

In earlier societies "the individual acted only occasionally and in limited spheres in a functionally rational manner; in contemporary society he is compelled to act in this way in more and more spheres of life". Most intimately connected with the functional rationalization of conduct is the phenomenon of self-rationalization, that is, the individual's systematic control of his impulses. However, since in a functionally rationalized society the thinking out of a complex series of actions is confined to a few organizers — men in key positions — the average man's capacity for rational judgment declines steadily. This leads to a growing distance between the elite and the masses, thus to the 'appeal to the leader'. Self-rationalization becomes increasingly more difficult. "When the rationalized mechanism of social life collapses in times of crisis, the individual cannot repair it by his own insight. Instead his own impotence reduces him to a state of terrified helplessness" (59).

The origins of the rational and irrational elements in modern society are thus traceable to the fact that ours is not only an industrial but also a mass society. As an industrial society "it creates a whole series of actions which are rationally calculable... and which depend on a whole series of repressions and renunciations of impulse satisfactions. As a mass society, it produces all the irrationalities and emotional outbreaks which are characteristic of amorphous human agglomerations" (61).

The "irrational", however, "is not always harmful ,...it is among the most valuable powers in man's possession when it acts as a driving force towards rational and objective ends" (62). It is harmful when it is not integrated into the social structure and enters the political life in a society in which the masses tend to dominate. This is so "dangerous because the selective apparatus of mass democracy opens the door to irrationalities in those places where rational direction is indispensable" (63). In short and to be specific, irrationalities are still an asset in France and England, but of course very bad in Germany.

III

It might be well to interrupt our exposition of Mannheim's studies and to select for discussion the following ideas:

- 1) Society is in a transition from *laissez faire* to planning. The character of ruling elites is decisive for future events.
- 2) To understand the actions and ideas of men the "multi-dimensional" nature of social events must be considered.
- 3) A civilization is collapsing; the belief in progress is gone; irrationality is on the increase. The last must be understood as the result of the contradictory development of "social interdependence" and "fundamental democratization", the more rapid growth of the *functional* as compared to the *substantial* rationality in industrial mass society.

To deal with the question of transition: It is essential for an understanding of Mannheim's thought to observe that his book has been influenced by "experiences in Germany and later by the English way of thinking, and

is an attempt at reconciling the two" (4). The democracies, Mannheim says, "have not yet found a formula to determine which aspects of the social process can be controlled by regulation, and the dictatorships cannot see that interfering with everything is not planning" (14). He favors neither of them, but a social policy which successfully merges what is good in both; everything depends finally on "whether we can find ways of transferring democratic parliamentary control to a planned society" (380). The political character of Mannheim's work is here revealed. Although somewhat hidden by a benevolent acknowledgment of Marx's contribution to social science, it is nevertheless an attack upon the idea of revolutionary change. Though convinced of the necessity of many of the fascistic reforms, Mannheim is thoroughly frightened by their social consequences. He favors a middle-way, that is, he favors the political attitude prevailing in the so-called democratic nations which are in opposition to the new German imperialism.

Mannheim is convinced that "if the groups engaged in politics still refuse to look beyond their own immediate interests, society will be doomed" (15). It is difficult to see more than rhetoric in this statement, for one or another group may be doomed (whatever that may mean), but why society? It is still more difficult to understand this because Mannheim does not believe "that the great theme of our time is the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie" (215). He admits that at an earlier time the class-struggle idea appeared to be quite realistic, but now it has to be recognized as a "distorted perspective". It is no longer true, he says, "that class antagonisms are the principal characters" in the social drama, because "new classes grew up which cannot be placed in the same category as the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, or the military caste; party organizations have been created which ignore the economic division between workers and industrialists. These issues dwarf the significance of the continued class tensions" (251).

If class issues are of "secondary importance" today they cannot be made responsible for the continuation of the present social crisis. If Mannheim nevertheless speaks of group frictions as responsible for the present chaos, this must be understood in the light of his conviction that "party organizations ignore the division between workers and industrialists". What "dooms" society is the struggle between party organizations and industry, between fascism and private-property capitalism. Mannheim's quest for ending group frictions to "save society" is an appeal to both fascist and "anti-fascists" to end their struggle and find a compromise solution which satisfies both, — a plea which simultaneously assumes that the proletariat as an independent force is already out of the way.

It is from this view that Mannheim's claims that most of the bad symptoms of our time are due to the transition from *laissez faire* to planning, from a limited democracy to mass society, and to the changes in social technique accompanying this process, must be understood. These principles appear to him as more important than the Marxian principles of class conflict and the struggle for power whose "concrete patterns are much too change-

able to be accepted as the eternal frame-work of future events" (251). He considers his principles more fundamental because they are more abstract, because "they sufficiently explain a large number of changes which will endure after the special class patterns have been modified" (252).

Though principles which will endure and transcend the narrower problems of the present are all right so far as they go, they are not "superior" and do not relegate the less abstract problems of the present into "secondary categories". To say that most of the symptoms of our time are due to its transitional character is to repeat — only in other words — that they are due to the actual struggle between party organizations and industrialists. Thus Mannheim has not replaced less abstract with more abstract principles. He has only narrowed down still further the class struggle principle by accepting — in concreto — one of its phases, that is, the present struggle between party organizations and industrialists, as of greater importance than the class struggle itself.

