

## A LOOK BACK AT THE TWO CULTURES DEBATE: ARCHITECTURE AS AN EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM

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1. W.R. LETHABY, *Architecture and Modern Life, Form and Civilization*, London: Oxford, 1957, p.93.

Is architecture an art or is it a science? There is an irksome boredom about the question; the cultural dichotomy it implies is all too familiar and apparently as tediously irreconcilable. Architectural practice and education are riven by the dilemma. Sedulously ranged around their computers or arrogantly aloof in their studios, the factions are easily identified. The day *may* be coming, as Lethaby hoped, when "architects will have to drop this high-priest business"<sup>1</sup> - whatever the dispensation preached. But not yet. Nor did Lethaby anticipate an early resolution of the problem as he saw it; five hundred years was his estimate. And why five hundred years? Perhaps a backward glance helped shape his guess. As Pugin, Ruskin and Morris had observed, the Renaissance has a lot to answer for.

Is architecture an art or is it a science? It was not the sort of question Alberti felt inclined to propose when he wrote *De Re Aedificatoria. Uomo universale* that he was, such niceties were not to him live issues. Nonetheless, the division of labour which the introduction of the new Renaissance architecture demanded was already implying an epistemological distinction which would haunt Western culture with alienation and division for centuries to come. The Industrial Revolution exacerbated and intensified this schizophrenia. Appalled by what had become "the dull squalor of civilization", the writers of the nineteenth century, each with his own romantic, religious, social or political emphasis, clung to the old humane values of a craft economy in which the design and production processes remained happily integrated. At the same time they feared for the future.

2. J. RUSKIN, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Orpington: Allen, 1883, p.214.

I could smile when I hear the hopeful exultation of many, at the new reach of worldly science .... There is thunder on the horizon as well as dawn ..... 2

3. L. TRILLING, *The Snow-Leavis Controversy, Beyond Culture*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967, pp.133-158.

Ruskin's wonderful metaphor rings in our ears like a patriarchal curse. The exultation he speaks of, which swelled as the nineteenth century grew in rationalist confidence and Ruskin himself slipped deeper into his own irrational tragedy, came from men like T.H. Huxley. For Huxley, science would displace literature in the search for truth and ultimately serve as the basis for modern ethics. To this Matthew Arnold, whose *Culture and Anarchy* had already made it clear that such excessive confidence and misplaced faith in "machinery" was "our besetting danger", replied that although there could be no denying the intellectual delights and practical values of science, it, nevertheless, utterly failed to "serve the instinct for conduct and the instinct for beauty."<sup>3</sup> In other words, morality and beauty, ethic and aesthetic, were to be identified by Arnold's somewhat metaphysical "culture" and not by the rational materialism or utilitarianism proposed by "worldly science".

Of course there was much in the understanding of "culture" which Arnold, Ruskin and Morris shared which was conservatively retro-spective not to say retrospective. Though it did lead through strangely remote medieval by-ways, their search was always for a holistic and humane view of culture. It was a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Or was it? A few decades later an arrogant Futurist mechanolatry displaced the gentler anachronisms of Arts and Crafts. And now, in the Second Machine Age, the era of "Post-Modernism", or whatever we may rashly agree to dub the second half of the twentieth century, we begin to doubt again. Did we take the right leap? The same dilemma stalks our thoughts. Is architecture an art or is it a science? What is the nature of our culture? As Trilling has pointed out, we need only substitute the name of C.P. Snow for T.H. Huxley and that of F.R. Leavis for M. Arnold to realise the continuity of these profound questions. *Mutatis mutandis*, the debate goes on.

It is this debate I should like to re-examine here for it seems to me that no more appropriate cultural context could be found in which to try to seek some answer to our question about the nature of architectural design. Despite the fact that for more than a decade, from the late fifties to the early seventies the columns of Britain's learned journals and newspapers filled with claim and counter claim from both sides of the academic fence, it has not yet been remarked that architecture occupied a significantly similar if modestly declared position in contending theses which were otherwise deeply divided by intellectual habit and bitter animus. But this is to anticipate.

Snow was first to enter the lists. In a brief article in *New Statesman and Nation* in 1956, he adumbrated his "Two Cultures" idea. Full diagnosis of the cultural malady did not, however, appear until his Rede Lecture of 1959. Essentially Snow proposed to determine two distinct cultural attitudes: the first was that of the scientists; the second "the whole 'traditional' culture", by which he meant, in fact, the literary or literary-artistic culture.

Each went its own way, failed to communicate with the other, regarded it with marked distrust and incomprehension, promoted its own vocabulary and deliberately conflicting jargon, assumed its own priority or at least its self-sufficiency. Snow regretted this state of affairs with the particular keenness which his own position as a novelist and scientist entitled him to do, though his third propensity to the bleak *milieu* of Whitehall corridors soon began to obfuscate such regret. For the moment, however, he was suresighted enough to discern the great misfortune this split entailed.

This polarisation is sheer loss to us all...  
It is at the same time practical and intellectual and creative loss ...<sup>4</sup>

More perceptively still he noted the tragic implications, for the "clashing point of two subjects, two disciplines, two cultures... ought to produce creative chances." Rather later, Karl Popper has advanced the same dialectical proposition.

The difficulty of discussion between people brought up in different frameworks is to be admitted. But nothing is more fruitful than such a discussion; than the cultural clash which has stimulated some of the greatest intellectual revolutions.<sup>5</sup>

All this is not without its significance for architectural design and although, in his very first article in 1956, Snow did refer *en passant* to architecture as a somewhat central or hybrid discipline, one cannot help but feel that he might more profitably have looked longer in that direction - if only to elaborate a case for the possible "third culture" at which he hints early in the Rede Lecture text. But no such *rapprochement* is sought. The two cultures, entrenched first by the specialisation of England's educational system and secondly by the solid intransigence of her social forms, are not to be brought together. Instead, Snow begins to make a case for one side of the very polarisation he regrets. It is against this that Leavis's particularly virulent *riposte* is directed.

