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"Power, Politics & People"

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## THE CULTURAL APPARATUS

The first rule for understanding the human condition is that men live in second-hand worlds. They are aware of much more than they have personally experienced; and their own experience is always indirect. The quality of their lives is determined by meanings they have received from others. Everyone lives in a world of such meanings. No man stands alone directly confronting a world of solid fact. No such world is available. The closest men come to it is when they are infants or when they become insane; then, in a terrifying scene of meaningless events and senseless confusion, they are often seized with the panic of near-total insecurity. But in their everyday life they do not experience a world of solid fact; their experience itself is selected by stereotyped meanings and shaped by ready-made interpretations. Their images of the world, and of themselves, are given to them by crowds of witnesses they have never met and never shall meet. Yet for every man these images—provided by strangers and dead men—are the very basis of his life as a human being.

The consciousness of men does not determine their material existence; nor does their material existence determine their consciousness. Between consciousness and existence stand meanings and designs and communications which other men have passed on—first, in human speech itself, and later, by the management of symbols. These received and manipulated interpretations decisively influence such consciousness as men have of their existence. They provide the clues to what men see, to how they respond to it, to how they feel about it, and to how they respond to these feelings. Symbols focus experience; meanings organize knowledge, guiding the surface perceptions

of an instant no less than the aspirations of a lifetime.

Every man, to be sure, *observes* nature, social events, and his own self: but he does not, he has never, observed most of what he takes to be fact, about nature, society, or self. Every man *interprets* what he observes—as well as much that he has not observed: but his terms of interpretation are not his own; he has not personally formulated or even tested them. Every man talks about observations and interpretations to others: but the terms of his *reports* are much more likely than not the phrases and images of other people which he has taken over as his own. For most of what he calls solid fact, sound interpretation, suitable presentations, every man is increasingly dependent upon the observation posts, the interpretation centers, the presentation depots, which in contemporary society are established by means of what I am going to call the cultural apparatus.

## I

This apparatus is composed of all the organizations and *milieux* in which artistic, intellectual and scientific work goes on, and of the means by which such work is made available to circles, publics, and masses. In the cultural apparatus art, science, and learning, entertainment, malarkey, and information are produced and distributed. In terms of it, these products are distributed and consumed. It contains an elaborate set of institutions: of schools and theaters, newspapers and census bureaus, studios, laboratories, museums, little magazines, radio networks. It contains truly fabulous agencies of exact information and of trivial distraction, exciting objects, lazy escapes, strident advice. Inside this apparatus, standing between men and events, the images, meanings, slogans that define the worlds in which men live are organized and compared, maintained and revised, lost and cherished, hidden, debunked, celebrated. Taken as a whole, the cultural apparatus is the lens of mankind through which men see; the medium by which they interpret and report what they see. It is the semiorganized source of their very identities

and of their aspirations. It is the source of The Human Variety—of styles of living and of ways to die.

Nowadays in the overdeveloped society, everyday life and the mass arts; private lives and public entertainment; public affairs and the stereotypes put out about it—they reflect one another so closely that it is often impossible to distinguish image from source. So decisive to experience itself are the results of these communications that often men do not really believe what “they see before their very eyes” until they have been “informed” about it by the national broadcast, the definitive book, the close-up photograph, the official announcement. With such means, each nation tends to offer a selected, closed-up, and official version of world reality. The cultural apparatus not only guides experience; often as well it expropriates the very chance to have experience that can rightly be called “our own.” For our standards of credibility, our definitions of reality, our modes of sensibility—as well as our immediate opinions and images—are determined much less by any pristine experience than by our exposure to the output of the cultural apparatus.

The most embracing and the most specialized domain of modern society, this apparatus fulfills the most functions: such role as *reason* may have in human affairs, this apparatus, this put-together contraption, fulfills. Such part as *sensibility* may play in the human drama, it carries out. Such use as scientific *technique* may have in history and in geography, it provides. It is the seat of civilization, which—in Matthew Arnold's phrase—is: “the humanization of man in society.” The only truths are those defined by some cultural apparatus. The only *beauty* is the objects created or indicated by some set of cultural workmen. The only *good* is the variety of cultural values with which men are made morally comfortable or morally uneasy.