It might be difficult to recognize in the present struggles between fascism and private-property capitalism the old struggle between those who control the sources of economic and social power and those controlled by them because of the fact that the emphasis has now been shifted from the so-called economic into the political sphere. It is easier to discard the whole problem and to concentrate on issues which apparently transcend both the class struggles in their former and in their present disguises. In that case one cannot help assuming that society is already in the process of transition towards planning. Thus for Mannheim all present social tensions and difficulties result from the side-by-side existence of *laissez faire* and planning. But here a new difficulty arises, for Mannheim himself says, that so far we are "only in that stage of development where each of the dominant social groups is intent on capturing for itself the chance of planning and controlling society in order to turn its power against rival groups" (70). He thinks that up to the present "history has not produced genuine attempts at planning, since the experiments of which we know are blended with the spirit³ either of oriental despotism or military dictatorial traditions" (7).

For Mannheim real planning does not exist; but real planning should exist. The *new principle* is not practiced, but it should be practiced. Since this real planning does not exist, the present miserable state of affairs cannot be attributed to the side-by-side existence of new and old principles, that is, *laissez faire* and planning, democracy and dictatorship. The less so, since the *old principle* was in force only in the same sense as the new principle

3) We might as well leave the "spirits" out of it as Mannheim is aware of the fact that not only in the countries thus beset, but in all highly industrial states a "transition is taking place because all are suffering from the same dislocation of their normal existence". The fact "that some show obvious symptoms of the crisis and others are experiencing similar changes at slower speed under cover of social peace," he says "is due merely to an uneven distribution of pressure on different states, and to the existence of greater mental and material resources in certain countries" (12).

is in force now, not really, not socially, but only to favor some dominant social group, just as the new planning principle now favors other dominant groups. That both the democracies and the dictatorships, in Mannheim's opinion, fall short — although at different poles — of doing what he deems socially necessary is explained by the fact that both systems, despite all their differences, are still capitalistic regimes at different stages of development and within different settings. Both by performing apparently opposite movements nevertheless reach identical results, a process that finally may reestablish a new capitalistic "unity", a relative uniformity of behavior, the fusion of the "good" to be found in both the old and the new for which Mannheim hopes. From this point of view, Mannheim's book merely reflects what is now in the process of development, i. e., the social re-organization of the prevailing society in accordance with recent economic and class changes.

Mannheim's assertion — based on the ever-existing parallelism of old and new social patterns, techniques and principles, and their bewildering influences — that the present social crisis is a transitional period leading over to a new society is not convincing. From such a point of view all societies are always in transition, and though in one sense this is true, such a statement is not sufficient to explain social phenomena, nor can it serve any practical purpose.

Throughout capitalistic development, planning and *laissez faire*, democracy and dictatorship have always been two sides of the same coin. The planning of individual enterprises, which is now extended to national planning, and dictatorship over the working class, which now embraces all layers of society, are indications of the "maturity" of a society whose development has been determined by the characteristics of its embryonic stage, that is, by specific production — and class-relations that allowed for "progress" only in terms of capital concentration and power centralization.

No doubt one could very well speak of the present as a "transition period" in distinction to a period where fascism was not as yet fascism but merely a tendency expressed in the growth of monopolies, where dictatorial control over the workers' life did not extend beyond the factory, the barrack, the relief station and additional compulsives of the wage system. One could, that is, — to use an analogy — arbitrarily refer to the ripening period of fruit as its transitory stage, and to its previous growth as its "real," "normal", or "healthy" stage. Transition to what? Though there is no reason why one should not distinguish between different developmental stages of one particular societal form, yet all that transition could mean here is the transition toward decay. Distinctions have to be made between different developmental stages in a certain society and between one society and other societies. Though the birth of capitalism preceded the capitalist revolution, nevertheless the transition from feudalism to capitalism must still be regarded as a revolutionary act, as the result of class struggles. And though the transition to a new society need not and will not copy the transition from feudalism to capitalism, still it cannot be a mere "reconstruction" of the prevailing society. It would then still be the prevailing society, however changed.

Even if one follows Mannheim's advice and concentrates his attention "not on the contrast between evolution and revolution but on the content of the changes themselves" (12), it still has to be established whether those changes constitute a real social revolution, that is, abolish one kind of class rule in favor of another, or abolish class rule altogether — the criterion for which rests in the socio-economic field. Of course the latter query is of importance only to the class interested in revolutionary change. But disinterest in the problem does not eliminate it. Here, however, lies the crux of the matter, for Mannheim is convinced that "revolutions" can no longer be anything other than good or bad "reconstructions" of the *existing* society. He is satisfied with a very limited program, which as a matter of fact is so limited that it has already been overtaken by recent events. In the economic sphere, for example, he pleads for no more than a minor transformation of property concepts,⁴ for he is convinced that "entirely new principles of construction can often be found in trivial microscopic processes, provided they are integrated in a certain manner. Thus major principles are not infrequently concealed behind the mask of petty details" (12). However, fascism has meanwhile shown us what "major principle" was behind the "petty detail" of the "transformation of property concepts". The petty details which in the society thus changed, are supposed to secure "freedom for individual adjustment", on which Mannheim bases his hopes for a better future, suggest, as we shall see later, principles quite as unsatisfactory — at least for the large mass of individuals.

