

At this point it becomes necessary to review in brief the place of the innovator in what had become an ever "complexing", persistently enriched cultural milieu. As I stated in the beginning of this section, innovational activities have met with varying degrees of success in the distinguishable epochs of Western history, although their unorthodox quality has met with less automatic disapproval here than in the East. We remember that the individuals who reshaped Europe between 400 and 1000 worked against intolerably poor odds, and only with the growth of the Church in the 11th century did civilization in Europe find a stalwart and permanent influence regarding its survival. In the 13th and 14th centuries, apparently no-one stood to have lasting influence. Incessant wars and the Crusades plus the Black Death and gross insecurity among most societal members, make those few innovators who did produce significant change seem uncommonly lucky.

However, as every schoolboy once knew, what made renaissance man different from the medieval mold was the astoundingly high opinion he held of himself. This courage to institute alterations in all levels of existence - which later reached epidemic proportions - boosted Luther and friends into reevaluating the place of a staid Church in the spiritual (and consequently, secular) lives of men. The ideology of the reformation produced high levels of literacy so necessary to later developments in history, along with

sundry other monstrously important changes, all of which were of course outside Luther's purview. Subsequent victories for the individual were less sweet, for the birth of personal rationalism and the scientific method came hand in hand with increasingly depersonalized governments, so that as Fromm (perhaps exaggerating) noted, man in the medieval "felt himself secure and safe"(101), and the birth of nation states and intense bureaucratization minus feudal obligations created general malaise. Again the individual innovator tread sensitive soil when propounding the new: Galileo was forced to retract his findings, "Lutherans hounded the pious Kepler, Calvinists exiled Grotius, Jews excommunicated Spinoza, Anglicans silenced Hobbes and burned his books, Jesuits got the works of Descartes put on the Index" (102).

With the beginning of the 18th century, the aberrant creative soul began to find himself once again in workable surroundings, after a tenuous century and a half of arbitrary response from the powerful, religious, and small-minded - in many cases one in the same. The history of the democratic revolutions and the results of those mass movements in the 19th century are common enough that I will not enumerate details, even to the slight degree I have done so thus far. What needs to be mentioned in reference to developments over the following 250 years are several broad trends, each of which affected innovative talent thoroughly.

Our knowledge of the past three centuries is in most instances copious, especially when compared to the eras just

surveyed. The history of invention alone occupies many volumes, even excluding the cataract of achievements in this century. But as mentioned before, technological innovation came into its own as a prized and laudable activity shortly after the "Century of Genius", and henceforth has met with far more acceptance than earlier innovators would have thought possible. Our attention therefore shifts (and in this we differ somewhat from LaPiere's fascination with material improvements) to ideological and (especially) organizational innovation.

The English Puritans and their spiritual allies, the Dissenters and related free-thinking religious groups hit upon the then shocking conception of life as purposively improveable, and not necessarily dictated by royalty. When Charles I lost his head in 1649, the first utterly secular government went into rocky operation for slightly more than a decade, protesting all the while its Godfearing intentions. But when Cromwell died and the Restoration came, the newer line of monarchs realized that levels of expectation among the people (for the time being most catered to in the nobility) were such that pigheaded absolutism was no longer a healthy practice. The line of Georges, famed for their ineptitude and lack of tact, were all the British needed to begin utilizing, almost by chance, the services of a Prime Minister and cabinet. In France the excesses of Louis XIV had begun to wear upon the patience of both the merchants and noble butterflies, compelled to spend lavishly in their court