## II

It is in terms of some such conception as this apparatus that the politics of culture may be understood. Around the world today some *intellectuals* play leading roles in the politics of their nation; other are altogether withdrawn

from political concerns; seemingly without political orientation, they are political inactionaries. Some *artists* happily smash national and party idols; others, equally happy no doubt, busily invent new images of them. Some *scientists* seem glad to become leading fixtures of their nation's equipment for war; others are traitors and some no doubt are spies. The range of the cultural workmen's politics is coextensive with the range of politics; at any given time in projection, in hope, in fantasy—it goes well beyond the working range of the politicians.

To carry out a political role explicitly is to try to influence decisions of consequence and so to engage in a struggle for power. It is to justify prevailing powers and the decisions of the powerful, or—as the case may be—to debunk the powerful and oppose authoritative decisions. Such politics is a conscious work: it is a book, a drawing, a pamphlet, addressed to questions of policy to agents of authority, to political publics.

But the politics of cultural work is not to be identified with the explicit political views or activities of cultural workmen. There is a great difference between enacting a political role and being, by virtue of one's work, politically relevant. The political choices of individuals must be distinguished from the political functions, uses and consequences of the cultural work they do.

That a scientist working in a laboratory may honestly conceive of himself as a disembodied spirit does not make any the less real the objective consequences of his discovery for the ultimate ends of bombing the population of a city of which he has never heard. Surely it is now evident that nothing happens in modern science, in "research" or in "development," that is not of probable military, economic, and political relevance.

And not only in science. That an artist simply may not care about anything but the way a certain shade of blue explodes in the eye does not make any the less real the function of his picture when it is seized upon by men of nationalist purpose. And nowadays any artistic product may well be seized upon in the building of cultural prestige for national authority.

That a sociologist cares only about the mathematical

properties of "a new scaling device for attitude studies" does not detract from the objective function of his work in helping generals to prod farm boys to kill off more Japanese, or corporation executives to manipulate all the more brightly their sounds and images going out endlessly to 50 million homes in order to increase the sales-volume of a new shade of lipstick of a new presidential face.

Although not all cultural workmen are concerned with politics, their work is increasingly of central relevance to the great issues of war or peace, to the nationalist celebration and competition, and to the very quality of everyday life. We cannot examine merely the individual workman and his choices: The cultural apparatus as a whole is established and used by dominant institutional orders. Growing up and working within it, educated by it, many cultural workmen today never feel the need to make political choices simply because they are in fact committed before the age of political consent.

### III

As an institutional fact, the cultural apparatus assumes many forms, but everywhere today it tends to be part of some national establishment. This term, "establishment," is of course your (a British) term. The ambiguity with which you (they) use it is at once too lovely and too useful for a mere sociologist to avoid stealing it. I now serve notice that I do intend to steal it, although I promise that I shall try not to make of it a Concept. In general, the term points to the overlap of culture and authority. This overlap may involve the ideological use of cultural products and of cultural workmen for the legitimation of power, and the justification of decisions and policies. It may involve the bureaucratic use of culture by the personnel of authoritative institutions. But the essential feature of any establishment is a traffic between culture and authority, a tacit co-operation of cultural workmen and authorities of ruling institutions. This means of exchange between them includes money, career, privilege; but above all, it includes *prestige*. A zone of at least semiofficial prestige which is at

once of culture and of authority is the zone of any establishment.

(i) To the powerful, cultural prestige lends "weight." Ideologies may justify explicitly, but it is prestige that truly celebrates, that transforms more power into spell-binding authority. The prestige of culture is among the major means by which powers of decision are made to seem part of an unchallengeable authority. That is why the cultural apparatus, no matter how internally free, tends in every nation to become a close adjunct of national authority and a leading agency of nationalist propaganda.

(ii) To the cultural workman, the prestige borrowed from association with authority lends increased importance and "dignity" to his work—and to himself. It makes of him a national point of reference for the rank-order of cultural work and of cultural workmen. What is so loosely called "the climate of opinion" refers to just such points of national reference for the producers, the consumers, and the products of cultural work; it refers, in brief, to those who are fashion-leaders in matters of cultural and political opinion; and who privately, as well as formally, certify others, their work, their taste.