IV

Mannheim, who sees a real transformation of one type of society into another in the metamorphoses of democracy into dictatorship, of *laissez faire* into *monopolistic laissez faire*, of imperfect competition into imperfect regulation, maintains that the outcome of the process depends on the character of the elite which gives it direction. We must recall that in Mannheim's opinion democracy in capitalism is possible only as a "pseudo-democracy", which grants power to a small propertied and educated group. With the development of capitalism, i. e., with the concentration of economic, political and military forces, "irrationality" grows and democracies change into dictatorships because it is not possible "to bring everyone to more or less similar levels of understanding" (46).

4) "It is becoming more and more obvious", Mannheim says, "that the enjoyment of income and interests and the right to dispose of capital are two different things.. It is possible that in the future things will so develop that by appropriate taxation and compulsory charity this unrestricted use could be curtailed, and the disposition of capital could be guided from the centre by credit control. Fascism is making unwillingly an interesting experiment in its unacknowledged expropriation of the capitalists. It has managed to socialize the power of disposition without ejecting the former industrial elite from their posts. Transformation of the original form of capitalism does not consist in abolishing the claims of property, but in withdrawing certain functions of the ownership of capital from the competence of the capitalists" (350).

What Mannheim here describes has in a different sense been stated before in Marx's laconic remark that the "democratic swindle" is over as soon as it endangers the ruling class, and by William Graham Sumner who said that democracy serves as an impetus for class conflict, which finally forces industry to become plutocratic in order to survive. What is new in Mannheim is the peculiar way in which he attempts to show that it was not the sharpening of class frictions in the course of capital formation that led to the end of democracy, but the extension of democracy, that is, the quantitative growth of democratic political processes that led to the qualitative change into dictatorship. An exaggerated democracy leads to fascism. Thus the "democratic nations" fight the fascist nations today because there was too much democracy in the latter and too little in the former.

Let us recall once more Mannheim's explanation of the growth of irrationality. There are always fewer positions, he says, from which the major structural connection between different activities can be perceived. The broad masses become increasingly unable to understand what occurs. Their actions disturb the smooth working of society if the men in key positions are not able properly to integrate those activities into social life. "Primitive types" of men in key positions endanger the whole society. The "primitive type" has a chance to reach those positions because of the existing democracy. "The first negative consequence of the modern widening of opportunities for social advancement through education", Mannheim says, "is the proletarianization of the intelligentsia. There are more persons on the intellectual labor market than society as it is requires for carrying out its intellectual work. The glut of intellectuals decreases the value of the intellectuals and of intellectual culture itself" (100).

This kind of argument seems familiar. There is, for instance, Hitler's observation that there are too many Jews in the intellectual professions, more than is good for German culture. Jewish intellectuals become in Mannheim's language just intellectuals, German culture, simply culture. This attitude is common to all separately organized groups with vested interests within the capitalistic structure. Essentially it expresses no more than the never-ending fear of the "arrived" of losing their positions to the "up-starts" in society "as it is", that is, in the relatively stagnating capitalistic society. But Mannheim says more. He asserts that if the "primitive type" worms or fights his way into the intellectual positions, he — the primitive type — reduces the whole intellectual level to his own. There is still another important assumption: If culture is no longer determined by the really cultured, who are to be copied with more or less success by the rest of the population, culture will be distorted. The specific economic and class outlook of the proletariat, for instance, which stresses the importance of technological development because by so doing it raises its own importance, may lead to an over-emphasis of the technological aspects of culture. "In Russia where the proletariat possesses exclusive political power," Mannheim says, "the proletariat carries this principle so far, that even if for no other reason, it continues to accumulate and to invest in order to expand itself as a social

class as against the peasantry" (105). If this is so, then all capitalistic development must have been carried out by a "ruling proletariat". Capitalism advanced so rapidly because it accumulated for the sake of accumulation and for the sake of transforming, if possible, the whole population — excluding the capitalists — into exploitable wage workers. Thus the Russian workers would seem to have taken power only to carry on the good, if one-sided work, from that point where the capitalists lost their breath. This overemphasis on accumulation under the direction of the capitalist, however, did not interfere with the creation of that civilization which Mannheim now sees endangered. Mannheim's rather grotesque example illustrates his point quite well however. Even in the "best case", so he thinks, class-rule determined by a class point of view leads to distortions. Consequently, the regulation and direction of society, in order to be intelligent and appropriate to social needs, must from his point of view be carried out by an elite which stands above classes and groups and knows what is good for the whole.

We do not think that the "democratization" of society is in any way responsible for the glut of the intellectual labor market. The existing "over-supply" is true of all kinds of labor, not of any particular kind. This indicates that the present crisis is not caused by maladjustments or disproportions between different branches of production which may be eliminated by way of a planning that reestablishes a lost workable "equilibrium", but is a fundamental crisis of the whole capitalistic system — a crisis that affects all branches of production and thus the whole of the labor market. The question of the intellectuals could no more be solved by rearrangements in the labor market than could a mere readjustment in the productive process overcome the economic crisis. As a matter of fact what adjustments and rearrangements are possible have already been accomplished, as the wide-spread destruction of capital and the proletarianization of the intellectuals bear witness.

From a different point of view than that which still accepts society "as it is" when speaking of the future, the glut of the labor market is meaningless. If class and profit considerations were eliminated and the productive forces of society really released, an "over-supply" of labor could not arise. There would remain the problem of how it might be possible to live better with less labor with the existing labor force and its possible improvement, and thus how to "intellectualize" the masses still further. This question has nothing in common with the present problems of the disequilibrium and disproportionality and the planning needs associated therewith. There is also no bridge leading from the latter kind of "planning theories", designed for a society in which class issues have been forced into the background because one likes to keep them there, to planning in a society in which class considerations have actually ceased to determine the productive and distributive processes.

