

## NECESSITY OF STYLE

The common sense of our times points to the necessity for men to come to terms not only with the accumulation of all of the knowledge of our time not only all the social revolutions of our time, but it points to the necessity to come to terms with the whole style of life as we now experience it around the globe. In every culture, individual style, corporate relationships and the symbolic dimension of being is called into question. In any major city of the world, we are confronted by a hundred different styles, yet there are few symbols of humanness that illuminate the mystery, depth and greatness of our lives, that reveal to us who we are, how we are essentially related to one another, and bring us to attend to our particular role in history.

The key symbol of all humanness is style, and style is of signal importance for the man of faith. Style is a form that one gives to life – it's like a piece of dough that you mold, season, form; it is like creating the face of God, like making visible the love of God for all of creation. Style is like a montage, for it is concerned with all relationships in life. It is your gift of life to life, an art form, a way of celebrating your life – all of it, the pain, the struggle, the joy, the death, the heritage, the mystery, the history of mankind. Style is love. Style is a particular way of life for the man of faith, for it proclaims his view of history, it designates his relations to his neighbor and it signifies who he has decided to be, his understanding of the Word in Jesus Christ, in the context of his time.

Every man embodies a style, whether he be self-conscious about it or not, that defines his life. The spirit of the times demands that the man of faith decide his style self-consciously and intentionally, and that he do so on behalf of all men. In our time, to decide to live on behalf of all is to decide to be the solitary man, the dead man, who also dares to be the first. In our time, it is to dare to order your time and space in terms of the demand of history; it is to dare to decide and appropriate the style of the new universal religious. Today, when the religious is of necessity secular, this means that in his everyday life, in his business, in the family and in his recreation, he stands as one who is the new style. Today, when the style is of necessity corporate, this means that he covenants with others to forge the new life style, in the knowledge that he is held accountable in that relation to them and to the Lord of history.

## NEW RELIGIOUS MODE

A style creator loves the ancient style carried in the church, for the sake of all. It seeks to recover the power, the vitality of the spirit forms so that everyone can live his life fully in all dimensions. In order to be the embodiment of a religious way of life in post civilization, the guru must:

1. **HOW TO GURU:** Become the spirit of times - he feels himself to be in tune with all of humanity in all its diverse expressions. He contemplates that which is new and foreign to him and incorporates it into himself - the slow unanalytical survey. It knows the mystery, depth and greatness of the objects of meditation and thus is enabled to know his own mystery, depth and greatness.
2. **LIFE STYLE:** He is thus able to know and to communicate to people their mystery, depth and greatness. Further, he exemplifies the manner of living, the religious exercises, which

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make it possible for all to see clearly what it is to live in the religious dimension. In him, men find the courage to act out what they know to be godliness. Life in style creation can be clearly seen as poetic, as being more than a conglomeration of facts, but as a story each tells the other.

3. ESSENCE OF NRM: The expression of the mode is ecstasy. And ecstasy is knowing the essential in life situations; that which is the heart of the matter, the center of the storm taking place, the spirit problem.

## GROUNDING

The new religious captures the scientific age of miracle for humanity by applying the scientific method and cybernetics to self-conscious control of the mind in knowing all of the mapped universe, and thus yielding the freedom to go beyond. The universe of the past and future is known in the present by rational structured contemplation. All of mankind is experienced through the re-tribalizing media.

Each movement of creative activity is a spirit war of pure decision against the mockery of a world seeking absolute values by attacking every manifestation of authentic style.

The decision to be the new being, or to die a new death, not captive to past deaths, is enabled by structured prayer which holds up the frailty of ancient virtue to the search light of the universal necessary deed.

## NEW SOCIAL VEHICLE

The New Social Vehicle is the form life takes when all people are honored and all people are cared for. The New Social Vehicle gives to people symbols of love for life, of respect for every fat lady.