National establishments tend to set the relations of culture and politics the important tasks, the suitable themes, the major uses of the cultural apparatus. In the end, what is "established" are definitions of reality, judgments of value, canons of taste and of beauty.

#### IV

Cultural activities require financial support. Even the most advanced-guard writer must eat. Of course, as a part-time writer, he may be independently wealthy; he may earn his money by noncultural activities; he may be supported by his wife or wives. But in any economy, without a capital investment or some continuing material support—in brief without money—cultural activities cannot very well go on, much less can they be established.

A set of publics are also required. These may consist of small circles of producers who form their own publics or of one hundred million inexpert consumers of culture.

The size of the cultural public—as well as the prestige, class, and power of its members—are major clues to cultural orientation. A John Stuart Mill writing with a receptive Parliament in mind clearly occupies a different position than a Soviet novelist oriented to party officials or an American professor writing for other professors.

The money and the public for culture are of course related. The source and amount of the money, and the extent and nature of the public go far to determine the character of a cultural apparatus and the position of cultural workmen. These are also the terms in which the specific national histories of culture are most conveniently understood. It is useful to remind you of the three stages into which a "natural history of modern culture" tends generally to fall:

(i) In Europe, including Russia, the modern cultural apparatus begins as a patronage system: patrons personally support culture and also form the public for which it is produced. The cultural apparatus is established upon a pre-capitalist basis, in close relation to princely house, to church, to monarch, and later to bourgeois patrician. By his work, the cultural workman brings prestige to such higher circles and to the institutions over which they rule. Part of the coterie of these authorities, his status is often ambiguous and insecure: he is usually dependent upon the whims of The Great Ones, whom he advises, amuses, instructs.

(ii) Then emerges the bourgeois public: the cultural workman becomes an entrepreneur. He earns money by the sale of cultural commodities to anonymous publics. For a brief liberal period in Western history, he stands on common ground with the bourgeois entrepreneur. Both fight against the remnants of feudal control—the businessman to break the bonds of the chartered enterprise, the writer to free himself from the insecurities of patronage. Both fight for new kinds of freedom, for an unbounded market for wool and shoes, for an anonymous public for novels and portraits.

The decline of patronage and the dependence of culture upon publics is a decisive turn in culture and in politics. A great deal of the modern history of culture, until well

into the twentieth century, has to do with the transition from Stage One to Stage Two. In fact, most of our inherited images of "the intellectual" and of "the artist" are based upon experience of this second stage. It has provided the models of the cultural creator that still prevail among us: the inherently and necessarily free man, and the cherished and heroic notion of the advance-guard. This notion, one might say, is "the myth" of the intellectual, the artist, the lone inventor, and even of the scientist. It is still clung to mightily, being identified with freedom itself by those whose ideal is *not* to become established, not to become connected with authority, and who, in brief, have sought to be autonomous members of some autonomous cultural apparatus.

(iii) In the Third Stage, which we now enter, several tendencies evident in the Second, are carried to their logical outcome: the cultural apparatus is established politically or commercially; the cultural workman becomes a man who is qualified, politically or commercially. Both money and public are "provided," and in due course so are cultural products themselves: cultural work is not only guided: culture is produced and distributed—and even consumed—to order. Commercial agencies or political authorities support culture, but unlike older patrons, they do not form its sole public. The public for culture is enormously enlarged and intensively cultivated into the condition of a receptive mass.

In the extreme, as in modern totalitarianism, all "observation posts" from which realities can be observed are available only to the duly qualified; all "interpretation centers" are subject to doctrinal or pecuniary review; all "presentation depots" are carefully-guarded points of access to masses or the markets. The competition of ideas and of images is confined to a narrowed range, the exact limits of which are seldom known. By trial and error they must be found out, and the attempt to do so is judged officially, sometimes bloodily; or judged commercially, often ruthlessly.

Any establishment of culture means the establishment of definitions of reality, values, taste. But in the third stage these definitions are subject to official management and,

if need be, backed up by coercion. Debate is limited. Only certain views are allowed. But more than that, the terms of debate, the terms in which the world may be seen, the standards and lack of standards by which men judge of their accomplishments, of themselves, and of other men—these terms are officially or commercially determined, inculcated, enforced.

