

Lecture I: The Human Being (David McClesky)

a

A few weeks ago I went to the movie ~~Little Big Man~~, and was drawn in by the spoof, but in the midst of being drawn in I became aware of the fact that I was being drawn in. And that raised another depth question-- what does it really mean to be a human being? That movie was Little Big Man. Seeing that movie I became aware that yes, I had desires ~~and~~ in terms of what I would really like to do, that is, to go off and live ~~in some remote~~ ~~place with an Indian tribe~~ somewhere in the world where I could really be a human being again. But in the midst of my dreams I discovered that in fact ~~the question was being raised~~ the question was being raised in the midst of my daily work-a-day world about what does it mean to be human in the 20th century world. Or as someone put it, our time is in more need than ever before of learning of what it means to be a civilized man. Therefore as we enter into this course this weekend that will be really our only concern, to find out ~~what~~ how we can be the new individual in the new society that is emerging in our day.

THE
SOCIAL
IMPOSITION

We've entered an era which the whole question of being human has been raised again. The dawning of our day is one in which people began with the kind of search for meaning. It was as though the meanings that we had learned yesterday no longer fit. ~~the kind of daily work that urban life was~~ presenting. It no longer fit the kind of technological, scientific understanding that we have of men. and certainly as we began to realize that we are in a secular age, we didn't know what it meant to be basically human. For the city came to us as being inhuman, and the scientific began to be dry and sterile, and was only work and ~~work~~ not really touching the totality of our lives. And so that's the question that we began with.

THE
HUMAN
ESSENCE

Men today have come upon a new way of ~~grasping~~ grasping after being human, in terms of the kind of questions that were raised in the midst of those times, in which men began to raise questions such as, "Who, really, am I?"--or "What kind of identity can I really grasp hold of that says to me who I am being?" Those kinds of questions pushed us into seeing that man is in fact in some sense a very ~~absurd~~ absurd existence, but nonetheless a ~~free~~ free man. And so we ask, what is your life really all about? What is it for? What is the effect of everything that I do upon other men? The kind of underneath understanding beneath life, the kind of philosophical question, if you will, that men are dealing with had to do not with how he lived or what he did in terms of rights and wrongs or those kinds of moral issues. ~~It was a deeper question than that.~~ It had to do with what I would like ~~to~~ to call, the ontological, the basic, the just-thereness in life. What is man at the bottom in terms of understanding that? I would like ~~to~~ to suggest that the way secular men have come about discovering what man is is not to try to deal with it in terms of a far flung abstraction, but ~~just~~ just to deal with it in terms of what we know about man. ~~There is~~

There are really only four basic pillars for me on what man is. Man is first of all simply a social being. He doesn't know himself except over against other men, save he is in the midst of a community of men, and therefore the kind of understanding of man as social or as sociality itself is there. Then there ~~are~~ other obvious things perhaps that we need not gloss over is

that man is a biological ~~man~~ being, a man who is a being who exists in two and only two ~~man~~ biological modes--there are men, and there are women. Someone said out of the French culture, great is the difference, that there ~~be~~ only men and women. That's a basic ~~thereness~~ in humanness existence and we need not really go much beyond that. But in the midst of being those, we also discover that we grow old. Being a man at 20 is not the same as being a man at 40 and not the same as being a man at 60. There are really are various phases in life, that you go through. So that is another just basic pillar in of humanness that is there. Then the fourth pillar is the one that is perhaps the hardest to ~~explain~~ see at first. And yet you know it is there in the midst of all the others--it that is, I am a man who is reflecting upon all that. I am a man who knows that there is something more than being a biological creature in the midst of time, who lives in the midst of a society of men, and therefore there is a kind of otherness about ~~man~~ men. They reflect, they think, they are self-conscious about being who they are. So the first aspect about man, man as sociality, has dawned upon us in our time as a kind of impositions, that in the midst of all the changes and explosions that are taking place across the globe, there is also a ~~human~~ deeper awareness of what it means to be within the social process. To say that the human is to be social is not some ethereal something, but ~~man~~ simply what we all know and participate in day by day. It's our new anthropology, if you will. Men in the ~~last~~ last century began to examine and study the various cultures in terms of the way they operated in village cultures and the way they operated in terms of moving into the modern times.

THE
SOCIAL
PROCESS

When you think about man and his sociality, you know first of all that he has to depend upon things. He has just certain basic things--food, clothing, these elements of life that you don't exist without. that is your bread, you just don't exist without the basic resources of being a human being. Yet you don't get them simply by living in the midst of them, you get them by work, you get them by --go back to the ancient cultures, scratching them out of the soil, to be able to exist, and to go on, to be able to live even a few years.. So ~~these~~ various kinds of means of production have come into being that enable men to make use of the things that they take out and consume in various forms. One of the problems that takes place in the midst of our work, in the midst of living off the things of the world, the earth, is--how those get distributed to every human being. How do those get transformed into usable goods that men can make use of and exchange and own, and consume in a way that makes you know of it. We call this usually the economic area of life. That's just basic to being a human being, that you have your social life of the economic world. There is no humanness without that.