existences, so that his death marked the beginning and the end of his inimitable style. Changes in values forced the ruling powers, whether the King, Parliament, clergy or nobility, to continuously offer demonstrable proof to their subjects that their authority was legitimate. This concern with mass approval ("consensus formation"), if even at first of a nominal variety, was something antithetical to the teaching of Louis XIV and his able ministers, and while England had never suffered under such bombastic absolutism, even for Elizabeth, the concept of "accountability" would have been repugnant. Whether or not one agrees with Weber and many others that ideas are capable of propelling individuals to social action, or adheres to the opposing Marxist-Mannheim understanding of ideological justifications, this fact is clear, without establishing causality: by the beginning of the 18th century, the bourgeoisie in all countries (except Spain), the increasingly literate masses of both the urban proletariat and peasant class, and many of the nobles whose fortunes languished because of outmoded restraints on their activities, all conceived of the monarch and the central government in increasingly rational terms. Newton's formulations, which to him seemed irrelevant to larger issues, had begun the usual process of filtering down to mundane levels, to such an extent that Voltaire as spokesman of rationality enjoyed a readership in the hundreds of thousands, beginning in 1733 with his outrageous Letters on the English. The people, not only the idle rich, found time to read and idolize

the author of Candide, and his influence on popular issues - often religious or political - reached a height unknown to any other writer, past or present, with the qualified exception of Mao. He produced 15,000 words per day at times and his hyper-rationalism, free of any shred of doubt about the possibility of men shaping their existences, has thoroughly permeated the French to this day, not to mention the rest of the Western "democracies".

History from this point is neatly divided into major conflicts, either between nations or between classes or interests within individual countries (external vs. internal wars). The politically dormant but intellectually bright period of the first half of the 18th century, as we all know, finally culminated in the most innovative of all collective behavior, the violent overthrow of a government too slow in recognizing the liabilities inseparably linked with feudal Weltanschauungen. The study of the French Revolution alone tells one a great deal about the dynamics of this style change. First, there must be urban centers filled with semi- or non-literate, manipulable, disenfranchised masses, whose patience with piecemeal reform has been exhausted and who have suddenly felt the agony of yet another setback to improving their lives. Secondly, there must exist intellectual leaders and spokesmen of the masses, who almost invariably originate in the bourgeoisie, and whose movement and speech are for whatever reasons permitted by the incumbent rulers. Finally, there must obtain an incredibly obtuse governmental bureaucracy or oligarchy

whose skills and resources in both co-optation or oppression are unequal to the task of any longer containing the wrath of the collective, and whose claims to legitimacy have time and again been shown to be unfounded. Only with these conditions as a minimum can the large-scale (or inclusive) political revolution (as opposed to palace coups, etc.) meet with success. As is well known, the vast majority of revolutions have failed even in an attempt to gain control, to say nothing of their ideologically utopian goals for rectifying wrongs of the society. No matter whose analytical framework one uses in assessing the etiology or lasting effects of revolutions, whether Brinton, Lyford Edwards, Leo Gottschalk, Davies, Gurr, or Eckstein (103), inter alia, for the typical societal member, the changes are good that immediate benefits from upheavals will not be in the offing. Collective social change of the revolutionary sort "devours its own children", and in its efforts to fully institutionalize its "challenge ideology", no-one is safe from arbitrary repression. The enormous literature on revolution attests to at least this much.

After Napoleon's demise, Europe's leaders (particularly Castlereagh and Metternich) were very quick in taking steps to prevent another Bastille (104). Counter-revolutionary tactics of every nature were employed all over Europe between Waterloo and the general continental revolutions of 1848, the most wide-spread and glorious of failures in collective action. An anomalous situation prevailed: on the one hand there was

an almost universal disgust and fear over the wanton destruction during the later stages of the French Revolution; on the other, factions from different strata of the social structure and for diverse reasons were strident in their support for liberalism and the "sensibility" of gradual eradication of social ills. Out of this dizziness, bastard ideologies grew, romanticism, methodism, and pietism (105) all gaining large support, along with a generalized reactionary mood in favor of royal restoration. But the dialectic of European modernization see-sawed with amazing speed between extremes, and by 1830 revolutions again shook Europe, for much the same reasons that the late 18th century American and French "internal wars" had come about. However, because of the strength of the still viable aristocratic landowners and other reactionary elements (particularly in Britain), these upheavals of the mid-revolutionary period met with failure. (One historian has claimed that the only difference between the 1830 and 1848 revolutions was this lingering ability of the conservative elements to fight back (106).)