1. HOW TO BE A SOCIAL ENGINEER: In order to formulate social structures to accomplish his purposes, the social engineer must know how people are, what their most basic needs are. He involves himself in men's affairs to know men but is distant in order to help men. He is mercurial in his ability to assume new roles. He meditates upon what he sees, asking what is it saying: on deeper and deeper levels. He allows his own life to be addressed.
2. LIFE STYLE: His own life style is that of deliberateness, first of intentionality. He gives himself completely to the moment because every moment must be lived. Humanity must be saved from suicide.
3. ESSENCE: Dedication to action is the hallmark of the social engineer. He knows that he is in charge. He is also visionary in his compassion for future generations, which keeps him from sacrificing the future hope to the present need. He funnels his energies into life. He does not dissipate himself. His decisions are final, but, of course, he is always evaluating himself.

Discipline is only for the sake of the mission, that which allows the last man in the outbush huddled before the last dying ember of life to create the face of GOD, which established his pre-existent primal right to knead and mold the essential bare bread of the universe, and to give to the last of the future to feed on, to live therefore, and to finally die.

Thus it is that without discipline no person every would have accomplished anything and that his death would have been for naught. Discipline holds people to the task that they have chosen, and it is in seeking that, that discipline is THE way.

#### I. PRACTICALITY OF CORPORATENESS

Corporateness is the utter, absolute, practical element that holds self to the task, the only validity will be found in the mission of rebuilding the church and the earth.

It must of necessity

include intentional constructs,

be entirely functional, and

manifest itself in missional poverty, paradoxical obedience, and loyal singleness.

#### II. QUALITY OF RECEPTIVITY, THE CONCRETE NOT-ME MUST BE TOTALLY RECEIVED.

- a. The consensual participation of every member that is honored and obeyed in the time union that frees every member.
- b. It's that corporate movement that is deposited in every vitreous receptacle across the planet and is flushed down the drains of history.
- c. That thrust to all-encompassing that never becomes wanton rape, and that all-embracing that never become discriminate prostitution so that the emerging new life never becomes a bastard monster.

#### III. RELEVANCY TO THE PRESENT TIME AND PLACE

- a. Scientific image - The atomic pile which has the perfect balance of elements in a rational construction so that the fire burns but does not explode.
- b. Industrial image - Being the eschatological crucible, the industrial furnace that receives the crude ore and the technical expertise, and in the white-hot heat turns the polarities into molten steel that flows out into a new form, realizing that every new product needs different ores and technical tools.
- c. Urban image - The universal city that will greet the earthen urs and celestial bodies of the galaxy with open readiness and emerge into brotherhood in final expression that will never again have to be subjectively dealt with because it will have become the never ending ring in the trinitarian spirit.

That discipline that will be the one objective reality before which every form that is viable can act out its dreams of the joyousness of death.

DISCIPLINE is the style, that says – easy, is always preceded by not, if what follows is significant.

## EPILOGUE

The style of the new universal secular religious is comprehensive, easily recognized by others because it is for all others. It is consciously affected by the stylers, yet springs forth effortlessly from the self. No part of the body is withheld from involvement; nevertheless, the universal religious always knows who is essential to the situation, and closes itself to the extraneous.

The new secular religious lives in grace. The corporate body holds itself ready to have access to itself, others, and to its ground of being. It therefore is life illuminated by its own mystery, depth and greatness. It is the inexplicable insight, intuitive knowledge of what is really going on within the hearts of men and within the stream of history.

Thus, does the new corporate religious embody the Spirit of the times, push deep into the possibilities for creating a new civilization, and decide the direction that history will take.

Thus, does the new corporate religious be the sign of God's love in the world, secure the promise for the future of men, and be an invitation for others to "Come, taste and see that the Lord is good."