In order to compare the two sides of the debate adequately, I propose to look at the principal statements made by the protagonists between the Rede Lecture of 1959 and the 1972 publication of Leavis's collection of essays *Nor Shall My Sword* which includes his *Two Cultures? The Significance of Lord Snow*. Reviewing these as a whole may ignore some of the sequential niceties, but it will, I hope, elicit the fundamental differences between the two cases. From this comparative survey some intimations on the nature of architectural design begin to emerge.

Four areas of dispute appear to lie at the heart of the debate. There is, first, the question of just exactly what Snow and Leavis each means when he speaks of "culture" or "cultures" in this the twentieth century. This is not a matter of comparing and contrasting precise definitions but rather a question of exploring their respective stances and priorities on the issues of

4. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution*, Rede Lecture, Cambridge (1959), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.19.

5. K.R. POPPER, *Normal Science and It's Dangers, Criticism and The Growth of Knowledge*, ed. I. Lakatos, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970, p.97.

logic, ethic and aesthetic which permeate all human activity. In the second place, there is the retrospective view expressed in differing interpretations of the cultural impact of the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution, which each sees as some kind of case-study of culture's relationship with technology, a dummy-run, as it were, for the more exacerbated tensions of the present. Thirdly, there are the philosophical problems of the human predicament; *la condition humaine*, which is at once individual and social. But upon which should the emphasis fall? Here perhaps more than in any other aspect of the debate are the crucial differences of conviction which lie behind the whole cultural issue and which, in a fourth and more political arena, create conflict between Snow and Leavis over the most appropriate educational strategy for the future.

To begin with, though he was unambiguous enough in stating his case for an art/science dichotomy, Snow made no attempt to clarify what he meant when he used the word "culture". By 1963, when he came to take "A Second Look" at the matter, he was aware of this omission and set out to elaborate a definition (in fact he gave two definitions) and more particularly to show that his scientists were worthy of the ascription. Broadly, culture was "intellectual development". But a more satisfactory explanation of what this meant could be found in Coleridge's "cultivation" which for the poet was "the harmonious development of these qualities and faculties which characterise our humanity". Amongst these qualities Snow listed man's curiosity about the natural world around him, his propensity for symbolic systems of thought and his use of language. Since these attributes, especially the first two, could not be denied to the scientist, Snow felt justified in having proposed a "scientific culture". Indeed he had already in 1959 gone so far as to put the Second Law of Thermodynamics on a par with the works of Shakespeare, and boldly suggested that "the scientific edifice of the physical world was . . . in its intellectual depth, complexity and articulation the most beautiful and wonderful collective work of the mind of man."<sup>6</sup> A second definition, derived from anthropological usage, was also offered. Any group sharing common ways of thought and action might claim to be regarded as a culture. The scientists, whatever their differences, seemed all to Snow to have "the future in their bones . . . without thinking about it, they respond alike. That is what as culture means."<sup>7</sup>

The scientists were eulogised for the rational rigour of their thought and for its "intellectual depth"; for their commitment to problem-solving, strongly moral, optimistic and confident; and finally for the aesthetic quality of their work and achievements.

However divisive the initial analysis, however confused the desire for restorative treatment, or however educationally pragmatic some might have suspected the whole exercise to be, there could be little doubt of Snow's earnestness. Leavis, however, was not disposed to

6. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution*, Rede Lecture, Cambridge (1959), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p. 21.

7. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution*, Rede Lecture, Cambridge (1959), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p. 19.

grant even this limited toleration. In 1962 he launched his attack. With vicious acerbity he pilloried Snow as "portentously ignorant", "intellectually as undistinguished as it is possible to be", quite without any understanding, it seemed, of history, civilization, the Industrial Revolution or what it means to be a novelist. Was his "Strangers and Brothers" series written by "an electronic brain called Charlie"? As Trilling puts it at the outset of his essay, "It is a bad tone, an impermissible tone." But it is Leavis's argument, not his tone, which must be respected.

The presentation which he gives of his opponent's case is itself sarcastic: "there are the two uncommunicating and mutually indifferent cultures, there is the need to bring them together, and there is C.P. Snow..."<sup>8</sup> For the last, Leavis has scant regard. As to the need to bring the two cultures together this may be considered a burden upon Snow alone since he proposed the separation. Snow, nevertheless, though he obviously regrets the split and occasionally refers to some desirable harmony between the two sides, perversely follows a course which in the main has to be interpreted as advocacy of one of these cultures only. Leavis, in denying the split, or at any rate regarding it as trivial and superficial, logically need not concern himself with the *rapprochement* problem.

What then is Leavis's understanding of "culture"? The simplistic anthropological definition, i.e. the loose grouping of scientists who "without thinking about it ... respond alike" will not do. "Without thinking", indeed! Nor will what Leavis takes to be a modish Sunday paper distinction between rival establishments satisfy the importance of the argument. With all the righteousness of the literary don he is indignant, not to say enraged, at the trite cross-cultural equations between Shakespeare and Rutherford. Yet, though he does not say so explicitly, it seems fair to conclude that Coleridge's "cultivation" would meet with Dr. Leavis's approval for it is in poetry, literature and language in particular that he finds the fundamentally human basis of culture. It is to "the creation of the human world, including language"<sup>9</sup> - a phrase he repeats in different essays - that science must defer. We do not have any revolutionary cultural situation but an evolving "cultural tradition" grounded in the creative continuity of the word. It is a tradition which imposes upon us a duty "to maintain the full life in the present"<sup>10</sup> (My italics).