Today, of course, all three stages of establishment exist side by side, in one nation or another, in one division of culture or another. Accordingly, the politics of culture and the culture of politics around the world are quite various.

## V

In underdeveloped countries, the cultural apparatus is usually confined to very small circles and to rudimentary middle classes. Often it consists of only a few distributors and consumers, linked by education to the cultural machineries of more developed nations. These unhappy few often form the only public available for cultural products and services. Their countries are often filled with masses of people whose lives are dominated by the historical round of subsistence in family, village and tribe, and by mass illiteracy and the pre-industrial grind of poverty. Such facts limit and often make impossible any larger public and any larger support for cultural activities.

In many such countries the main task of the indigenous intelligentsia is often understood by its members to be the political creation of a national economy and a national state. For them the cultural task and the political struggle are clearly one. From its beginnings, their cultural apparatus is filled with political vision and demand. That is the most striking and important fact about the paramount role of "the intellectuals" of the underdeveloped areas.

Brought into being by the schools of Western nations, they are often condemned to a declassé kind of existence. Although of course there is great variation, they tend to be an intellectual proletariat which can find no suitable place among the illiterate masses, among the beginnings of the middle classes, or in such alien organizations of Western business or government agencies as may exist. In these

governing institutions, "the best places" are usually reserved for men from the governing nation. Yet they too have argued the political alternatives argued in Europe, and they have taken quite seriously the political ideals and economic aspirations provided by their Western experience.

Given their situation, and the condition of their countries, they have tended to reject the capitalism of the West. In their minds, as in their societies, capitalism is linked with an imperial rule that has excluded them from coveted positions and subjected their countries to domination in all spheres of life. They feel that so long as they are merely capitalist, their countries will not become modern industrial nations. Their rejection of capitalism may or may not be accompanied by acceptance of Communism. But usually their insurgent nationalism is intimately linked with the desire to build industry, suddenly and on a great scale. Accordingly, the Soviet way to industrialize is quite appealing to them.<sup>1</sup>

## VI

What is characteristic of the cultural establishment of leading West-European nations is their historic duration as semiofficial formations of prestige which are somewhat independent from national authority but which have great

<sup>1</sup> We must, of course, keep in mind the great variety of societies and of cultural situations covered by the term "underdeveloped country." India and China, for example, are "underdeveloped countries," but they have had great, ancient, and elaborate cultural organizations and products, quite distinct from those of the West. At first, as from the seventh to the eleventh centuries, they have in many cultural respects surpassed the Western world. Yet: their cultures have never included science in the Western sense. Moreover, the culture of India has been part of a crippling caste system; that of China, of a crippling bureaucracy of Mandarins. In the modern period, neither has been able successfully to cope with the results of the scientific divisions of Western cultural apparatuses. China's cultural apparatus is now being thoroughly revolutionized on the Soviet model, and the Mandarin, as well as the "old hand" of the West, are replaced by new types of men. India's cultural legacy is seen by the world at large, and by many Indians educated to Western aspirations, as something to be overcome rather than a means of the new and rapid development that is desired.

relevance to it. Although decisively modified, they often retain something of the flavor of patronage. Pre-capitalist in origin, in varying degree, they have resisted merely economic forces; in varying degree, they have seemed autonomous.

In France, it is said, Men of Letters have formed a sort of tribune that is in part a political, in part a literary, and altogether a nationalist matter. The writer is "the public conscience." Speaking as a moralist, often he has been "a supreme oracle of public affairs."<sup>2</sup> although by no means always an effective one. The center of the French establishment is The Academy, and The Ministry of Education which embrace virtually all features of cultural endeavor. Even the most "radical" members of this apparatus tend somehow still to feel themselves inside representatives of French culture.

In Germany, the professoriate, historically seated in state universities, has been the bearer of German science and scholarship, its members the national insiders of the German establishment. Near the top of the general hierarchy of prestige, they have also been among the higher servants of the state, and yet once seated, rather autonomous within it.