## STYLE

### ESSAY ON STYLE

#### Collection of notes from JWM's file

- I. What is Style
  1. Knowing/Doing/Being
  2. Art/Grace - Dance
  3. Organize time/space
  4. Humanness Invention
  5. Total life and Consciousness of Consciousness
  6. Our "Thing" - Presence

**Life is about dance.**

**Life is about Day dreams**

- II. The Form of Style
  1. Interior Structures
  2. Necessity of Model
  3. Cultural Situation
  4. Demands of Times
  5. Universal Revolutions
  6. Individual/Society
- III. The Qualities of Style (Universal)
  1. Dynamic
  2. Pluralistic
  3. Planetary
  4. Futuric
  5. Inventive
  6. Selective

- IV. The Social Vehicle
  1. Always in the abstract
  2. Changing and Present
  3. Structure
  4. Primary Contradiction
  5. Model Problemat
  6. Practics

- V. The Religious Mode
  1. Always there and Abstract
  2. Contemplative
  3. Meditation
  4. Prayer
  5. Ur and Four fold
  6. Practics

## VI. The Identity and Vocation

1. Identity there\Human
2. Four Fold
3. Together in Awe
4. Vocation - There/Human
5. Fourfold
6. Together in Style

## VII. The Discipline of Style

1. Intro: Sum of All
2. Time/Space (Rational)
3. Knowledge
4. Symbols
5. Goods
6. Decisions Polity

## VIII. Function of Style

1. Revolution
2. Change
3. Sign
4. Symbol
5. Community
6. History

Radical revolutions within any group or social situation are always accomplished by style. It is by being finally and not by knowing or doing; it is neither by ideas or deeds but by posture and stance. It is the inner substance within an organization's form that alters the social and historical trends.

1. The Christian style is to be a sign of God's love and of our discipleship with Christ. This must be true of both the individual and the church at large including all its parts.
2. The Christian style is dynamic and ever open to change. It cannot be contained in any legalistic system of rules but is essentially situational. Guidelines for action are to be found in the situation itself, in the study of the Bible and history in our dialogue with others both within and without the Church. Special emphasis here is however upon the fellowship of the faithful.
3. The Christian style is grounded in a self understanding that has to do with loving God and love in action or service of our neighbor. Fundamentally this is a style of reconciliation between the generations, the classes, etc. This necessarily implies that hope for the future and also joy in this context are part of this style. Finally this grounding demands that our lives are laid down for the sake of others.
4. The Christian style therefore, whatever else means that it is concerned with the solidarity of mankind. It is found only in the midst of the world as we work along with all others. And manifests itself particularly as this is evidenced in our relation to the outcaste and the alien, the poor and the different. In these we meet Christ.
5. The Christian style has ten to do with the structures of humanness in society such as the domestic and the broader communities. The last firs, this style is a fighting for justice and human dignity. It is a continuing resistance of oppression, sickness, alienation, and

loneliness. This style is present when we give ourselves to society, give ourselves to change it. This means supporting and defending science and the arts and all manifestations of our age. This means budgeting our resources for sharing. It means literally living with the outcaste.

6. The Christian Style is embracing the new demands issuing from the youth culture and Feminine Revolution in our time. This has to do with the retooling of the construct of the family in its broadest sense. This style holds together the generations and this begins with acknowledging the adult role of the young enabling them to participate in the decision making that determines their destiny and surrendering the authoritarian functioning of the elders. Revolution in the family is embraced also as it is manifest in the new role of woman and the re-doing of the sex ethic emphasizing the inter-relatedness of intercourse, commitment and marriage. The new role of woman is embraced and the relation between the sexes is to be a creative partnership. Purity -
7. The Christian Style is also a religious mode which has to do with waiting upon God in the community of faith where we offer our lives to God as we break bread together, pray together and commonly meditate upon Jesus Christ. It is here that a crucial dimension of style is realized, namely discipline as we budget both our time and our goods.

The times in which we live are universal or global as never before in history. This means that certain qualities of style are also universal. Moreover, the manner in which the ground of our style is articulated indicates certain general qualities of the contemporary style of humanness. These are as follows:

*global, open, plural, creative*

1. Inclusiveness or planetary
2. Futuristic or
3. Pluralistic or multi-grounded
4. Dynamic or changing
5. Inventive or creative
6. Selective or contradiction centered.