Attempting to interpolate architecture in the cultural spectra offered from each side of the debate is not easy. A good deal of guessing has to be done for, apart from a natural predisposition to declare the sanctity of their own chosen fields, neither Snow nor Leavis is greatly concerned to determine the cultural provenance or priority of this or that profession or intellectual activity. There is evidence in fact that when Snow does try to do so the effort proves somewhat embarrassing. Physicists and literary men are easily pigeon-holed - necessarily so since Snow's case rests largely on the

8. F.R. LEAVIS, *Two Cultures? The Significance of Lord Snow, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p.44.

9. F.R. LEAVIS, *Two Cultures? The Significance of Lord Snow, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p.61.

F.R. LEAVIS, *Luddites? Or There is Only One Culture, Lectures in America*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1969, p.16.

10. F.R. LEAVIS, *Luddites? Or There is Only One Culture, Lectures in America*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1969, p.19.

11. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures - a Second Look* (1963), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.58.

12. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures - a Second Look* (1963), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.58.

13. F.R. LEAVIS, *Pluralism, Compassion and Social Hope, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p.172.

14. W. MORRIS, *The Prospects of Architecture in Civilization* (1881), *On Art and Socialism*, London: Lehmann, 1947, p.266.

clear, if superficial, distinctions which his readers will recognise between the two - but there are other pursuits less easily classified. Included in this problematic grouping are "intellectual persons in a variety of fields - social history, sociology, demography, political science, economics, government (in the American academic sense), psychology, medicine, and social arts such as architecture,"<sup>11</sup> (my italics), who cannot be conveniently slotted left or right. But there is no denying that these share with science a concern "with how human beings are living or have lived", an observation which, coming as it does in Snow's 1963 *The Two Cultures: A Second Look* seems to weaken his original case quite seriously. It marks a trend in the argument away from the polarisation first emphasised towards a more conservative complementarity theory. A third culture is even proposed to account for these awkward but increasingly ubiquitous aberrations, with the convenient chronological caveat that, "It is probably too early to speak of a third culture already in existence. But I am now convinced that it is coming."<sup>12</sup> All this - and there is more - represents, I think, a growing implicit acknowledgement that Leavis's barbed attacks have bitten deeply into the tissue of Snow's thinking.

Leavis's case, as I have pointed out, does not rely upon any schizophrenic view of culture and consequently there is no difficulty for him in admitting the cultural contribution of science or technology. There is no question of bifurcation; for him it is an issue of priority. And it is highly significant, I think, that in acknowledging the great impact of science, he should particularly choose to highlight its influence "on the prevailing notion of civilization, on architecture, on ethics, on religion, on the English language."<sup>13</sup> This is, as far as I have been able to ascertain, one of the only two references which Leavis makes to architecture in the whole debate. Yet he places it in august company - civilization, ethics, religion, and his beloved English language - which he obviously regards as amongst the most important expressions of human culture. I find myself concluding from this that architecture stands high in Leavis's hierarchy. Why should this be so?

I think it is because (and here I risk a dangerous inference) architecture is an activity leading to an experience which does "maintain the full life in the present". Snow, raking the loam of second thoughts, recognises architecture as a special case which shares a social concern with science and hints at its being some kind of bridge between his two cultures or a prominent element in a dawning third culture. But Leavis digs deeper. Is not architecture, the creation of the visual environment, in Morris's expansive definition "the turning of necessary articles of daily use into works of art,"<sup>14</sup> special in that it unites the conceptual with the physical, it mediates intellectual activity through the experience of the senses? Needs compel; ideas take substance; the stones breathe. What is much more, this

15. E.F. SEKLER, *The Visual Environment, The Fine Arts and The University*, Canada: Macmillan, 1965, p.83.

arrestment of the whole man is effected not quite as in the other arts in the suspension of the real world but in the space and time of the here and now. Architecture is thus peculiarly fit "to maintain the full life in the present."<sup>15</sup> (My italics).

Snow's Rede Lecture was entitled *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution* and it is to the relationship invoked by the second part of his title that I turn next. This is the retrospective view of which I spoke earlier, Snow's method being to seek precedent in the nineteenth century from which to draw conclusions for the present. Now, he asks, did the literary intellectuals react to the first impact of industrialisation upon society? Does their response to this challenge to a life which for centuries had been borne on an agricultural-mercantile economy lend credibility to any claim they may still have to act as traditional guardians of culture? His answer is an unequivocal no. To industrial revolutions the literary-artistic world could offer only dismal cultural reaction: "natural Luddities" was Snow's ringing condemnation of the literary men. The swelling undercurrent in the productive conditions of man's life surged on beneath the eddying spume "screams of horror" from the writers. Unable to understand what was happening, they fulminated against the "dull squalor of civilization" wrought by steam and steel, preached pessimism and alienation, and yearned for a medieval England full of happy handcraftsmen. Meanwhile, however, the great mass of the ordinary people up and down the country flocked in droves to the city. There never was any idyllic rural Eden, no romantic healthy peasant life, perhaps never a happy Gothic mason. "Industrialisation", says Snow, "is the only hope of the poor"; they knew it then, and they still know it. He defies any other view,

... if you go without much food, see most of your children die in infancy, despise the comforts of literacy, accept twenty years off your own life, the I respect you for the strength of your aesthetic revulsion.<sup>16</sup>

16. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution, Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.28.

It could be argued that it was Ruskin's very aesthetic revulsion which put ten years of madness into his life and that the role of the warning reactionary brought its own bitter suffering; but for all that Snow's words are powerful indeed. Nostalgic dreamers of Luddite moralists, the literary intellectuals were out of touch, indicted by *hauteur* and *hubris*.