By this time the liberal humanitarian doctrine had gained such a following (and concurrently, radically-inspired bloodshed of earlier years was still repugnant) that members of the ruling classes began piecemeal reforms which were the precursor to the modern art of co-optation, in draining off from the revolutionary factions both leadership and popular support (107). At this point and for the next century and a quarter, somehow the notion entered the minds of leaders and

followers alike that French-style revolution had become a no-win game, or at best, one of diminishing returns. Political organization on the part of rulers grew much tighter and their techniques of coercion and repression advanced in sophistication geometrically while social improvements for the disenfranchised lumbered along the gradualist route. Nevertheless, a new mode of change became necessary.

The enormous growth of urban centers and the expansion of communication (for example, the repeated attempts to establish in England a radical, working-class newspaper between 1810 and 1830, finally culminating in cheap Sunday papers around 1840 (108)), along with the ever increasing interest in socio-economic matters among the traditionally dormant lower classes, gave rise to the social movement (or segmented revolution), the tool of the collectivity for social change into our own day. The prerequisites for successful social innovation of this type are several: (1) a high level of general frustration and dissatisfaction, but of such a nature that the potential participants recognize the (Mills') connection between personal problems and public issues; (2) this frustration must become focalized - pure anomic despondency has been in evidence throughout history, but social movements have not; (3) urban concentration of a literate and politicized mass; (4) at least a rudimentary understanding of secondary behavior, the most essential move from Gemeinschaft- to Gesellschaft-thinking, necessary to an acceptance of complex organization; (5) rapid and efficient mass communication

(certainly one of the handicaps of the earliest attempts at such organization was the lack of telecommunications); (6) the capacity to create a separate definition of social reality and out of this, a hypothetically rearranged social organization; (7) the early emergence of strong leadership. The real key however, as mentioned before, is also the reluctance of the conservative interests to utilize brute repression (the predominance of "foxes"), the use of which would doom any social movement in its infancy. (This formulation is a composite of the findings of Hadley Cantril, Hans Toch, Brinton and other well-known interpreters of collective political action.)

Even if the social movement can formulate an appealing "challenge ideology" - as opposed to the institutionalized ideology (or simply, "institution") of the status quo - it faces a multitude of organizational problems. The mortality rate for movements is extremely high, as it proceeds through each of the four basic stages: social unrest, popular stage, stage of formalization, and institutionalization. Without going into detail, a few remarks may be in order regarding each of these stages (again, drawn from prominent theorists). Most movements fail to emerge from the first stage of social unrest, since one or more of the prerequisites listed above are not in evidence.

The popular stage is characterized by the focalization of general distaste for the status quo, very often through the "discovery" - by the emergent leadership - of a scapegoat.

A martyr at this point is almost essential in order to garner support among the uncommitted, but interested, masses. (The powers that be if of any sophistication will naturally do everything possible to avoid creation of martyrs, and will go so far as to disallow the opposition to fabricate one - a tactic not unknown to enterprising movement leaders.) The infighting will become extremely heated and through something of a Darwinian selection process, the most adept will rise to the top and immediately begin pamphleteering, beginning dissemination of "The Word", usually in capsulized slogans. The leaders make certain that the impression is left with the followers of overwhelming external popular support for their cause(s). Rostering begins and the "historical invincibility" of the movement is proclaimed. Coinciding with these aggressive moves, the establishment is provoked into confrontation. An initial defeat usually ends the future of the movement, either due to leadership loss, or because (as Bismarck did with such skill) the ideological position of the challengers is neatly included in the program of the dominant interests. If the actual aims of the movement are purely ideological (as the anti-war movement of the 60's apparently was), then eradication of the issue dissolves the movement; but often radicals in search of a cause merely gravitate to another of the (many) possible areas which require rectification.