Then as men struggle to do that, they find that they have to order their life somehow. They have to set up rules, regulations, laws, ways of saying yes's and no's to one another because they ~~man~~ tend to grasp after more of the goods of the world than perhaps they are due. So the political area comes into being as that area which orders our life ~~that~~ that area in which we decide how we are going to order our life,, ~~socially~~ and finally we do that in terms of what is man, what is his well-being, what can enable him to be more fully ~~human~~ human? being in the midst of his economic basic existence. And so the political area is important area of of life that some men give all their time to. Yet all men participate in both of these areas of life.

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ But there is another question that comes in the midst of living and ordering your life around the various kinds of consuming things that are there. That is that you have to decide on what basis you will do any of that. On what basis will you order your life? On what basis will you distribute your goods? of life? --Therefore the other dimension of life comes in, where there are just wise ways of doing that men have learned back through the past. So we have to have educational structures that continue those wise ways in being. Granted, we are always having to learn century by century as to what the better way would be for the time in which they are living, but the educational structures of life are important. Then there are ways in which we manifest that, there are ways in which we act it out. There has to be examples of what the wise ways of living them out would be. So a certain kind of style of life comes into being. The curious thing about all of that is that human beings are such that they have to label those things that they are doing, those wise ways and styles that they are living, ~~thems~~ the kind of economic being, the kind of political being that they are, --they need labels, they need names, the need symbols that say to them, "This is the way I understand my social existence." So the social process takes place. That's what it basically means to be human.

105
WINTER
SOCIAL
But that doesn't happen in separated chunks--you deal with your economic life over here and deal with your political life over here--they are very much interdependent. They are always feeding upon each other. The economic area of life is always maintaining, ~~organizing~~ --paying taxes, if you will, --to the governmental structures in order to keep them in being. The political is maintained in society in that way. Or the rational, or the cultural, the area of labeling and giving symbols to life, takes its ~~own~~ ground and is manifest within the economic. The economic grounds the rational processes of life, the meaning giving, the ways of illuminating life as it is.

Then too the political as an area of life feeds back against the other areas. It delimits the economic--it says what the economic cannot do. It says where men cannot infringe on the rights of other men in terms of their business activities. --as we have had the trust busting and regulating industries in our time. Those have come out of the political dimension of life, and always delimiting that. The political area also in terms of the cultural guards it, or makes sure that structures are kept in being in such a way that insures that we have schools. That of course is in crisis in our time. Sometimes the political finds itself unable to guard the cultural, but that's its task, and it knows that that is its task.

The cultural finally gives the reason for being of all the others. It feeds meaning into work. It feeds meaning into the laws that are enacted ~~that~~ in order to regulate society. And finally, it gives a kind of direction that the whole society, ^{moves in} and particularly in terms of the political area, it's our cultural wisdom and our know-how about life that pours meaning into the political area. In other words, we are a social being that are always in the midst of creating society. Human beings are such that sociality doesn't just happen. It's a society that has its gives and takes and dynamics and ways of operating, in which finally we cannot identify the society with ~~any~~ any particular culture, or any particular institution or way of living. ~~When~~

THE
SOCIAL
IMBOL

So when you come to look at our time, you find that these various social processes have taken place in such a way that some areas of life have come to predominate over others. The economic dimension of life in our day has taken the lead in creating a fantastic world, a world of affluence, a world of technological know-how, a world of fantastic ways of more work getting done with various kinds of intricate and elaborate machinery. So the economic has come out of the last century, and the industrial revolution that took place then to occupy most of the social process, or a large portion of it, or more than its particular share. Because of that, you can say that there is a kind of economic tyranny over life. ~~When you try to evaluate~~ When you try to evaluate whether or not some entity in society is coming off, ~~whether some business is~~ whether some business is happening, or some ~~lx~~ family is successful, or whether some individual is ~~making~~ reaching the kind of social prestige that is needed--it's usually in economic terms that we measure that kind of success. Or it's ~~mixed~~ filtered into the various kinds of value systems that we have until it becomes tyrannical over our lives. It wags our whole life around.