Mannheim's position, which assumes the possibility of planning without fundamental changes in the social structure of the process of production, offers little choice as to the way in which his theories might be worked out. Essentially everything boils down to a demand for a better-selected and more

secure elite which wisely and justly puts everybody where he belongs, even in labor camps a la Hitler, if necessary.⁵ We will have to return to this point when dealing with Mannheim's suggestions for the planning of society.

V

In regard to the *second point* selected for discussion, namely that social events are of a multi-dimensional nature, we would like to say at once that no one could disagree with this observation. We will also admit — using Mannheim's example — that the principle of competition has "universal" validity. There is no problem here — only the problem of where to begin. The selection of points of departure is decisive for any social analysis, since all social phenomena are not of equal importance, nor equally accessible for investigation. Mannheim, who conceives Marxism as a theory which "regards the economic and political factors as absolute" and thus "makes it impossible to proceed to the sociological factors proper" (21), misrepresents the theory he criticizes. Though it is true that Marx's science of society is first of all economic research this does not limit its comprehensiveness. It is not the fault of Marxism that other branches of the social sciences are less amenable to *scientific* investigation, that they become the less scientific the further they are removed from economic relationships. To remain scientific, Marxism starts where scientific research is possible. It is not Marxism but society which is responsible for the overwhelming importance of economics and politics.

Mannheim prefers to concentrate on the "usually disregarded psychological effects of the more elementary processes", such as occur "in other than economic surroundings ...in which men struggle or co-operate". He is concerned with questions such as "how and when and why people meet, how power and influence, risk and responsibility are distributed, whether men act spontaneously or under orders, what social controls are possible", because "all these things, taken individually and collectively, decide what is said, how it is said, what is consciously suppressed, or repressed into the unconscious, and within what limits the dictates of public morality are regarded as binding for all or as valid only within certain groups". He wants to deal with relationships like "authority and subordination, distancing and isolation, prestige and leadership, and their effect on psychological expression and culture in different social settings" (20), and so forth.

To judge from the results of Mannheim's studies one cannot help wondering if a less ambitious goal might not have been better. The ideas he advances do not reveal the "social changes underlying the psychological and cultural changes" any better than the more restricted investigations of Marx.

5) In the magazine MASS UND WERT (October 1937; p. 113) Mannheim wrote: "The fascist labor camps, though not a pleasant solution for the crisis under which the permanently unemployed suffer, are nevertheless, from the view point of social technique, a better method if compared with those of liberalism which tried to solve the social-psychological problem of unemployment by way of the dole."

Rather the opposite is true, for Marx goes much further than Mannheim, and on the question of competition, for instance, shows that its "universality" remains bound to the specific form of capitalistic economic competition; that the general can only be grasped with reference to the particular. Competitions in love, in art, in politics, though having in one sense a "significance of their own", really attain their own significance only by way of the economic process. The influence they exert upon society on their "own account" gain *social significance* only by winning importance economically. Otherwise, that is, in so far as they really show independent forms, they remain outside the field of social science, which like anything else has its limitations. In short, considerations of an infinite number of social relationships will not lead to useful generalizations. The latter are bound to a definite number of social relationships. To increase that number by way of social research, and thus to improve the reliability of accepted generalizations, or to change those generalizations, is a worthwhile undertaking, but its success has to be measured by the knowledge already gained and the applicability of that knowledge.

It is impossible here to compare all, or even the more important, findings of Mannheim with those of Marx. Any careful Marxian reader of Mannheim's book is bound to notice that Mannheim — in spite of himself — relies almost exclusively on economic phenomena to interpret social and psychological facts. The extra-economic relationships that "form the real center of the drama" in which social are translated into psychological changes play in his own exposition as small a role as they played in Marx, who granted their existence in order to leave them alone. Thus the Marxian reader of Mannheim's work will often find himself on familiar ground. However the Marxian raisins to be found in this large cake of many ingredients⁶⁾ must not lead to the assumption that the differences between Marx and Mannheim are merely verbal, or that we have to deal here with a new attempt to bring Marx up-to-date. Whenever Mannheim draws from Marx, he empties him. Yet, whatever content this book possesses it owes to that "Marxism" that it declares to be insufficient for the purposes of modern sociology.

It may be in order at this moment to draw attention to Mannheim's dialectic which never fails to regard at least two sides of each and every problem he presents. As irrationality and rationality have their negative and positive aspects, so has mass-democracy and pseudo-democracy, so has competition and regulation, so has the restricted Marxian view and the more abstract sociological approach of Mannheim himself. Though generally the class war is regarded as a secondary issue, Mannheim at times admits that his "discussion of it does not aim at proving that there is no real chance of the class war becoming stronger than any other consideration" (341). This, however, is "only one alternative". "The question of primacy, though an

6) Adler, Dewey, Durkheim, Freud, Durbin, Hegel, Hobson, Gumplovicz, Le Bon, Michels, Mill, Nietzsche, Oppenheimer, Pareto, Pavlov, Sorel, Spengler, Scheler, Summer, Tawney, Veblen, Weber, and others.

important one", he says, "in no way alters the fact that in some periods emphasis may be shifted from one mechanism to another, and this in itself may depend on the changing nature of social techniques" (308). Thus everything is possible and Mannheim actually succeeds in giving an idea of the "real", that is to say, the "multidimensional nature of social events".