In England, what is called "The Establishment" at any given time seems a vague formation and rather closed-up. Yet viewed historically, it appears to have been generously assimilative. At its center are the older universities, the higher civil service, the monarchy; these have been firmly connected with county families and their gentry culture. From the points of this triangle of university, government, and social class, The Establishment has radiated wondrously in the attempted embrace of the politics and the culture of nation, empire, and commonwealth.

In all these European countries, established cultural workmen have often been held in high esteem. During Stage Two, they remained somewhat in tension with the commercial ethos of capitalism, and with the expanded authority of the modern state. They have been based upon pre-capitalist (often anticapitalist) traditions and institu-

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Luthy, "The French Intellectual," *Encounter*, August 1955, p. 5.

tions, and they have themselves constituted one such basis. As formations of prestige, they long resisted the naked force of money; closely related to political authorities, at the same time they have been autonomous from them. In both these respects, of course, the European cultural agencies and cultural workmen are undergoing decisive change.

### VII

In the Soviet Union, Stage One is now at best a vague memory of scattered old men. The features of Stage Two are absent or perilously underground. Despite "revisionism," the Soviet Union now represents one rather pure type of Stage Three. The source of money is the one-party state; masses of people are the managed public for culture; cultural activities are official activities. Opposition is traitorous, and exists mainly as a more or less hidden literary mood. In the absence of opposition parties, cultural activities become the only available form of opposition.

The physical terror and psychic coercion of The Purge seem necessary to an official establishment of this type. For its very basis is a fusion of the special skills of cultural workmen and special tests of political loyalty, and it is dominated by a political management of status, reputation, and public shaming. Suddenly the official line changes; then the only innocent man is the man who has accomplished nothing—because he is too young or because he has quietly withdrawn from work. Since any mature and active cultural workman has a quotable past, the very history of the intelligensia leaves in its wake a cumulative guilt. The disgraced man's past is publicly turned against him: His one opportunity is to out-compete those who vilify him—he must vilify his own past and his own work. Such self-accusation and recanting may be an expedient adjustment to authority, or a genuine reversal of values. To understand which it is in any given case one must realize the totality of allegiance to The Party, and one must think in terms of traumas, and of activities well known in the religious sphere as penance and conversion.

### VIII

In the Soviet bloc, the cultural apparatus is established by an authority that *post-dates* capitalism: An official apparatus of psychic domination, it is quite fully a part of political authority.

In the leading nations of Western Europe, the cultural apparatus is established out of a tradition that *pre-dates* capitalism: In it the authority of tradition and the prestige of culture have been intricately joined.

Both cultural tradition and political authority are involved in any establishment of culture, but in the United States the cultural apparatus is established in a third way. Above all, culture is part of an ascendant capitalist economy, and this economy is now in a condition of seemingly permanent war. Insofar as cultural activities are established, they are established commercially or militarily.

This, I believe, is the signal fact about the culture and politics of the United States today. Cultural activities, on the one hand, tend to become a commercial part of an overdeveloped capitalist economy, or, on the other, an official part of the Science Machine of the Garrison State. If cultural activities are not felt to be relevant to these points of concern, they carry little or no public consequence.

Everywhere today, the Science Machine and the Mass Culture Industry are intricate and fascinating developments; in twentieth-century America, they are indispensable to the understanding of the cultural apparatus. Science—historically seated in universities and connected rather informally with private industry—has now become officially established, in, of, for, and by the military order. Private corporations and military agencies together support and guide the major scientific activities that go on in America.

Many an American intellectual, artist, scientist is becoming an important adjunct of a very peculiar kind of economy. His work is a business, but his business is with *idea*, image, technique. He is caught up, first, in the shift in economic emphasis from production to distribution, and along with this, the joining of the struggle for exist-

ence with the merchandised panic for status. Mass culture in all its ramifications for cultural life, and for the nature of the overdeveloped society itself, rests upon the ascendancy of the commercial distributor. Mass culture in the United States is essentially commercial culture.

Many cultural workmen are also caught up in the general shift by which art, science and learning are brought into subordinate relation to the dominant institutions of capitalist economy and nationalist state.

They are at the intersection of these two developments, and their dual involvement in them explains the major divisions among them and the enriched muddle of ideals they variously profess; the insecurity they often feel about the practice of their crafts, their generally low social prestige and relative income, and their emulation of the style of the businessman.