Whereas the political area, whose job really is to regulate life and give rules and limits to the economic, has been rendered impotent in its ability to do that. It has been unable to finally control the way we utilize our economic life. It finds the many kinds of crises that are emerging, some of which emerge out of the economic, some of which emerge out of the cultural, such as the various racial struggles and revolutions that are taking place in our time, or such as the youth riots in universities and educational arenas of our life. The political tries to regulate those, but finally it has to resort ~~to~~ to brute force, and cannot really regulate them in terms of bringing a society back into balance. So it is really impotent. ~~To go into the various governmental structures that~~ To go into the various governmental structures that are responsible for the political processes, you find that decisions are being made by great lobbying groups, out of the various cultural interests or various economic interests that finally makes the political unable to do its job. ~~So in the~~

In the midst of that the cultural, or those deep meanings that we have for life, have really collapsed in terms of meaning. Here is the explanation. for why the meanings of life, the understandings of life, seem to have gone empty, ~~seem~~ seem to have become a kind of desert. There's a cultural void that exists within our day. Men raise questions about the meaning of their work and why they are doing what they are doing. ~~They~~ They raise questions about their families and why things don't seem to operate quite as they would like to have them do. So here is our times. We are sociality, yet our sociality has deep sickness within it. Part of our job this weekend is to find ways to deal with that social imbalance that is happening.

THE
SEXUAL
IMBOL
THE
BIOLOG
GIVEN

In the second aspect of being a human being deals with the sexual imphosion. There not only have been the kind of external manifestations of women--getting their legal right, moving into the business world and the work world, taking positions alongside men. But there has been the kind of addressa that that has ~~made~~ made or claim that has made upon us as the sexual beings that we are. We are men and women. There is something about this area of life that makes you almost embarrassed to talk about it. Perhaps it's out of our particular Puritan heritage, but it's not simply our culture. Other cultures too are struggling with this issue in another kind of of way. In fact most of the humor of our day comes out of the sexual roles and the collapses and the successes that are taking place in terms of what it means to be a man, what it means to be a woman. ~~Amos...~~

So we are finding that once again man is having to invent man. Humanness is not just something that floats in upon man. Humanness is invented.

And we in our day, because of the rug having been pulled out from under us, the various means that we have, find that we cannot simply explain men and women on physiological terms, we can't explain them on psychological terms,-- to explain a psychological difference between us. We find we can't even explain it in moral terms, or the way we live. But there is something deeper than that, ~~that~~ Men and women have inherited from the past and in fact find themselves struggling with ~~things~~ again, there's a kind of raw humanness, that exists, especially in the adult phases of life, where men and women deal with one another, whether in the family or in society, and have to relate in some particular way. You almost want to say that the previous phases, the youth phases of life which we will come to in a moment, they are learning what it means to be a man and a woman, or there is a kind of neuter period of life in which you are experimenting with that dimension. But finally it comes down to a basic humanness that is there. All of society^{are} ~~is~~ struggling in this area. ~~But~~ Societies up until very recent times have had particular roles for man and particular roles for woman. Usually it is the man that has been put on the pedestal, where we have said, that is the epitome of humanness. To be a woman is a second-class citizen. That is being questioned in our day. It is being questioned around the world. When you look at what it means to be human what you find is that there is a basic ontology, a basic thereness in being a human. that is just necessary. ~~E~~

THE
COMPLE-
mentary
dualism

~~Ed~~ It's not that there are men and there are women. There are also two basic principles in life that are utterly necessary to each other. The male and the female are modes of living, if you will. We participate in them sometimes more this way and sometimes more the other way. Perhaps one of the great pieces of wisdom from the past that we have been using in this area is the wisdom of the Chinese culture in which they articulated and lived out of the yin/yang understanding in which maleness and female-ness were always necessary and complementary to each other. There is a difference, and yet the male and the female point to the light and the darkness, they point to the thrust in life and giving birth ~~to~~ life, that are very crucial to each other. You don't have life without both of those. So they held that together as a kind of complementary dualism. But they also acknowledge the fact that the male has within it the female, and the female has within it the male. Or if you look at any particular human being, or any particular social process, what you find is a man who has certain feminine qualities, and a woman who has certain masculine qualities, but the legacy, the ontology, says that finally those need to be kept in harmonious perspective. ~~That's the~~

That quite often has produced a conflict in a particular human beings. They have found themselves in rebellion against being a man or in rebellion against being a woman. But to rebel against that basic ontology is really to rebel against your own fate and not to deal with the actuality of your own being. In other words, finally life become life when these ~~two~~ are held together in some creative tension. I'm not speaking here ~~about~~ simply in biological terms again, although you can see how that is present in the biological arena--you cannot have one without the other, and unless the test tubes accelerate and do their jobs more quickly than we have imagined, that will continue for some time to come. ~~The~~ kind of creative tension has to be manifest. That's not simply delightful. There is tension. Tension is conflict. ~~It~~ is an otherness over against an other otherness. Our false understanding of marriage has often been that there has to be some kind of harmony that is really tranquility, and you never find that. Actually there ~~is~~ are deep tensions that have to do with the deep memory that we have. ~~and that's the~~

Our very ancient heritage, our mythology, out of the past all ought to tell us that. They seem in the ancients not to have been able to talk about it

directly, to communicate directly what they meant by being a male or being a female; but they certainly embodied that understanding, even in the myth of the garden, Adam and Eve. The conflict was there and pointing to that.