But with this idea of the "real" nothing real can be undertaken. A bewildering picture emerges and it still remains to extract what is recognizable in it in order to reach conclusions. Mannheim in offering this picture stands nowhere and everywhere; as the saying goes, he cannot be "pinned down". There is not one position from which he cannot withdraw. He is never at a loss for explanations which would justify both his old and any new position. His comparatively constant principles such as the transition from competition to regulation as well as the others therewith connected, allow for a great variety of interpretations. The constant principles are vague enough. Events could never prove or disprove their validity

His own proposals for the reconstruction of society and the remaking of man have no connection with reality. The "multi-dimensional" nature of his reality excludes both a fruitful empiricism and convincing theories. The latter remain idealistic demands not at all based on the empirical research accompanying them. His search fails to yield results because it is spread out over too large a field; because it consistently refuses to deal with society as it is and prefers instead to deal with society as it should be. Mannheim thus bears witness once more to the fact that a "sociological science" attempting to deal with *society* is an impossibility in a *class* society. In dealing with social issues in a class society one has to deal with class issues. But this Mannheim refuses to do. He does not see that so long as classes exist, class interests necessarily co-exist. He wants to have the first without having the second, or rather he believes that classes cannot be changed, but that class interests may be dealt with independently.

As thought and actions in the capitalist society do not stem directly from actual social relationships but must, in order to assert themselves, first be transformed into value relations in the exchange process, thought and action within the capitalist society can only be interpreted in connection with the prevailing fetishism in the capitalist economy. As all social actions bear upon economics because of the interrelation of all social phenomena, it is first of all necessary in order then to discover how non-economic social changes are transformed into psychological — to find out how far these changes and their psychological results are ruled by the fetishism valid for all spheres and all aspects of social life. This means that no investigation can yield results unless it starts from the social relationships that underlie all economic and extra-economic relations, that is, the class structure and the class problems of society. The fascistic concentration of capital "simplified" exchange relations but did not do away with them. Within certain territories the maze of the market is displaced by an open antagonism between the controllers and the controlled in the production and distribution process. The ideologies that to a large extent spring — so to speak — "automatically"

from the exchange relations, are now planfully constructed and take on outspokenly political characteristics. If it was previously necessary to deal with thought and action in the "round-about" manner enforced by market relations, which made the economic interpretation of social phenomena quite difficult, it is now much easier to discover behind every social phenomenon the actual determining social relations, that is, the exploitation of the non-possessing class by the class, group, or individuals that control the means of production by way of a monopoly over all the social control institutions.

There is no way of saying anything of importance in regard to the manifold social and psychological problems, unless they are seen from the point of view of existing class relations. By relegating class issues to the background and by concentrating on the infinite number of extra-class, that is, extra-economic phenomena, Mannheim can only mystify once more the real social issues of today. In brief, he only helps to formulate new ideologies for securing the rule of fascistic regimes.

VI

Before dealing with the *third point* selected for discussion it should be said that Mannheim's distinction between *substantial* and *functional* rationality is a devious one, because in reality all rationality is functional. The distinction between the two forms of rationality is based on the assumption that the changes in human beings are something other than social changes, an assumption closely connected with the old idea of the invariability of human nature. Mannheim, however, does not go that far; he only assumes that human nature changes less rapidly than society. He explains this with the principle of the "contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous". "What is the significance of the bomb-dropping aviator?" Mannheim asks. He answers himself: "It is that human beings are able to make use of the most modern products of inventive genius to satisfy primitive impulses and motives" (42).

We do not share Mannheim's concept of the contradictory character of human nature. For us the whole problem of rationality raised by him seems artificial. But we will continue to argue on his own theoretical ground. Mannheim needs the contradictions in human nature of which he speaks in order to justify his own ideas of planning. Though he knows that war, for example, "is not the outcome of some invariable instinct like aggressiveness, but partly of the faulty elaboration of the psychological tendencies through institutions, and partly of the desperate flight of people into collective aggression when un-coordinated institutions clash and bring about a feeling of general insecurity" (141), he also sees that at "the present stage of centralized propaganda new patterns of thought and behavior can be popularized in a much shorter time and on a much larger scale than was formerly possible" (24). Under the new conditions, he says, "leaders enjoy the possibility of raising hatred on one day and appeasing it on the next" (137). Under such conditions it seems indeed important what kind of elite rules society.

It is true that we live in an age that produces ideologies, emotions, and activities in the same way that it produces cheese or any other commodity. It is an age where what was formerly considered "subjective" is now "objective". We have reached a stage in which all and everything has been perfectly capitalized and robbed of its last remnant of individuality. Except for "sports" there are no longer inventors, but factories for invention; no longer politicians — except clowns — but "machine-politicians". Each and everyone today, regardless of his specific qualities or shortcomings, can be all or nothing, because — if need be — consent can be produced at will. In short, there is no longer an individual and private sphere, because there have been developed, with modern technique, instruments of control powerful enough to rob the powerless in society not only of part of the products of their labor, but also completely of themselves.