The virtual dominance of commercial culture is the immediate ground of America's cultural scope, confusion, banality, excitement, sterility. In this overdeveloped society, the mass production, the mass sale, the mass consumption of goods has become The Fetish of both work and leisure. The pervasive mechanisms of the market have indeed penetrated every feature of life—including art, science and learning—and made them subject to the pecuniary evaluation. In a word, what has happened in the last two centuries to work in general is now rapidly happening to artistic, scientific and intellectual endeavor: now these too become part of society as a set of bureaucracies and as a great salesroom.

The cultural workman has little control over the means of distribution of which he becomes a part. The distributor—along with his market researcher—"establishes a market" and monopolizes access to it. Then he claims to "know what they want." The orders he gives, even to the free-lance, become more explicit and detailed. The price he offers may be quite high—perhaps too high, he comes to think, and perhaps he is right. So he begins to hire and in varying degree to manage a stable of cultural workmen. Those who thus allow themselves to be managed by the mass distributor are selected, and in time formed, in such ways as to be altogether proficient, but not quite compelling

in their attractions. Accordingly, the search goes on for "fresh ideas," for exciting notions, for more luring models; in brief: for the innovator. But in the meantime, back at the studio, the laboratory, the research bureau, the writer's factory—the distributor manages many producers who become rank-and-file workmen of the commercially established cultural apparatus.

There is increasing bureaucracy but also there is the frenzy for new fashions. In this situation, the cultural workman tends to become either a commercial hack or a commercial star. By The Star, I refer to a person whose productions are so much in demand that, to some extent at least, he is able to use distributors as his adjuncts. This role has its own conditions and its own perils: The Star tends to be culturally trapped by his own success. He has painted this sort of thing and he gets \$5000 a throw for it. However affluent, he often becomes culturally bored by this style and wants to explore another. But often he cannot: he is used to the \$5000 a throw and there is demand for "his style." As a leader of fashions he is himself subject to fashion. Moreover, his success as a star depends upon his "playing the market:" he is not in any educative interplay with publics that support his development. By virtue of his success, The Star too becomes a marketeer.

Some cultural workmen of course do remain independent. Perhaps three or four men actually earn a living in the wealthy United States merely by composing serious music; perhaps twenty-five or so, merely by writing serious novels. But generally the star system tends to kill off the chance of the cultural workman to be a worthy and independent craftsman. One is a smash-hit or one is among the failures; one is a best-seller or one is among the hacks and the failures; one is either absolutely tops or one is just nothing at all.

## IX

Behind these developments, there is the signal fact that between the Jeffersonian era and World War II the United States has not contained any enduring and nationally respected establishment, academy, professoriate. Any such

zone of semi-official cultural prestige that has existed has been publicly unimportant and transient. There have been no recognized centers of cultural certification and judgment. No continuous upholders of standards of taste and cultivation have held publicly recognized positions. Certainly the cultural producer as such has not been regularly among The Representative Men of the Nation. No cultural establishments of the European type have existed in the United States.

(i) Underlying these facts is the unopposed ascendancy of capitalism and liberalism. The bourgeoisie from its national beginnings has been unhampered by feudal power and prestige—by any pre-capitalist strata or powers or institutions. Accordingly, its members have easily monopolized both social prestige and political power as they have created and occupied the top positions of the class structure.

(ii) The very rich in America have not been notable as a self-cultivating elite. There have been no strata to which this bourgeoisie might have been assimilated or with which it might trade class for status, and with status, "culture." In the status medley which the very rich of America have created, prestige has not been gained in the self-disciplined ways of cultural production and expert consumption. No nationally significant class of rentier gentlemen or county gentry sat in the nineteenth century countryside writing books, plays, histories, or painting pictures; nor, after the early days of the Republic, have American politicians been prone—as the French are said to be—to literary production. Even their own utterances are typically shaped by hired ghosts. Neither the very rich nor the politically powerful have generally been a durable and central public for live artists and intellectuals. Their sons have become lawyers, not sculptors; graduates of business schools, not writers; and these sons, the daughters of the very rich have married.