Is Snow right? His contention that the poor rushed eagerly into the cities is surely an over-enthusiastic interpretation of events. He fails to mention that the Clearances and Enclosures Acts deprived the subsistence farmer of his land and livelihood, meagre though each was, virtually forcing him into a new life. Emigration to the colonies or absorption by the rapidly industrialising urban centres were the only options available. Nevertheless, though Snow may oversimplify, the growth of material prosperity and the improvement in

health which have accompanied urban-industrial civilization over the last century and a half are strong supporting evidence for his case.

The more important issue in the context of the debate, the charge that the traditional culture elite was callously indifferent or unsympathetic to industrialisation, is much less convincingly argued. Admittedly, few nineteenth century writers of any distinction enthused over the machine and all its works. But some, as Leavis points out, were not wholly devoid of optimism. Dickens, for example, at times so trenchant a portrayer of the misery and degradation of urban life, could yet write of the railway train which "trailed smoothly away upon its course of civilization and improvement." But somehow one suspects that Leavis is over-reacting on this tack, particularly when Lawrence is quoted to "do honour to the machine and to its inventors."<sup>17</sup> He steers a better course in asserting that, far from being indifferent to industrialisation, the writers, almost to a man, were loud in their warnings about the dangers. It was after all Ruskin, more than anyone else who called attention to the important difference between wealth and well-being.

Perhaps personal fortune insulated and isolated many of the literary intellectuals. Perhaps their misgivings about the machine turned too quickly into outright antagonism and absurd medieval reveries. Perhaps it is impossible to measure one man's happiness against another's. But it is just as illconsidered to propose some neo-Marxist translation from the materially quantitative to the spiritually or culturally qualitative. Nor should we expect the writer to be the naive acolyte of "progress", abandoning the continuity of cultural values in a didactic orgy of propaganda for an unknown future. The portrait of the artist sketched by Snow verges close on this obedient hack ghosting for the great impersonal forces of history.

What gives the victory in this round of the debate to Leavis is his insistence upon the continuity of the cultural tradition. Scientific values were not enough and they are still not enough. Our society, nineteenth or twentieth century, has let the working class down bodily by its lop-sided drift; it has "left them to enjoy a 'high standard of living' in a vacuum of disinheritance."<sup>18</sup> With every wage increase and every hour off the working week the "menace of leisure" grows more implacably dangerous.

"A general impoverishment of life - that is the threat that, ironically, accompanies the technological advance and the rising standard of living; and we are all involved."<sup>19</sup>

Few would now dispute that architectural impoverishment has paralleled urban growth and technological advance. Of course, Snow's view of the nineteenth century intellectual holds good in environmental matters; all too often, theory and practice were as unconnected as the great iron

17. F.R. LEAVIS, *Luddites? Or There is Only One Culture, Lectures in America*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1969, p.6.

18. F.R. LEAVIS, *Luddites? Or There is Only One Culture, Lectures in America*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1969, p.5.

19. F.R. LEAVIS, *Luddites? Or There is Only One Culture, Lectures in America*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1969, p.13.

20. W. MORRIS, *Art Under Plutocracy* (1883), *On Art and Socialism*, London: Lehmann, 1947, p.139.

railway sheds were with their Gothic hotels beyond the buffers. Even such percipient observations as Morris's socialist dictum that "all art, even the highest, is influenced by the conditions of labour of the mass of mankind"<sup>20</sup> failed to jell into any recognition of the new conditions which were all the time becoming more and more manifest. But what he does not see is that when once the lesson was learnt and the machine accepted into the corpus of architectural thinking and production, the results did not seem to prove substantially better than the undramatic but humane scale of, say, Webb's "Red House" or Voysey's suburban cottage villas.

21. W.R. LETHABY, *Architecture and Modern Life, Form and Civilization*, London: Oxford, 1957, p.88.

Excessive confidence in the new materials and techniques of a scientific age frequently led designers into theoretical positions from which the contingent - the unique and individually human factor - had to be excluded in favour of the seemingly inexorable force of historical necessity. So Lethaby: "It is not a matter of the whims, the ability, or the genius of the architect, it is a matter of the civilization"<sup>21</sup>; or Gropius: "the outward forms of the New Architecture... are not the personal whims of a handful of architects... but simply the inevitable logical product of the intellectual, social and technical conditions of the age."<sup>22</sup> Most terrifyingly dogmatic of all has been Mies: "Architecture is the will of the age."

22. W. GROPIUS, *The New Architecture and The Bauhaus* London: Faber, p.20.

I do not mean to imply that such forces did not and do not exist, nor that it was in any sense misguided of designers to adopt the Bauhaus ethic which called for "models for mass production." Nor is it my wish to appear to misrepresent architectural thinking of the early twentieth century by a few carefully selected quotations. Gropius, for example, was very careful to stress that "the aesthetic satisfaction of the human soul, is just as important as the material"<sup>23</sup> and to warn against a too-doctrinaire interpretation of the scientific rationalization of the design product or process. It does appear, however, that the immense building tasks of our time, the re-shaping of outworn, bombarded or abruptly developing cities, have, except in a few notable cases such as Warsaw, been realised without much thought for the human soul or psyche. The early shibboleths of zoning, highrise apartment blocks and multi-level transportation inter-changes, are all now found wanting. The city cannot be chopped up with the mechanistic ruthlessness hopefully proposed by C.I.A.M. and we know now how little beauty or satisfaction has emerged from the aesthetic determinism of Functionalist theory.