Under such conditions, however, it becomes quite fantastic to follow Mannheim in his attempt to trace the twofold nature of man "right back to prehistory" (64), to search among the investigations of the ethnologists for clues which may explain down to the last details the reason for irrationality in men. Why all this effort? The cause of the "irrationalities" in the present day society is quite clear. If Mannheim states that the same "persons who, in their working life in the sphere of industrial organization are extensively rationalized, can at any moment turn into machine wreckers and ruthless warriors" (64), it is obvious that only if they are ordered to do so can they do one or the other. Because of their contradictory nature" they could only become wreckers and warriors if they were given a chance to escape the physical and psychological control to which they have to submit today. But Mannheim thinks that "the concentration of military instruments lessens the chances of any type of insurrection and revolution, as well as of the execution of the democratic mass will" (48). Then where do the "primitive motives" enter in? The aviator does not drop bombs because of some "primitive impulses". In so far as "primitive impulses" may play a part they are quite meaningless as regards the aviator's various activities. He drops the bomb for the clear-cut reason that risking death and killing belong to the capitalistic way of existence. Thus the sociologists do not need to "discover" the "social mechanism" which determines when and in what form in "human society" rational and irrational forces occur. All they have to discover is what lies open before their eyes. All that has to be seen is the class nature of the present — not "human" society, which forces the powerless to serve in manifold ways the singular need of the ruling class to keep itself on top.

According to Mannheim the "negative" side of mass-democracy under conditions of modern industry must be seen in the growth of irrationality and the break-down of morality. The intellectual and moral lag Mannheim deplors accompanied the whole of the capitalist development, but only recently did it assume disastrous proportions. Capitalist development, "progressive" as it was in terms of increasing productivity, necessarily lifted the intellectual level of the masses. According to Mannheim, however, functional rationality increased to the detriment of substantial rationality. His

proof is the economic crisis and the accompanying political outburst which he considers irrational.

The question arises: Would there have been no crisis if substantial rationality had not suffered as Mannheim thinks it did, if it had been sufficiently increased together with functional rationality? If for the sake of argument one accepts Mannheim's distinction with regard to rationality, even then it could be said that an inapplicability of substantial rationality is no proof for its nonexistence, or rather, that an insufficiently practiced rationality of this sort is no sign of its decrease. To us it seems obvious that whatever substantial rationality existed in men other than those in key positions, this could not change the fact that because of the peculiar characteristic of the capitalistic production process all that could be employed was functional rationality.

It is not so much the necessary functional division in social production as it is a question of class relations which puts some men in key positions and transforms others into living robots. The men in key positions may then point out that it is precisely the absence of substantial rationality on the part of the masses which forces them to serve society from key positions that give them insight into the interrelations of things. This whole argument of Mannheim's reminds us of the "white man's burden", which he transfers from the colonies to the world at large. Furthermore, the men in key positions are not there because they possess greater insight, nor does their position give them such insight. They, also, are restricted to that unfortunate functional rationality because their whole activity despite all possible insight and consideration for the interdependence of all social phenomena — must serve the interests of just one particular group which struggles against all others. Mannheim himself says that "what is economically irrational for a whole nation may still be profitable to particular groups" (136). We might improve upon this sentence in our own way and say: What is *profitable* for a particular group is necessarily irrational for the whole of the nation — if this nation is seen from a viewpoint from which class issues are no longer decisive. Otherwise the whole problem of rationality and irrationality as posed by Mannheim becomes senseless. Rational for whom and in relation to what? To avoid such questions Mannheim must necessarily assume the existence of a society in which class issues are no longer of importance.

If it were true that, relative to functional rationality, substantial rationality declines in the course of technological development, then in times of long-drawn depressions which decrease the tempo and scope of technological advances there should be less, not more, irrationality in the world. And if the masses actually enter politics by way of the democratic mechanism, the decrease in irrationality should also make itself felt in the political sphere. Just what is the proper proportion between technological and intellectual-moral development? When and for what specific reasons does the alleged disproportion become dangerous to society? When is a mass-democracy incompatible with an industrial society and when not? How much democracy must exist, how far advanced must industry be? What kind of intensity of mass-

influx turns the trick? At what point can the irrationalities no longer enter narrow circles? For all this and more, Mannheim has always just one answer: at the point when the crisis begins. The crisis explains all his assertions. But what explains the crisis? His assertions of course.

What is forcing its way today "in the arena of public life" is not however, that "irrationality" which hitherto found an outlet in "narrower circles and in private life", but the quite "rational" actions of oppressed people to preserve their lives with all their irrationalities. That their activities appear "irrational" to the ruling groups in society is due to the rulers' fear of losing control over the ruled. These "irrationalities" appear quite "rational" to new controllers, for it brings them to power. This transfer of power-positions from one group to another within the prevailing social structure neither increases or decreases, nor expresses such increase or decrease, of rationality or irrationality. Irrational it that group which loses power — not only "irrational" but "doomed". The only "rationality" there is for any ruling class or group is that which preserves its rule. The only "rationality" there is for the powerless is the "irrationality" which destroys the ruling "rationality".