(iii) All this stands in contrast to the rise of the European bourgeoisie. In Europe, to gain mere economic position has not been also to gain prestige and power. In Europe, the pomp of state, the dignity of church, the honor of violence—and the halo of cultural sensibility—have

rested upon feudal powers, which have monopolized strategic positions of authority—and of culture. Only slowly and after much struggle have the sons of the bourgeoisie come to rise alongside these strata, and in the course of generations to displace them. In its struggle, the bourgeoisie was itself transformed; to some extent it was made over in the honorific ways of pre-capitalistic kinds of cultural sensibilities and political opinion.

Upon the American bourgeoisie—continuously predominant in wealth, power, and prestige—upon this bourgeoisie, as patron and as public, cultural workmen have been conspicuously dependent. It is the businessman who has established and run colleges and universities, the libraries and museums. And cultural workmen themselves have often felt considerable gratitude towards the "men who have produced" the "men who have met payrolls." The prestige of the businessman has been aided by his cultural philanthropy—although perhaps only in a rather minor way: He has not needed any such prop. He has gained prestige and honor on the basis of his claimed merit of function; and functional merit has had to do with the building of businesses, which have not needed any cultural halo.

The capitalist producer has been felt to possess and even to create the ascendant American values: usefulness and efficiency. Even the most independent cultural critics have honored these same values. America's foremost critic in the period of America's most deep-going criticism—Thorstein Veblen in the Progressive Era—assumed these values as indubitable. He was opposed to the power of business precisely because he felt that businessmen did not truly serve these values, but rather those of waste and idleness. In short, Joseph Schumpeter's notion that under capitalism intellectuals generally tend to erode its foundations—that they inevitably become critics of consequence—does not generally hold true of the United States.

## X

In the short time at our disposal, I cannot qualify as I should like to do these charcoal sketches of the relations

of culture and politics. Yet in concluding the present lecture, I should like to suggest to you that it is just the sort of establishment that Europe *has* known that many American intellectuals (as well as sophisticated circles of the ruling elite) want very much to bring about in the United States. I do not believe that they will make it—any more than I believe that these kinds of establishments prevail in Europe. For Europe too is increasingly subject to those tendencies which now affect all cultural establishments as they enter The Fourth Epoch. The form toward which they now drift is more pronounced, even flamboyant, on the one hand, in the USSR, and on the other, in the USA.

The world polarity of cultural establishments is now between the USA and the USSR—the one commercial, the other political, both military and both moving away from the ideals of Stage Two. These two now seem the cultural models of the future. In the meantime, between them lies Western Europe—whose types of establishment are grievously declining and the underdeveloped countries—whose cultural apparatus, being inchoate, is not yet established in any of the three major historical types. 1959

## LANGUAGE, LOGIC AND CULTURE

Problems of a sociology of knowledge arise when certain conceptions and findings of the cultural sciences are confronted by theories of knowing and methodology. Awareness of the social and economic factors operative in the reflective process has arisen within American sociology as peripheral notations on specific researches and as implicit in psychology when sociologically approached.<sup>1</sup> However, the relevant sociological materials, particularly as they bear on the nature of mind and language, are as yet unexploited by those interested in sociological theories of knowledge and in the cultural careers of ideas.

Sociologies of knowledge have found elaborate statement in other contexts,<sup>2</sup> but American social scientists have not assimilated or developed theories adequate to carry on historical reconstructions of thought from a cultural standpoint, nor have they attempted systematically to state the implications of such an attempt for methodology and theories of reflection.<sup>3</sup> Despite this lack of postulational framework and empirical hypotheses, assumed and unanalyzed "answers" to certain theoretical questions are operative in the minds of many sociologists. It is the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. L. Wirth's preface to Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*, xxi, New York, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> The German *Wissenssoziologie* and the French sociological theories of knowledge. For a reasonably adequate bibliography of the German materials, see Wirth-Shils' translation of Mannheim, *op. cit.*, 281 ff. For French, see reviews and monographs in *L'Année Sociologique*, vols. I-XII.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. however, H. Becker's brief, substantive presentations scattered through his and H. E. Barnes' *Social Thought from Lore to Science*, New York, 1938.