Summary:

Since style is Being or presence, it is unsynonymous with our knowing and doing. Though it only exists in knowing and doing it is not the same as either or both together. Indeed it is an intensification of both but not reducible into them. It is the transparency in the intensification of knowing and doing. Hence is a mode of humanness in itself. This means that style is symbolic. It is perhaps first of all and before all else, signal and symbolic. This is why the discipline is the clue to style. Style is our self understanding and missional calling. It is our engagement in the social vehicle and our relation to the religious mode. All of these are signaled or symbolized in the highly specific, concrete, particular, special, unique life manifestation which we term life discipline. Discipline is bringing order into our time which order is our sign. The discipline is

the form and the substance is the self understanding actional thrust, religious mode and social vehicle. Style is both form and substance. (The ordering of time is the crucial and primary ordering). And maybe this is the only ordering finally. Anyway, discipline is also an ordering of our goods, our knowledge, our relations and our mission. Our style in sense of discipline has to do with polity and structures of operation. It has to do with economic life. It has to do with our study life. It has to do with our worship or symbolic existence. STYLE is External disclosures and internal character.

### Discipline

Style as Discipline is self-control. That is it is intentionality; it is ordering. Or better, it is ordered intentionality. This is the medium and the medium is the message. Discipline in this sense is symbol. It is sign. Style therefore is an outward sign of an inner orientation or inner ordering or an inner self understanding. In the sense that style is not knowing or doing, but is an intensification of each it is a form and a substance that has symbolic power. One says Style is living out a world view. Style is using time - using time in a new way. It is, some say, manifesting a value system. The form of the local congregation is a style. The WCC is a style. Our Worship is a style. Style is a distinctive rendering of our life. It is Presence - Service - social change - dialogue of Mediation. New Style will emerge when obstacles are removed as emotional problems, social ill health; spiritual ill health. Style is getting involved; it is working on problem solving.

Games are a way of structuring time to avoid relating to creativity. Style is structuring our time to be --- to serve our fellow man --- to create a new social vehicle – to stop the war. IT is structuring time for the sake of mission. This is style.

Style is ordering our time and space, our goods and our

Reorder of:

race

poverty

viet nam

hunger

health

generations

Reordering our time/space is manifest in reordering our good and skills, our ideas. We must become examples of re-ordered.

### All Individuals and Groups

Every individual and group must forge out their style in their given situation. This includes Council of Churches, Denominations, and it especially means Local Churches.

### ART

Style is an art form composed finally of the total life. Death alone completes it. It is made of many roles; there are in it many phase; it is continually changing. Actually every, thought, deed, feeling, decision, relation, situation, that comprises our existence is a part of it. It is our line in the drama of humanness, written by our life. It is our “dab” on the portrait of man. It is our note in the hymn of humanity.

Style is our method. It is our way of coming at life, of responding to the given. It is our stride, our pace. It is our technique. Style is our (individual, group) invention of man.

Style though not synonymous with our action or better involvement in the social vehicle it cannot be separated from it. There is no such thing as authentic style (or just style period) outside the social life. But what does style mean in relation to the social vehicle?

It is a presence that manifests both affirmation of the social vehicle and the revolutionary thrust against it. This is the perpetual pioneer or the continual pilgrim.

This model building through which the primary practical contradiction in a given time and space can be discerned and practical responses forged – or ways of being present. The being or presence is the living embodiment of the model and the means of communicating it.

The analysis of the problems or contradictions in a time and place and the discernment of the priorities of them, is what gives particularity to style and accounts for their pluralism and the fact of their continuing change. This is what determines the form of the style of any group at any time. That is, it is the particular mission. The same is true in the religious mode.

The Commonness of human or Christian style is grounded in the self-understanding and the missional election of the people of God. We are the received people, who affirm the past in our inclusive concerns, ever open toward the future. This is to say that we are the incarnational ones. We are also the ones elected to lay down our lives on behalf of all at the edge of the not yet. Hence, we are the cruciform ones; the perpetual revolutionaries. Yet this ground is itself grounded in the awe relation which is also culturally conditioned by the UR Images. Hence, there is here a deeper relativity or plurality.

Now all this is climaxed by the fourfold qualities of style. Here again is the “universal” in the human or Christian style which is before or prior to all plurality.

What has come clear in this is that when you push identity to the bottom, you get vocation or Mission and vice versa. To say this another way, the bottom of Religious Mode and the bottom of Social Vehicle become the same.