

*Multae viae veritas*: regular readers of this journal will by now be familiar with that version of protest which is directed against what Marcuse has called the growing civilization of 'one-dimensional man' (cf. e.g. Fergus Kerr, *New Blackfriars*, March, April, June 1969, March, May 1970). And this mode of formulating a deep sense of privation is only a sophisticated attempt to spell out systematically and philosophically what the ordinary man will more succinctly, if inarticulately, sum up in the phrase 'the rat-race'. Any such protest and resentment is the negative of a yearning for a whole way of life which is informed by a sense of art, style and common purpose springing from the archaic depths of man. In another vogue but indicative phrase, counter-culture, it is 'culture' which is of the essence, whereas 'counter' is accidental. In this perspective, the slow creation of a home of beauty, repose and delight at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, is a miniature and portent of a social creation on a larger scale. Jim Ede, its creator and curator, has described the home he began to make first for himself and then for the undergraduates as a 'place where they found that art was no removed event, but a vital part of daily life. . . . Kettle's Yard . . . is in no way meant to be an Art Gallery or Museum. . . . It is, rather, a continuing way of life from these last 50 years, in which stray objects, stones, glass, pictures, sculpture, in light and in space, have been used to make manifest the underlying stability which more and more we need to recognize if we are not to be swamped by all that is so rapidly opening up before us.'

What we groan under and strive in our various ways to overthrow is the repression of the powers of the imagination and of the free ranging of the spirit to find itself in true relationship. But our attempts to transcend the constrictions of our finer faculties can take basically two quite distinct forms: we can either strive to remove into what is, in one form or another, a realm of pure essence of the spirit, distilled of all that is materially and bodily human, or we can continue the often anguished struggle to infuse the style of the spirit into the very raw materials of such lives as we inherit. In the former case, we become like week-end drop-outs who return to the drudgery and conformism of work during the week, or like those increasing thousands who escape to the golden sun and sky-blue waters once a year. But such a course, in the end, is merely to allow safety-valves to relieve the otherwise unbearable pressure of a system when it is the 'system' itself which ought to be changed so as to permit of the breathing of the creative spirit into its midst.

This latter endeavour, however, involves not merely the existential struggle of assuming the actual given of our lives in order to impart to it the inwardness of style but the intellectual acknowledgement of

an intrinsic harmony or complementarity between factors which too often we take to be antithetical. It is to strive in life for what can be maintained to be the real truth of art, namely, that brute facts, 'facticity', do not exist of themselves, but only within a context of some shaping pattern and economy of order. For what seems to emerge again from various articles which we publish this month is that what Iris Murdoch once termed the 'journalistic' and the 'crystalline' are not truly opposed but complementary, albeit in varying tensions. In this way, the deepest truth of life and of art consists in a synthesis of the tensions between correspondence with the phenomenal world and some sort of interpretive and therefore symbolic initiative. And this is why such apparent opposites as representational and abstract, realistic and parabolic, empirical and fictive, history and myth, matter and shape, fact and mystery, are really correlatives.

Any such view of the world, of course, presupposes an inherent, underlying rationality and intelligibility as the norm of things, however shot through with flaws, surds, frustration and fall. More deeply still, such a view finds in the Incarnation its supreme exemplar, validation and innermost explanation: the achievement on any scale, and in morals or in matter, in life or in art, of any shaped and shaping whole out of scattered chaos, any wresting of a satisfied silence out of the potential economy of movement, will appear as a prefiguration and epiphany, however passing and makeshift, of a greater glory of tranquillity growing to grandeur from within. Any embodiment of the spirit which paradoxically releases the spirit in the measure in which it seems an inevitable fit is another sign and hint of the enfleshment of the Word.

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