture already in extreme ferment and possibly on the verge of radical change. The present seems pregnant with great conceptions, yet their import remains largely hidden. This may be an apocalyptic notion, but it is the best we can do to explain a reticence toward anything resembling "formal discipline" in connection with attempts at synthesis. Probably, we're afraid we might miss something by coming into focus too soon.

Our efforts, doubtless, as a result, will suffer from imprecision. Even fallacies may occasionally appear in our pages, although we shall trust in acuter critics to point them out. So, we shall go our own pace, sharpening the issues as best we can, remaining hospitable to dealers in magnificent mysteries like William Blake, and warming to the enthusiasm of everyone who is willing to work, even "naïvely," for ends of great and manifest importance, while searching along paths that are admittedly obscure.

We are persuaded that the cultural change and growth hopeful men of the present long for, if it is to come, will come from widely separated sources, providing the incalculable fertility of difference as well as a grass-roots sort of inspiration. We are persuaded, in short, that *finding* the truth is not a group project, although all men who seek the truth inevitably share a common *esprit de corps* and will eventually recognize in one another the hallmarks of their common quest. It is a role of MANAS to try to point these hallmarks out, for mutual help and encouragement.

The time will come, no doubt, when a unified vocabulary and a consensus of conceptual approach will characterize the civilization now in the making. Every great civilization of the past has found, in its maturity, a broad philosophical unity of this sort: witness Egypt, China, India, and Greece. But for the modern world, that time still lies in the future. We do not yet know enough, in other words, to "properly formulate the problem," and "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in our philosophy," is still the text for our civilization.

It is possible, of course, that Mr. Borsodi has in mind an approach that comprehends these considerations. For that, the reader is invited to go to his books. And it is undeniable that any effort at unified analysis, such as is being attempted at the University of Melbourne, should teach us all many things. The point is that every frame of reference tends to be selective as it becomes specific—and the more specific, the more selective, or even exclusive. Thus, for educational purposes, the definition of problems seems far more important than their solution, and we pause on this threshold until a greater confidence enables us to cross it.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

"THE NEW EDUCATION"—AGAIN

WHATEVER else can be said about the "modern view in education," it is certain that it has many spokesmen. Volumes are continually issuing from the environs of Teachers' College, Columbia—on the one hand inviting the attacks of such critics as Albert Lynd, Alfred Bestor, and Rudolph Flesch, while a host of teachers derive gospels of classroom practice from the same volumes. At present we have *The Emerging Self*, produced in 1954, and circulated with the endorsement of William H. Kilpatrick, who stands as a sort of unofficial dean of the views represented at Columbia.

The author, Thomas L. Hopkins, makes himself a fair target for the critics, but he also presents the view represented by Dewey and Kilpatrick—namely, that education should be something better or at least more than, a planning *for* children and adolescents. Most open to attack, perhaps, is his argument that the curriculum should be planned by children—or, more correctly, that it should grow out of the presently felt needs of the children, and expand from this point to some meeting-ground with the "cultural heritage." Adult planning of the curriculum, according to Dr. Hopkins, is "authoritarian." Granting that many liberalizing changes and improvements have been adopted, he insists that the old authoritarian controls still operate, however "subtly":

> From the authoritarian point of view the curriculum is now being made or designed by adults. . . . The present theory and practice are only a refinement of the approach of Spencer and Bobbitt. They do not represent a new point of view, neither do they produce a basic change in the educational program for children or college students. As they see it, these adults are making the curriculum for children. According to their own evidence, however, the learning results are unsatisfactory.
>
> Who should make the curriculum? Children or pupils or college students or behavers should make it. They have made it in the past and will continue to make it in the future. How can adults work with them so that behavers can make a better curriculum? This question is simple to answer but difficult to achieve in practice. One suggestion will be given here since it will be discussed throughout the book. Preplanning or planning in advance and planning on the spot or planning in process go on in every life activity. The learnings which constitute the individual's self are his preplanning for every experience and his tendency to action in his on-the-spot or process direction. And so it is with teachers and pupils. But the teacher must change the nature of his preplanning in order to work cooperatively with pupils in process planning. He must study his adult need-experience process so as to feel, conceptualize, accept, and use it in improving himself. His self-security must emerge from fixed ends to an ongoing process. He must recognize results in his own improved behaviors before he is adequately prepared for on-the-spot planning with children. Traditionally the quality of the preplanning is the quality of the subject matter selected to meet adult needs. In the cooperative approach the quality of the preplanning is the quality of the person who works with the pupils. Herein lies a fundamental difference, for a disintegrating person can teach subjects, as every reader of these words knows. But only a teacher who is moving toward higher operational unity on a maturity scale can help children or college students find and improve themselves through their own need-experiences.