The movement during the formalization stage has already been more successful than most, and its ideological line

changes from the inclusive, all-encompassing demands which typify revolutions, to the more tractable segmental definition: change of one particular social evil or institution. The choice of this stolid institution is a delicate one and not always so simple as one might think, for if the institution is a paper tiger and insufficient moral indignation is aroused by its obtuseness, then the movement will founder for lack of a detestable enemy. Additional factors come under consideration: for instance, high social mobility or simple geographic mobility are both bad for any movement. Captive audiences tied to distasteful statuses and locations make the best movement personnel - which is one of the reasons for the poor organizational qualities displayed by the student activists of the last decade. Also in the minds of the leaders is the necessity to reformulate the movement line in more absolutistic, personalized and simple terms so that complex problems can be relegated to easy solutions. Large and nonpersonalizable evils (e.g. population problems) are nearly impossible to use as bases for movement activity. At this point too those intellectuals and others with non-standardized information become disenchanted with the simplistic panaceas offered by the leaders, and defect. An officially prescribed ideology is formulated along with a multitude of procedural regulations pertaining to the movement members, referred to by this time as the "elect". Goals are made specific and time-tables set.

The leader of the formalized movement will have about

him two types of assistants, the philosophers of the movement and the instrumental lieutenants. Below these are the regional and cell leaders, who are trained in the art of managing mass demonstrations. They do this in such a way as to completely avoid the possibility of members conversing, seminar style, so they might not discover (to their amazement!) that their supposedly shared goals and values are not so homogeneous as the leadership would like them to believe. An assumption of tremendous camaraderie is allowed to build up among the membership, and the meetings of members take on a carnival, good-time atmosphere, utterly foreign to the extreme rationality going on in the small leadership enclaves. One of the leaders' major concerns is of course funds, with which they purchase regalia helpful in creating consensus-formation among the members, plus other obvious expenses, and without which the entire operation collapses.

A subtle shift begins within the ranks. Those fiery, effusive types for whom the movement in its infancy was an emotional outlet give way to more bureaucratic souls, willing to take orders and whose intellectual-emotional commitment to the movement is of a more predictable sort. The maintenance of cell conformity across the board is essential, otherwise factional strife will sap the movement of its combative strength. Therefore discipline must be maintained, and to do so, some fratricidal techniques are employed.

Finally, the movement will meet with success and gain the changes as originally conceived, or modified along

the way, thereby reaching institutionalization; or it will meet the established order in final confrontation and be crushed.

In order to appreciate adequately the impossibility of another "classical" social movement taking place in this country or in parts of Europe, the individual personality of the cell participant requires examination. Even in the days of a relative abundance of social movements, leaders (who typically are extremely intelligent and capable men, not the raving lunatics portrayed popularly) had a devilish time maintaining internal cohesion within the movement, especially as it grew. Those who participate in the cells are constantly reminded of their ingroupness, ethnocentrism and general rightness in the ways of the world. The member must buy the national or regional ideology at the cell level, so it must become at once highly personalized, but general: i.e., simple and sloppily applicable. As Cantril put it, the cell is the "microcosmic element of the movement", and the internal discipline and social control - usually through peer pressure - is rewarded with heavy emotional payoffs as to being "in the know" and correctly aligned with ultimates. In brief, the "true believer" is as much at home in the cell meeting as he would be in prayer meeting.

It is at once obvious that the marginally informed, or more ably phrased, the "selectively informed" individuals who fill the rosters must adhere in thought and action to definitions of reality (at least regarding those segments

dealt with by the movement) anchored in absolutes. Social movements do not traffic in moral and intellectual gray areas. The remarks of the leaders are in keeping with strong value positions on every issue or possible issue (something Nixon does naturally) in an effort to avoid dealing with the specific and controversial: the mouthing of slightly programmatic abstract sentiments. The point of my thesis then is largely concerned with the degree to which a leader (who must be simultaneously "one of us" and "above it all") can elicit from his personnel unthinking absolutistic behavior; and correlatively, how much the modern mentality will accept prefabricated, highly subjectivistic and empirically inaccurate assessments of reality.