23. W. GROPIUS, *The New Architecture and The Bauhaus* London: Faber, p.24.

In some sense it is surprising that Snow has not welcomed the architects more wholeheartedly into his fold. The assured optimism of the more materialist wing of the Modern Movement could readily be assimilated by his scientific culture. On the other hand, the historicist architecture by the nineteenth century fits well into his view of the aloof connoisseurship of the literary-artistic culture. This contradiction destroys his claim

to use last century as sound precedent for this. In addition, his recognition of architecture's concern "with how human beings are living or have lived" concedes much to Leavis. The experience of the present, the lessons of the past - these, he seems to be admitting, cannot be ignored. The legibility of architectural and urban form must be conserved if we are to sustain our humanity through changing environmental contexts. How "human beings are living or have lived" is unquestionably part of what Leavis means when he talks of "the cultural continuity."

Snow's sympathies as a writer sometimes obtrude upon his pro-science judgment, but he is always honest enough to admit his dilemma. Critical of the writers' detachment from what he sees as the central demands of eliminating poverty and alleviating suffering, he can still acknowledge literary quality in such a-partisan or reactionary authors as Eliot, Yeats, Pound, Joyce, Lawrence, Woolf, Gide, Kafka, Faulkner, Beckett ... "I don't know the answer," he confesses.<sup>24</sup> This same inconvenient sensibility lies in his early admitted belief that the human predicament is ultimately individually tragic - a solitariness from which love perhaps provides temporary respite. But, he believes, the tragic view cannot, indeed must not, be indulged.

24. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures - a Second Look*, *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.75.

There is a moral trap which comes through the insight into man's loneliness; it tempts one to sit back, complacent in one's unique tragedy, and let others go without a meal."<sup>25</sup>

25. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures and The Scientific Revolution*, Rede Lecture, Cambridge (1939), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.17.

But while the writers and artists are depicted wallowing in their individual Angst, the scientists, clear-eyed and yet not "shallowly optimistic, unaware of man's condition," see and work for a hopeful social conditions. The scientific culture is prepared to offer the meal; "jam today," as Snow expresses it, with the promise of "jam tomorrow" too, as science removes the threats of H-bomb war (*sic*) and over-population, and begins to close the obscenely yawning gap between rich and poor. To this social hope the literary-artistic culture has never to its shame subscribed.

But whence this admirable ethic? "What is the 'social condition' that has nothing to do with the 'individual condition'?", as Leavis asks. That this dismissal by Snow of the writers, even the nineteenth century writers, as blind to the social hope is precipitate, had already been shown by Arnold in *Culture and Anarchy*:

And this culture begets a dissatisfaction.... which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarised, even if it cannot save the present.<sup>26</sup>

26. M. ARNOLD, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), *The Complete Works of Matthew Arnold* v.5, University of Michigan, 1965, p.98.

Arnold does not fall into Snow's "moral trap". The essential point, however, is that Arnold's dissatisfaction, and therefore his hope, springs from culture, i.e. not a scientific culture but the cultural tradition of humanitas. Leavis makes the same point when he states that the "social hope" can only spring from the individual, from his sense of humanitas.

27. E. PANOFSKY, *The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline* (1940), *Meaning in The Visual Arts*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970, pp.23-50.

I find in Panofsky an excellent discussion of this crucial term. In his *Meaning in the Visual Arts*<sup>27</sup> he explains its meaning in relation to man's consciousness both of what is less than man and what is greater than man: from the first springs an awareness of values, while from the second comes a recognition of limitations. It is this combination of responsibility and tolerance which creates the dignity of man that is implicit in *humanitas*. In this almost religious understanding Snow's standard of living index is again inadequate. And again Leavis's thrust is keen and sure. "What, ultimately, do men live by?"

28. F.R. LEAVIS, *Literarism v. Scientism, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, pp.140-141.

The criteria of judgements of value and importance are determined by a sense of human nature and human need, and can't be arrived at by science itself; they aren't, and can't be, a product of the scientific method, or anything like it. They are an expression of human responsibility. In the rapidly changing external civilization of the technological age it is peculiarly necessary that that consciousness of human responsibility and what it involves should be cultivated and strengthened to the utmost.<sup>28</sup>

29. See J.A. RICHARDSON, *Modern Art and Scientific Thought*, Chicago: University of Illinois, 1971, p.77.

According to Leavis, values, and for that matter hopes, emerge from that lonely self-awareness against which Snow too quickly reacted.<sup>29</sup> Ends should not be confused with means; scientific method may well refine our responses to these ends, purifying them, as it were, in the fires of rational criticism, but it is no more than a method, having only an indirect contribution to make to the creative initiation of the tasks we set ourselves. It is the task of the traditional literary-artistic culture, at least as Leavis understands it, to sponsor a creative will which will apprehend goals and generate iconic forms.

This does not mean that the creative spirit works in some romantically remote garret. No matter how much the writer or artist, realising that the ultimate resources lie within himself, seeks to be set apart with his own esoteric vision, he must send out for food. Or to express the paradox rather better, he is obliged to communicate. Not that any acknowledgement or appreciation of his message is vital - he does not have to be understood - but the very act of declaring his revelation creates a putative social relationship. The poet and the novelist must use language. Everyone speaks. The musician must put sound together. Everyone hears. The painter and the sculptor use line and colour, shape and mass. Everyone sees and feels.

30. F.R. LEAVIS, *Pluralism, Compassion and Social Hope, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p.171.

Except in the individual there is no creativity (any more than there is hope - whether conceived as 'social' or not). But the potentially individual such as an artist is discovers, as he explores his most intimate experience, how inescapably social he is in his very individuality".<sup>30</sup>

For the architect this latter realization comes early. His very existence, his right to maintain a specific identity, depends upon the social context of his activity. Without client or builder there can be no architecture, no matter how many young men may fortunately still dream dreams. Moreover, the problems of communication, ramifying with alarming rapidity in the specialisation explosion, are all too familiar, while the patently social obligations of his activity in a world of accelerating population become everyday more compelling. So much is this the case that it is not surprising that doubts should arise over the architect's role in contemporary culture; "interdisciplinary", "consultative collaboration", "systematic design method", "environmental appraisal technique", and all the rest of the current jargon seem to belong more in the vocabulary of Snow's scientific culture than elsewhere. It has, I think, become much harder for the architect today to swallow the fundamental emphasis in Leavis's case that, "Except in the individual there is no creativity..." Such a claim demands the subordination of all social consideration to the primacy of the individual imagination. Few appear confident enough to dare such a position. Perhaps it is this compromise which our cities bespeak with such bathos.