Stripped of its sometimes confusing verbiage, you may recognize in this something akin to the fundamentals of Gandhi's "basic education." For Gandhi felt that children who are engaged in necessary practical community work—work shared by teachers who are principally wise companions—will in time themselves perceive the need for considerable breadth of learning. Mathematics is to be studied when calculations become important to the erection of a building or the allotting of seeds for a field. Art becomes important when a building is to be decorated: in this way, the children design their "curriculum." But, we should also note, they do *not* design the *activity* which gives rise to curriculum needs. The activity was planned by adults, and is not planned in order to meet the abstract intellectual needs of the child. The planning is community planning, carried on by those best able to conceive and fill the needs, of the community.

Since Dr. Hopkins whirls through such wide circles in endeavoring to settle on his point, we are not especially anxious to shield him from the critical analyses of language and logic that are sure to be directed at *The Emerging Self.* (Read carefully the last sentence quoted and you may believe, with us, that Teachers' College professors seem to dictate most of what they write, and are much addicted to terms practically esoteric save for initiates of their own clique. How do you like "higher operational opportunity on a maturity scale" or "need-experiences"?)

Other and more interesting criticisms of Hopkins' thesis can be made. One would imagine, for one thing, that college students would be better able to plan a suitable curriculum than members of a grade school. But a University of California Faculty Committee, after a study of student motivation, came to the following conclusion:

> Much motivation is irrelevant to the real purposes of the university: the social prestige that a college degree commands the financial gain that it supposedly insures; and the "contacts," as they are called, social, commercial and even romantic, that one makes there. These sturdy motivations trail off into such gentle vagaries as going to college "to have a good time" or keeping up with the same group to which one belonged in high school. Underlying these ostensible but irrelevant motivations are even more deep-set but equally irrelevant ones: escape from the home; or, conversely, exodus under parental pressure for a college degree; a desire for a sanctuary in the ivory tower with its imagined immunity from the pressures of work-a-day life; or even a simple urge for a change of place and pace.
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> For all these reasons, familial, social, and educational, the average student entering the University is either mismotivated or is not motivated at all, in terms of the central aspirations and ideals of the University.

Once again, then, we wonder if the profound teacher, Gandhi, did not present a rather ideal synthesis, rather than simply a point of view. He believed in selecting the *activities* of education as something of obvious benefit to the entire community, students and teachers alike, and allowing; definite subject-matter to evolve around the spontaneously awakened interest of the students. The term "subject," of course, may here give an erroneous impression, since a "subject" suggests something that can be mastered by memory, and then regarded as an accomplishment. This is the same psychology that allows college students to regard the acquisition of a formal degree as having tangible value.

But how can one go about achieving Gandhi's sort of integral activity in our own cultural setting?

Well, why couldn't education at public expense be limited to less than half the school day, so that *teaching* would be more highly valued, while the responsibility for worthwhile expenditure of most of the child's time would return to the home? It may be true that many of our teachers are doing a better job with children than the parents, but, somewhere along the line, education has come to mean something separate from daily living. Whether we trace this back to the medieval church and its double standard of "spiritual" and "practical," or to some other origin, the tendency described inhibits that genuine passion for learning which all educators long to discover in the young.

FRONTIERS

"The Timeless World"

ALICE GRIFFIN's survey, "New Trends in the American Theater," appearing in *Perspectives USA*, Winter 1956, focuses attention on "the renaissance of the regional theater." Apparently, the generally pulverizing effect of the motion pictures upon live theater finally cancelled out some of its own force—aided by television. When too much sensation, contrived by marvelous technics, comes too easily, it is not surprising that a number of persons suddenly discover enough respect for their own imagination to prefer drama allowing the spectator a more active part. And living actors, of course, carry a warmth not possible of transfer via celluloid. Mrs. Griffin concludes her summary by remarking that "the spark of the living drama, which was almost extinguished, survived after all, and it lives today in the hearts of people everywhere." Here is part of her supporting story:

> In the past twenty years, the word "theater" has assumed a new meaning almost everywhere in the United States. There was a time, at the beginning of the century, when theater meant stock companies that played melodramas from coast to coast, even in the smallest towns. But then, in the twenties, motion pictures virtually killed country-wide live drama by appropriating its houses and its audiences; and theater came to mean the stage activity which was limited to a small area along Broadway in New York City, where production costs were high and producers relied on tested formulas to create their successful comedies and musicals. Only in the last two decades, in thousands of American communities, has theater come again to mean the living drama—Shakespeare, Sophocles, Moliere, and the modern playwrights—played on new stages in productions that excite the imagination. The regional theater is becoming an integral aspect of cultural life in American towns, as important as public libraries and civic concerts. It may not be long before good theater is within the reach of everyone.
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> The new pioneers in the theater were not experts sent out from New York to perform a job and then return. They were the residents of the community where the theater, either civic or university-sponsored, was to function. With their own hands, theater-minded citizens converted churches, garages, and shops into stages; with common sense they planned their administration, with imagination they produced their plays. Since then, growing audiences have made possible new buildings and the drama departments in the universities have provided plays for their own communities as well as trained theatrical personnel for other towns. The regional groups have received the theater that had expired throughout the country, and they have done it with seriousness of purpose and freshness of approach. Undoubtedly they will play an important role in shaping the American theater of the future.
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> From the West to the East extend the regional theaters. There is the University of Washington in Seattle, with three theaters and a touring company. There is Theater '55 in Dallas, Texas, an arena theater established eight years ago by the late Margo Jones, dedicated to presenting new plays by promising authors—among them Tennessee Williams and William Inge. There is the Cleveland Play House in Ohio, in its fortieth year, operating three well-equipped theaters, maintained by a paid staff of sixty, which offer fifteen to twenty plays a year. There is the Erie Playhouse in Pennsylvania, where 18,000 persons, nearly fifteen per cent of the community's total population, each year buy subscriptions to the season's plays before seeing a single production. There are theaters in tents, in Quonset huts, in million-dollar auditoriums, in rebuilt barns and churches, in cellars and lofts and courtyards.

An introductory essay by Tennessee Williams to his *Rose Tattoo* offers light on the ingredients of "living theater." Williams, something like William Faulkner, by the way, often seems to do his most impressive thinking in essays or introductions (which may mean that we know nothing about drama!) instead of in his plays. Here he speaks of the introspective value of tragedy, proposing that man becomes neurotic by allowing himself to become "a creature of time," and can recover emotional balance only by discovering ways of *arresting* time. Thus, when we observe the drama of human travail and confusion, we are at once participants and above or beyond the involvement—seeing what is wrong with ourselves as participants. The time is our time, and with the burden of predicaments lessened, we achieve both liberation and insight. But let Mr. Williams speak for himself, as he honors a line from the author of *The Ballad of the Sad Café:*

> Carson McCullers concludes one of her lyric poems with the line: "Time, the endless idiot, runs screaming 'round the world'." It is this continual rush of time, so violent that it appears to be screaming, that deprives our actual lives of so much dignity and meaning, and it is, perhaps more than anything else, the *arrest of time* which had taken place in a completed work of art that gives to certain plays their feeling of depth and significance.
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> Fear and evasion are the two little beasts that chase each other's tails in the revolving wire-cage of our nervous world. They distract us from feeling too much about things. Time rushes toward us with its hospital tray of infinitely varied narcotics, even while it is preparing us for its inevitably fatal operation . .
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> So successfully have we disguised from ourselves the intensity of our own feelings, the sensibility of our own hearts, that plays in the tragic tradition have begun to seem untrue. For a couple of hours we may surrender ourselves to a world of fiercely illuminated values in conflict, but when the stage is covered and the auditorium lighted, almost immediately there is a recoil of disbelief. "Well, well!" we say as we shuffle back up the aisle, while the play dwindles behind us with the sudden perspective of an early Chirico painting. . . . Whether or not we admit it to ourselves, we are all haunted by a truly awful sense of impermanence.

Talk of ethics and morality somehow takes on depth when related to Mr. Williams' description of time, as when he writes: "The great and only possible dignity of man lies in his power deliberately to choose certain moral values by which to live as steadfastly as if he, too, like a character in a play, were immured against the corrupting rush of time. Snatching the eternal out of the desperately fleeting is the great magic trick of human existence. As far as we know, as far as there exists any kind of empiric evidence, there is no way to beat the game of *being* against *non-being*, in which non-being is the predestined victor on realistic levels."

Here is another interpretation of Greek tragedy. Time, as Williams sees it, often does something quite other than it should in respect to experience of our own emotions. It is usually assumed that our emotional impressions carry us away because we think about them *too much.* But it may be, as Williams remarks, that we encounter far greater difficulty by falsely regarding our distressed feelings as "inconsequential," thus deciding to escape or ignore them. We need to believe that the simplest stress, the smallest bit of suffering—and the momentary ecstasy—is worth much contemplation:

> The classic tragedies of Greece had tremendous nobility. The actors wore great masks, movements were formal, dance-like, and the speeches had an epic quality which doubtless were as removed from the normal conversation of their contemporary society as they seem today. Yet they did not seem false to the Greek audiences: the magnitude of the events and the passions aroused by them did not seem ridiculously out of proportion to common experience. And I wonder if this was not because the Greek audiences knew, instinctively or by training, that the created world of a play is removed from that element which makes people *little* and their emotions fairly inconsequential.
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> Great sculpture often follows the lines of the human body: yet the repose of great sculpture suddenly transmutes those human lines to something that has an absoluteness, a purity, a beauty, which would not be possible in a living mobile form.
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> A play may be violent, full of motion: yet it has that special kind of repose which allows contemplation and produces the climate in which tragic importance is a possible thing, provided that certain modern conditions are met.