The last real social movement in this country was King's civil rights movement. A man of great intelligence and consummate organizational skills, even he finally failed (long before his death) to knit together a thoroughly effective collective mode of social change. To begin with, the opposition had, at least at the outset, everything going its way: the laws, moral sentiments of the populace, social control agencies, etc. But even more problematic than King's enemies were some of his allies, the white intellectual spokesmen who worked for understanding on the part of middle America. In order to retain their aid (which certainly effected change, in the same way Victorian female crusaders aided in the reeducation of patrician England vis a vis the poor) King had to concur with their intellectual notions of

equality. But in order to simultaneously retain his black followers' zeal and self-sacrifice, he was forced to assume the ministerial posture of simplistic emotionalism. Towards the end of his work he faced more and more the accusation of absolutists (on both sides): "two-faced", which of course he was out of plan and necessity.*

*Closely related to these observations about the "last real social movement in the U.S." are current speculations about the situation of blacks today and what, if anything, they are doing en masse. To answer this, I attended recently a brilliant sermon-lecture by the acknowledged "leader" of blacks today, Jesse Jackson, whose topic at Amherst College (March 6, 1974) was "Black Capitalism: Myth or Reality". His hortatory techniques were flawless and extremely reminiscent of his mentor and patron, Martin Luther King (whose daughter, Yolanda, was in the audience - she attends Smith college nearby) but his ideological line was utterly different.

In brief: the civil rights movement is completely dead since "civil rights are a foregone conclusion". What is needed now is hard work, thrift, investment, the study of economics, control of media through ownership of outlets, cessation of senseless consumerism by exploited blacks, an end to the black bourgeoisie pseudo-African heritage cult, etc. Jackson had recognized two facts which he did not reveal directly to the audience: (1) repression by the state has ended the possibility of violent black revolution, as in the assassination of Panthers, to cite the most blatant case. (2) The black population is too well educated and becoming increasingly attracted to American material existence to be sincerely attracted to a King-styled quasi-religious movement. Jackson's brilliance as a demagogue took these two severe liabilities vis a vis a social movement and turned them to an advantage, all the while continuing his use of movement lingo and the inextinguishable message of black pride: "God didn't send us over here to be the slaves of white folk; we were sent over here to save humanity from the foolishness and incompetence and greed and emptiness of the white man's practices. Only the black people can save the system. We are chosen to be the saviors of humanity and we will not allow the white man to drive the car over the cliff with his wife in the front seat, his children in the back seat and the black folks locked in the trunk".

Increasingly atomistic Weltanschauungen have enveloped the most capable blacks in the U.S. and they no longer need or desire pseudo-Gemeinschaft camaraderie within constraining movement apparatus. They seek segmented lives as much as their class peers who are white. No-one knows this better than Jackson.

Speaking from experience, I may add to these reflections some "data" concerning student political activism of the recent past. Many an intelligent and eager undergraduate had severe problems with himself and his peers when he tried sincerely to "go active" and yet maintain some sense of individual intellectual and moral autonomy. SDS meetings and the like were exercises in unanimous frustration: on one hand, everyone cared very much for intellectually vigorous and sophisticated political behavior, but on the other, were faced with the necessities for collective action. The old organizational route was immediately repellant given the history of party politics in this and other countries, but no serious substitute was discovered, thus the birth of politics-by-antics in Rubin et al.

(Moreover, in conversation with a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts visiting from Free University in Berlin, the situation in Europe has taken the next logical step. Rather than dissolve the concept of change through collective behavior (as I suggest), the German collegiate population has renewed its efforts to "unlearn what it already knows to be true", an unenviable and probably impossible task. It seems a renewed dogmatism is being foisted upon the student body by radical leftist leaders, and recalcitrant nonbelievers in the straight Marxist formula for modern living, paradoxically, flee to the U.S. to find less regulated intellectual air!)