Leavis's case, though shouted at us with frequently aggressive intolerance, leads to a central article of faith, "a necessary faith", in *humanitas*, in which human fallibility and responsibility continue to be the mutual bases for imaginative action in "creative response to the new challenges of time." It is Snow who tends towards a politico-artistic banality. Working in the opposite direction to Leavis, i.e. from a social concern to a personal alignment, he argues that

Our response to it (the inequality of the social condition) affects... the nature of the art we value or practice...<sup>31</sup>

Is not this precariously close to a cry for socialist realism? I prefer Leavis's divine discontent.

Macquarrie has a phrase, "the ambivalence of our present culture."<sup>32</sup> It is not a developed concept; he wishes merely to convey the confused and contrary nature of our society's cultural trends, some expressing positive values, others more destructively critical. But by borrowing the phrase and placing the emphasis more on the idea of alternative strengths which can be embodied in the word "ambivalence", i.e. *ambi*-valence, rather than on the more customary slightly negative implications of equivocal meaning, we may come close to a final important distinction between the traditional culture and the scientific culture which lies at the heart of this third round of the debate.

The exchanges of the scientific culture are carried on in a common social currency—logic, mathematics, abstract symbolic systems generally; all admit of a world-wide but *uni*-valent interpretation; ambiguity is anathema to scientific communication. The traditional culture,

31. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures: a Second Look, Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.68.

32. J. MACQUARRIE, *Existentialism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973, p.203.

however, remains *ambi-valent*. Its strength lies paradoxically in its transcendence of the personal into the social - and back again. Its languages of communication, both literal and metaphorical, are legion, differing greatly over time and space. In the art world, ambiguity affording a rich plurality of view, is often a delight. Yet all languages, all views, grow out of the individual human experience and are only superficially altered by social change. "*On ne a que soi.*"<sup>33</sup> But Khnopff's motto is only partially true. The traditional culture is built upon a consciousness of individual "being", but it is a consciousness which cannot come into our experience without a complementary sense of "being-in-the-word" and "being-with-other". It is this *ambi-valence* which characterises the literary-artistic culture and again ensures its precedence in maintaining "the full life".

The last of the four aspects of the debate which I have chosen to consider, that of education, may appear most parochial of all for at first sight; the argument seems to focus upon specifically English institutions. Public school or comprehensive; Oxbridge exclusive or Robbins redbrick; what, to one side, are sacred cows become the *bêtes noires* of the other, and neither Snow nor Leavis is afraid to let his prejudice show. But beneath the superficial and particularly British arguments there is a fundamental problem which makes education a key issue. For if there is a cultural dichotomy, if there are two cultures, then the cause must lie somewhere in the educational structure which our society has devised. Or, more importantly, if we are to preserve an integrated culture, if the continuity of the "cultural tradition" is to be maintained then this will have to be done through education. It may be that this trust in the ameliorative or redemptive value of education is the customary recourse of the liberal intellectual - somewhat optimistic in its shunning of more radical social or economic change - as well as being typically British in its moderation. It would, of course, be surprising if this were not so, considering the backgrounds of both protagonists. And in any case, even the bloodiest revolutionary upheaval quickly finds itself confronted by the need to promulgate its ideals through education. The British ideal, sometimes cynically defined as the genius for compromise, is frequently acknowledged to be one of evolutionary change in which innovation is subtly allowed to take place on the periphery of the system from where, as Donald Schon showed, the dynamic conservatism of the centre may gradually be broken down.<sup>34</sup> But even this eminently commonsensical approach, though it certainly serves to preclude the trauma of catastrophe suffered in other cultures and mitigates the worst excesses of "grand solutions", can nevertheless permit the advocacy of quite different and sometimes bitterly opposed policies before the court of public opinion. As I have already described, both Snow and Leavis have their own diagnoses of the cultural malady. Their respective prescriptions for the invalid are no less dissimilar.

33. See exhibition catalogue "Peintres de l'imaginaire" Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 1972, p.28.

34. D.SCHON in the forth of the 1970 Reith Lectures; See *The Listener*, 10 December 1970, pp.810-812.

While Snow offers a new course of treatment which he is inclined to present as something of a panacea, from Leavis comes an exhortation to keep taking the tablets as before.

When in 1970, after over a decade of discussion, Snow came to review his position in the light of what he wryly called *The Case of Leavis and the Serious Case*, he altered the emphasis of his earlier thesis, elaborating a much more interdependent view of the two cultures than he had previously done, i.e. he saw each culture as but a separate epistemological aspect of one whole. True, he had briefly mentioned the possibility of two such "sub-cultures" in his 1963 *Second Look*, but had failed to develop the idea - possibly because this would have been a too-dangerous dilution of his principal intention to bolster the cause of science and technology. By 1970, however, he was prepared to play down the cultural antagonisms and to say instead that science and "the humanist culture" were but "Two ways of dealing with experience."<sup>35</sup> He conceded that both were necessary aspects of any full culture and seemed to suggest their creative interdependence. Again, of course, this approach had been present at the start when, in the Rede Lecture, he expressed regret that the separation and polarisation of the two cultures had occurred and that it was "sheer loss to us all .... at the same time practical, intellectual and creative loss." But now Snow came down off the science platform, dropped the Luddite smears, and began to look at what might be done to stop the rot.