As long as it is possible within a particular social pattern to satisfy the essential needs of the masses, the masses will acquiesce and their behavior will appear "rational". If the situation changes decisively, as it does in capitalism's long depressions, the ideologies bound to other situations lose their force. The enforced search for new ideas and activities that ensues leads to movements in opposition to the ruling rationality. If the ruling class entrusted with and interested in the maintenance of the existing social relations is unable for one or another reason to adapt its control measures to the new situation in time, it will be replaced by other groups striving for control and better able to adapt their methods to the new situation — by virtue of the fact that they are less hampered by vested interests and given to a greater flexibility. The "rationality" of the old ruling group is fought by the "irrationality" rationally employed by the new, which in turn, as soon as it is in power, makes the ideologies serving its purposes the ruling ones and the acquiescence in their rule the norm for rational behavior.

As long as the new rulers are able to remove some of the causes which previously disturbed the "social peace" or to transfer the social unrest to another setting by engaging in warfare or simply by creating during the interval between the expectations connected with the political change and the disappointment which may follow, a new control machinery able to force the masses into acquiescence, social "unity" is re-established. This in turn forces the masses to create on their part new methods of struggle and weapons for mass-pressure. This may take time. A period of social peace is granted to the new rulers. There arises a period in which the behavior of the masses appears once again quite "rational". It has not yet found out how to be "irrational" under the new situation.

The *Age of Reason* was based on the absence of "reason" in the economic sphere whose "unreasonable automatic" functioning has since been disturbed

by the capitalistic accumulation process, that is, by increased concentration, centralization and monopolization. It finds its end as soon as reason threatens to be applied in that sphere. However, there was in evidence less mass-pressure and thus less "irrationality" in Mannheim's sense, during capitalism's ascendancy than during its period of depression. But it was not mass-democracy, nor any kind of disproportion between technique and intellect, which led to a growing "irrationality" in capitalism. This historical form of society developed from a "rational" into an "irrational" dictatorship because of economic occurrences which led to mass movements and their exploitation by groups competing for power within the capitalistic production relations. Democracy was rational for the liberal bourgeoisie; fascism is rational for the fascists. From the point of view of a class-less society, both the "rational" liberalistic society and the "irrational" fascist society of which Mannheim speaks are equally rational as far as capitalism is concerned. Both are irrational as far as the hypothetical class-less society is concerned.

VII

To work with concepts such as social interdependence vs. fundamental democratization, substantial vs. functional rationality, etc. Mannheim needs a society in which other than economic and class forces are determinant. He must discover "transition belts" that lead over from one into another social structure, culture and psychology. Thus he must not only consider the "negative" but also the "positive" aspects in the present process of social disintegration. The new vigor of the masses, caused by the process of "fundamental democratization" and expressed in the "growing irrationality" may also be looked upon, he says, "as the first stage in a general process of enlightenment in which, for the first time, broad human groups are drawn into the field of political experiment and so gradually learn to understand the structure of political life" (199). Due to changes in the sphere of morality⁷ in the industrial society, a "superindividual group solidarity" develops which must be considered a positive element in the existing mass-society. "Our world", writes Mannheim, "is one of the large groups in which individuals who until now have been increasingly separated from one

7) Because there exists for Mannheim "a complete parallel between the factors making for the growth and collapse of rationality in the intellectual sphere and those making for the growth and collapse of morality" (66) we need not deal especially with the questions of morality raised in his book. With certain modifications — of little concern for our purpose — Mannheim uses again in the sphere of moral discipline the distinction between the functional and substantial points of view. "The functional aspect of a given type of moral discipline consists of those standards which, when realized in conduct, guarantee the smooth working of society. Substantial morality consists of certain concrete values, such as dictates of faith and different kinds of feelings, standards which may be completely irrational in quality. The more modern society is functionally rationalized the more it tends to neutralize substantial morality, or side-track it into the private sphere."

The dual-morality (moralistic in private life — violent in the public sphere), thus far the privilege of the ruling classes, may be adopted by the masses. "Once the

another are compelled to renounce their private interests and to subordinate themselves to the interests of the larger social units" (69). Capital is combined into large industrial organizations, workers learn solidarity in trade unions; and thus competition creates group unity. By this process, Mannheim thinks, man "realizes gradually that by resigning partial advantages, he helps to save the social and economic system and thereby also his own interests" (70). He learns to understand better the interdependence of events and develops a consciousness of the need for planning. Although till now "the individual thinks not in terms of the welfare of the community or mankind as a whole, but in terms of that of his own particular group, yet this whole process tends to train the individual to take a progressively longer view; it tends at the same time to inculcate in him the faculty of considered judgment and to fit him for sharing responsibility in planning the whole course of events in the society in which he moves" (70).

What Mannheim here describes as positive elements in the existing competitive mass society cannot, however, serve regulative principles. The labor organizations, for instance, which he introduces to illustrate his position were formed and controlled in accordance with capitalistic organization and control principles. They were themselves as little "democratic" as the "democracy" with which they were connected. They interfered successfully in the process of "fundamental democratization" and prevented a "mass-influx" into the political life. A new capitalistic institution, the labor bureaucracy, arose, which secured its existence by serving class society. The transformation of these organizations into fascistic control instruments is not a special case of the suppression of labor and democracy but part of the general transformation of the half-dictatorial into the full-dictatorial capitalist society. These organizations were not suppressed, or rather modified, because they contained positive elements in contradiction to fascist needs. In order to serve the fascist needs better, they were more closely integrated into the social life-process of fascistic society. What "positive" elements they had, here found their application. At that moment when — despite all capitalistic control techniques — the economic crisis and large-scale unemployment endangered the whole of capitalistic society, they were reformed together with all other capitalistic institutions and control techniques in order to cope with the new situation. At this moment, not because of a long process of "fundamental democratization", but through the suddenly arising and not so suddenly disappearing economic and political crisis there arose the pos-

acceptance of violence becomes the general principle of social morality, the fruits of long moral training in the sphere of labor and competition will be destroyed almost automatically" (72). The fruits so destroyed were results of the stage of "superindividual group solidarity" dealt with in the text above. In other words, morality collapses when the masses meet their rulers on their own ground and thus destroy the class-value of the dual-morality. They may become as immoral as their masters, and may even disregard the good work of their organizations which helped to maintain the dual-morality by strengthening the illusion that group solidarity is possible in the capitalistic world.