Thus in the past 600 or so years, social change through

innovation has come full circle, from the early, damnable merchants and bankers of the late medieval and the independent renaissance-reformation individualists combatting both Church and royalty, to the successful collective change instituted by Cromwell's group and subsequent mass movements of either the inclusive or segmental variety, and finally back to the reappearance of the relatively unattached innovative member of post-modern culture.

I have concentrated upon political change in the last few pages. To use Raymond Williams' trichotomy, "democratic" and "industrial" revolutions have both been subject to changes and study of them has continued relevance regarding the limits of social change on the large scale. More difficult to deal with are "cultural" revolutions, traditionally involved with modulations in quantity and quality within the realm of Kultur. As Williams' own work illustrates (109), the sociologist can shape a methodology suitable to the examination of art (serious and pop) within social structure with much profit. However, I would like to expropriate his term and redefine "cultural revolution" to mean not only change within the aesthetic institution, but far more broadly, to include change in the educational, recreational, kinship and supernatural institutions as shaped by the innovator in ways described above. As mentioned earlier, the problems for innovation within these major structural components of post-modern culture reside not so much in external pressures for conformity as in

the individual inertia socialized into societal participants and seldom brought to the level of "critical consciousness". It is clear that innovative behavior within kinship relations, for example, is relatively free from severe external threat which of course did obtain in premodern and early modern periods.

However, as Marxists and the like are quick to point out, the ability of people to innovate within both these institutions and the remaining ones (economic, political-governmental, stratificational) very often hinges upon the ability to perfect inequities and irrationalities within the latter (e.g. funds, power, prestige are necessary to some types of innovation). It is one thing to recombine existing cultural traits into a revised approach to religion (something which has been done incessantly since man's beginning), but something else to independently restructure the social control forces already in the hands of centrally-managed governments.

This and related arguments in favor of large-scale social change (or its frequent correlate, sabotage and terror), suffer from the illusion of establishment size and strength typical of left-wing and right-wing organizational thinking, the product of minds bent upon magnifying the evil of their opponents through reification in order to enhance their zeal or sense of accomplishment (cf. Lipset and Raab, The Politics of Unreason). Complex organization is both strong and weak, and one of the first lessons to be learned by the modern innovator when dealing with these three institutions (which

serve as the Marxists' nemesis) is to locate the many weaknesses and quietly begin work in those quarters. While emotional satisfaction may be gained by confronting armed employees of the established order, those interested in genuine change are found more often (if discovered at all!) operating through "approved" channels, but with personally-defined subversive, rational ends. They have discovered that life is too short to allow the use of any other technique. (The innovative process is of course more complex and difficult to characterize than is apparent in the above sentences, but for purposes of broad distinction, it will suffice at this point.)

As for the "cultural revolution" as defined by scholars in the sociology of art, knowledge and beliefs: the changes in the arts over the past 300 years have very closely followed (or anticipated) historical events, as closely that is as art can emulate social change without becoming state-sponsored propaganda. But as popularizers such as Toffler and scholars like Milton Albrecht, Wylie Sypher and Raymond Williams have shown (110), alterations within the arts have recently sped up at an ever increasing rate, so that for instance, the novel (first conceived in the early 18th century and only in the last 25 years coming under severe critical attack as being anachronistic) lasted 250 years; entire schools of today come and go along with their unique definitions of art in one or two seasons. The complete works of Balzac or Dickens or Trollope run easily over 30 volumes and required maniacal

dedication to produce; the complete works of our greatest current writers seldom exceed a half-dozen books and are usually the product of one "stage" in his life (before he went into film, painting or race-car driving). The guitar has replaced the piano and violin as the most popular musical instrument in the U.S. A moderately talented soul can perform impressively on the guitar within months; violin and piano technique come after years, and sometimes not even then. (For examples ad nauseum, see Toffler.)

But here again, and perhaps more here than in any other institution, individual innovation consistently produces the fresh, new and imitated. It is intriguing to speculate if other institutions (those "more critical" to the continuance of the social system, to paraphrase Parsons (111)) were as relatively unstructured and unbureaucratized as the aesthetic, would the paucity of innovative productions be alleviated somewhat.