Already in 1963 Snow thought it desirable to "educate a large proportion of our better minds so that they are not ignorant of imaginative experience, both in the arts and in science,"<sup>36</sup> but merely touched on such a policy, seeming to recommend it principally for its pragmatic value to applied science, an activity which he still regarded as the only proper cultural response to the "remediable suffering" of most of mankind. Any deeper philosophical implications such as those which might have led to a more explicit avowal of the central importance of the individual imagination similar to that of Leavis were all but passed over. Snow's "better minds" were merely to be "not ignorant of imaginative experience." No doubt in 1970 the "social hope" in technology remained but, in recognising complementary values in culture, Snow's strategy for a better future had become much less partisan in tone and more broadly educational in scope. The twin cankers of the English educational system - class consciousness and specialisation - must be expunged: comprehensive education is the only hope. The paradox is that Snow can only now make such proposal convincing since he himself has finally discarded his earlier advocacy of scientific specialisation. It is not the scientists who have "the future in their bones" but the children in the schools.

But while agreeing with Snow's conclusion in respect of primary and secondary education I find it hard to form any opinion about his views in the tertiary sphere,

35. C.P. SNOW, *The Case of Leavis and The Serious Case* (1970), *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.94.

36. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures: a Second Look*, *Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan 1971, p.77.

largely because he has so little to say. Apart from the direct call for more applied scientists and technologists and a later more catholic comment that it should "be possible to devise methods in ordinary academic courses to illustrate the distinction between the two kinds of knowledge" there is not much to indicate any detailed views about the relative roles of universities, polytechnics, art schools, colleges, etc. I suspect, however, that this omission points up the extent to which for Snow the real social and cultural healing will have to be done in the schools.

Leavis, on the other hand, approaching the problem from the other direction, is perfectly clear on the higher education issue. For him the university is still the true centre of culture - particularly the university English school, since literature is, in Arnold's words, "the criticism of life". By its guardianship of the word and its preservation of the critical function, "that critical function which is a creative one,"<sup>37</sup> the university secures for itself the right to act as a kind of cultural trustee. There, over the years, has been enshrined, "the continuous collaborative creativity that ensures significance, ends and values, and manifests itself as consciousness and profoundly human purpose."<sup>38</sup> Consciousness, conscience, and creativity, these are the qualities which Leavis values above all others in the preservation of the "cultural tradition" and which he believes can only flourish within cloistered courts.

I cannot agree with this exclusive confidence in the universities after all, since the democratisation of culture wrought by the printing press, creativity has been an increasingly extra-mural activity. Nevertheless, if we are to have elites - and like Leavis I happen to think we must - we may fare better with the teleological elite of the "literary-artistic culture" with its long tradition, than with the precocious, less humane and decidedly more dangerous methodological elites of science and technology.

But is it enough to trust an elite, even, pace Leavis, a plurality of elites? In a solely intellectual sense, i.e. if we restrict our concerns purely to the world of ideas, it must be so, for the ultimate elite is the individual himself and it is only there, as Leavis showed, that *humanitas* and creative response are to be found. The idea of comprehensive education, for example, is not some all-pervasive enlightenment revealed by the *Zeitgeist*, but a slowly maturing programme emanating from an educational elite. If, on the other hand, we speak of the world of social action, in which ideas are to be implemented, we cannot, without risking either tyranny or anarchy, leave decision and provision to a favoured few. There is then, I believe, in this final round of the debate a fundamental reciprocal relationship between the alternatives posed.

We may grant that the most stable and lasting foundation for a wholesome culture in our society must be laid in

37. F.R. LEAVIS, *Luddites? Or There is Only One Culture, Lectures in America*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1969, p.23.

38. F.R. LEAVIS, *Literarism v. Scientism, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p.53.

the schools but this does not absolve us from the continuing intellectual task of setting goals. Far from it; indeed such a policy is itself merely the result of efforts which have their origin in some sort of creative elitist speculation. It cannot be enough to rest easy with one pay-off in social action, no matter how comprehensive an influence education can be, for the constant updating of aims as well as methods must be maintained and we are entitled to look to the higher levels of education or thought, to the intellectual elite, to Leavis's "centre of consciousness for the community," for a more profound restatement of the "cultural tradition" in today's terms - and in tomorrow's too.

As I have tried to follow Snow's arguments in particular I have been conscious of shifts of emphasis and direction from a determined effort to elevate one side of a divided culture to an incongruous redemptive role, to a more humane call for one integrated culture. In 1959, for example, we have the basic proposition that there are two distinct cultures, one scientific, the other literary, divided irrevocably by "a gulf of mutual incomprehension." But to complicate matters a third culture comprising what may be called "non-scientific optimists" is also presented. In 1963 the inevitable "2002 cultures" argument is mentioned but wisely rejected, while the "Two Cultures" become two subcultures.

"... in plain truth, either of our cultures, whether literary or scientific, only deserves the name of sub-culture."<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless the third culture is elaborated further although only in so far as "the representatives of the putative third culture have been speaking with trenchancy"<sup>40</sup> about social issues. No advance in clarity seems to be made by this development for we are not told whether this is an additional and third culture or a replacement for the old two cultures. By 1970, the two cultures - or rather, sub-cultures - are still explicit, but the tenor of Snow's words now appears to me to suggest a return to one culture. Confusing as all of this is, there does seem, nevertheless, to be an attempt at bridge building. I hope I have shown that, from the shadows cast on each side of the debate, the architect begins to emerge as one of the persons best fitted to build these bridges.

I fear that the deeper one explores the cross currents, logical and hortatory, swirling between Snow and Leavis, the deeper one feels dragged into a vortex of endless interpretative possibilities and contradictions. Still, perhaps from personal bias more than anything else, I have tried to tease out this one thematic thread.