sibility of a democratization of society. Under conditions as they were and are a real democratic participation in the political life on the part of the broad masses is possible only in the form of rebellion against all rationality, mores, institutions, and labor organizations and all their "positive" elements as they exist in the prevailing society. To speak of mass-democracy is to speak of a proletarian revolution.

One cannot conclude from the existence of "group solidarity" that it prepares the masses for the planned society of the future. The opposite is true. What group solidarity there is only shows that the pseudo-democratic as well as the fascistic capitalist society progresses in accordance with its own rules in opposition to all forms of solidarity. A trend towards "fundamental democratization", if existing, would find expression in the development of class-consciousness. Capitalism's triumph over the proletariat comes to light precisely in the successes of labor organizations, gained by way of "group solidarity"; for these successes excluded the democratization of society and removed possible obstacles in the path leading to dictatorship. Behind the illusory democratic processes was hidden the actual trend of development which is now openly exposed in the fascistic dictatorships.

Just as the "group solidarity" of the formerly individualistically oriented capitalists served to destroy the "automatic" capitalist "solidarity" which was made possible by "market laws" as yet beyond effective control, so the growth of capitalist "group solidarity" finally led to the break-down of international "solidarity" by breaking down the open world-market. This, in turn, led to a situation wherein capitalistic solidarity can find expression only in world-wide wars involving the destruction of ever-greater capitalistic "groups combined in solidarity" to serve the "group solidarity" of still stronger groups. The "group solidarity" of the workers, too, has led straight into the fascistic solidarity of the murderous front-fighter collectives and has destroyed for some time to come the basis on which proletarian solidarity could assert itself — the class basis. By hindering the development of class solidarity, "group solidarity" has not diminished but increased the general atomization of society. There is as little "solidarity" within each "group" as there is between the different social groups. There is as little sacrifice of individual desires in the interests of the whole in each group as there is folk-unity or world-community. The existence of an apparent "group solidarity" clouds the fact that it has come into being in order to intensify the struggle of all against all. The "solidarity" that is within each group is a "solidarity" of force and fear. The final meaning of this solidarity finds dramatic expression from time to time in wholesale murders and political purges in the interest of the "group". Thus the destruction of "group solidarity" is the first prerequisite for a possible class solidarity. The destruction of class solidarity, in turn, is the first prerequisite for a possible human solidarity. There is, then, nothing in Mannheim's "group solidarity" which reaches beyond the present and into the future, or acts as a sort of intellectual and moral training ground in preparation for things to come.

VIII

Mannheim ideas on how to plan society are based on those advanced in his interpretation of the collapse of the liberalistic social structure. If social interdependence and fundamental democratization create irrationality and the latter, on account of outworn social techniques cannot be integrated into the changing social structure, *new control techniques* have to be found which fit into the arising new structure and either transform the existing irrationality into a useful enthusiasm or free it of its dangerous character through sublimations. For Mannheim the question of reconstruction is a twofold one: not only society but man himself must be changed. Thought at the level of planning is different from that of the liberalistic age. Mannheim distinguishes between three historical stages of human thought and conduct: chance discovery, invention, and planning. There exists no sharp dividing line between the different stages, nor, at present, between the stages of invention and planning. They may very well co-exist as long as one dominates. If planning becomes predominant, however, the tension between old theories and new practice press towards solution.

The solution consists in furthering the "positive" aspects to be found in the process of fundamental democratization. The results of this latter process, Mannheim thinks, can be put to at least two different uses. Thus our future depends on what the "users" do; they may further the negative side of the democratization process by making the ensuing irrationality still more irrational, or they may turn this irrationality by way of intelligent and highly moral actions into directions which increase rationality and — in the long run — even improve the intellectual and moral level of the masses.

For Mannheim the remaking of man and society is planning for freedom. Dictatorship, he says, is not the same as planning. "A correct scheme for the planning of culture, which would plan everything in the sense of the totalitarian states, would also have to plan the place of criticism" (109). "Who plans the planners?", he asks. "The longer I reflect upon this question, the more it haunts me" (74). This question is asked today by most of the "anti-fascists", though not all of them are haunted by it. So far, however, it has always been answered in a fascistic manner. Let us look at Mannheim's attempt to solve the difficulty. He says that, "a new approach to history will be achieved when we are able to translate the main structural changes in terms of a displacement of the former systems of control" (269). As far as the control of the controllers is concerned, however, the former system seems to him to be quite adequate, for the new control techniques refer only to the broad masses, not to the elites. The control over the latter is to be secured by incorporating into the planned structure parliamentary democracy, if necessary without the nuisance of the "plebiscite which has lost its original function and no longer appeals to individuals living in concrete groups... but is addressed to members of an indefinite and emotional mass" (357).