Despite all dispute Snow and Leavis have, I believe, allowed themselves, albeit unwittingly, to agree about architecture. Snow, it will be recalled, identified architecture amongst the several pursuits and "social arts" listed in his "putative third culture," sensing I

39. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures: a Second Look, Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.53.

40. C.P. SNOW, *The Two Cultures: a Second Look, Public Affairs*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p.65.

suspect those qualities of imaginative vision, disciplined rationality and, especially, social conscience which must have seemed central to the new culture he saw coming. Leavis, in addition to his casual but revealing mention of architecture alongside civilization, ethics, religion and language, can be quite poetical. What but a deep belief in architecture as a torch-bearer of the "cultural continuity" is conveyed by this passage, written I can well imagine before the open leaded casement of his Cambridge study.

Here ... is this convincing evidence of modern skill, modern and humane architectural elegance, and modern resources, seeming, on its beautifully landscaped site, to grow in its modernity out of the old Hall, the old lake side lawns and the old timbered grounds. It is easy to see that the architects have been guided by an idea that kept them in living touch with true and highly conscious academic foresight...<sup>41</sup>

41. F.R. LEAVIS, *Pluralism, Compassion and Hope, Nor Shall My Sword*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1972, p.193.

It is all there: old and new, tradition and innovation, the conceptual and the sensual.

And are there not other indications, beyond the unforeseen agreement of two such otherwise opposed critics as Snow and Leavis which point to this conclusion? In the universities themselves, where Snow's picture of jealous specialists guarding their own exclusive province of learning can prove all too true, it is the architecture department, often only recently elevated to such august status, which more than any other is prepared to challenge established academic boundaries. As a result it has become the *enfant terrible* of many a Senate. Its loosely aggregated curriculum crosses all sorts of frontiers, is proudly multi-disciplinary, and rarely achieves any fixed form. Stretching from fine art to physics, it nourishes its own cultural continuity with study of the past and still purports to build an image of the future. Meanwhile in the schools, where project work has grown into a major focus for comprehensive learning, the architectural or environmental ticket is proving one to which many previously quite separate subjects can jointly subscribe. Barriers are being broken down and creative collaboration even beyond the walls of the school, is extending the scope of the total education as never before.

It begins to look as if architecture can stand as a symbol of the one culture - an educational paradigm for the future.

## İKİ EKİN TARTIŞMASINA BİR BAKIŞ: EĞİTSEL ÖRNEK OLARAK MİMARLIK

### ÖZET

Mimarlık bir sanat mıdır yoksa bir bilim midir? Sorunun bezdiren sıkıcılığının yanısıra, mimarlık eğitimini ve uygulamasını bir ikilem olarak ortadan yaran bir niteliğin varolduğu da gerçek. Sanayi Devrimi ile birlikte daha da kızışan ve büyüyen bu ikircikli durum kuşkusuz yalnızca mimarlık alanına özgü birşey değildi. Ondokuzuncu yüzyılda mimarlık alanında kalem oynatan kişilerin çoğunluğu kendi duygusal, dinsel, toplumsal ve siyasal inaçları çerçevesinde geçmişin tasarım ve üretim süreçlerini mutluca birleştirebilen el sanatları ekonomisinin oluşturduğu insanı değerlerin arkasında gönül esenliği bulurlarken, geleceğe korku ve kuşku ile bakıyorlardı. Ussal olana güvenin artması, Ruskin gibileri kendi usdışı ağılatıları içine bir parça daha itiyordu. Gerçeğin aranmasında ve çağdaş törebilimin temelinin atılmasında yazın yerine bilimin etken olacağını savunan T.H.Huxley gibi kişiler, bilim ve usa olan güvenin pekişmesini sağlıyorlardı. Bu arada, bilimin kılıksal değerleri ve anlksal beğenilerini yadsımasalar da "makina"ya bağlanan umutları ve gösterilen inancı, "kuşatan tehlike" olarak görüp, "davranış içgüdü" ve güzellik içgüdüüne yararlı olmayı" başaramayan bir etkinlik olarak nitelendiren Matthew Arnold gibi kişiler de az değildir.

Yirminci yüzyılın *Second Machine Age* diyebileceğimiz *Post-Modernism* çağı yada adı ne olursa olsun, ikinci yarısında atılan adımın sağlıklılığı tartışılabilir duruma gelmiş ve kuşuklar yeniden belirmeğe başlamıştır. Mimarlık bir sanat mıdır yoksa bilim midir? Bu kez, Huxley'nin yerini C.P.Snow ve Arnold'nun yerini F.R.Leavis olarak tartışmayı olduğu gibi sürdürmekte: Ekinimizin doğası ve özü nedir?

Snow ve Leavis arasında on yılı aşkın bir zamandır süren ekin tartışmasının bu yazıda irdelenen dört ana noktası şunlar: etin (yada ekinler)'den ne anlaşıldığı — bunun amacı değişik tanımları karşılaştırmaktan çok, kendi anlayışları içinde mantık, töre ve estetik gibi tüm insan etkinliğine giren konuların, kendi savunmalarında ne tür öncelikler kazandıkları; ekinin uygulayım-bilim (teknoloji) ile olan ilişkisi — bunun amacı ondokuzuncu yüzyıl Sanayi Devrimi'nin ekinsel etkinliğinin irdelenmesi; insanın durumu ile ilgili felsefesal sorunlar — birey yada toplumun vurgulanması sorunu; geleceği hazırlayacak eğitimin çizgisi sorunu. Ekin sanat ağırlıklı mı yoksa bilim ağırlıklı mıdır? sorusunda, geleceğe yönelik bir eğitsel örnek olarak mimarlık tek bir ekinin simgesi olabilir.

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