THE
SEX
ONTOLOGY

What is this sex ontology? What does it basically mean to be a man today? What does it mean to be a woman? We want to talk more about that later on. But we're clear about the feminine revolution that's happened today with woman's lib. and all the rest. But finally, the real revolution taking place now is not the feminine revolution, but the male revolution. It's a kind of quiet revolution that ~~no~~ no one hears much about. But it's happening. It's as though women had thought they had domesticated their husbands, the male, but actually what's happening is that the male is beginning to dream. He's beginning to think again about being the adventurer in the midst of the world. No one knows what that means, least of all him--where he can find the adventure. He seems not to find it as authentically or deeply as he once did within the economic area or within the political area. So where is it that he will once again find his role of being the adventurer, being the pioneer, the one who is always going out from the home? In fact, the man has been the warrior, the hunter, the one who has gone out to kill in order that his wife might go on, and therefore a seeker always, seeking his meaning, seeking the next territory where he can be & his particular social manifestation again, and be a kind of ruler over life. He has lost that in our recent history, and now he is beginning to dream of recovering that again.

The woman is finding her basic ontology over against this. In fact it has been only in the midst of her revolution that we have been awakened again to the fact that her becoming a man is not the solution. One of the problems with woman's lib. is that it says in effect that if a woman can do what a man does, then she will be a full human being. And in fact that is not so, for even if a woman becomes the president of a ~~university~~ she does not act that out ~~in the~~ in the same mode of being as the man does, or if she does, she loses being feminine, or being a female human being. So she has to learn again what it means to conserve, in the rich sense that conserving could be. She has to learn again to take a little somethings that occur in life and create from them in the ~~fantastic~~ Fantastic creativity that she has. She has to learn in every situation to somehow manifest the kind of bubbling that calls ~~her~~ out from those around her--other women and especially men, the kind of adventure that is needed in our time. But

But woman has a secret beneath her recovery of her basic ontology, that is that finally woman is greater even than she imagines. She has the secret that she bears both the male and the female. That means that she has that opportunity has--the man never has--for she creates out of the midst of almost nothing, the wonders of what it means to be human. That secret, I suspect, is why you often think there is a league among women. that they are always conniving together, never letting the man in on what is really going on behind the scenes.

THE
SEXUAL
MALISE

These roles which are finally based out of basic raw humanness is another area of being human that's also become perverse. It also has the malaise that has taken place within it. It is as though every man and every woman that you meet, you can guess when you meet them that they either fear being the man or the woman that they are, or they fear that they are not being the man or the woman that they are. When you meet a man or woman today, they are either overactively a man or overactively a woman, and therefore never a man or a woman. There is the kind of woman you meet who is a pussycat, who is always trying to be feminine,

always trying to be loving, always trying to comfort every person she meets, and is quite likely to go to bed with any man she can, just to prove she is a woman. She really ~~must~~ fears that she is not fully a woman, so she tries to be a woman in an overactive way. Or maybe it's the man who is overactive, who tries to be the man in ways, with the Marlborough tattoo on his hand, and becomes the bull over every situation he can find, so he can prove that he is a man, for he deeply fears that he is not a man. ~~Sexual implosion~~

Or maybe the man and the woman you meet will be the opposite of that. They will be the underactive. They will be the ones who are not acting out fully being a man or being a woman. Therefore the kind of Casper Milktoast guy you meet is the guy who fears like anything that he will have to be a man. He does not manifest ~~that~~ his manhood in any way whatsoever. He even begins to look like a female in many ways because of his fear of manhood. The woman who fears being a woman fears being female. That is the underactive female because she has decided to be a man. She has decided to be a bitch.

The malaise has happened everywhere. You have to say about everyone that you meet that they are falling off on one pole or the other. They have a strength that is really not strength, because finally they are out to castrate, or they are out to destroy in one way or another the opposite sex. Or the kind of weakness that finally is a seductive approach to life that tries to keep it at a distance in another way.

A sexual implosion has happened, and for man to be man in our time, means we have to find the way, the symbols anew, we have to find the mode of living anew, by which we can recover the deep well-springs of life that come from these great modes of being. That's what it means to be human.

The third aspect of being a human for me is simply that you grow old in being human beings. You find that you are not living--or you are living in a different kind of mode than you were yesterday. Time passes on, and what it meant to be a man, what it meant to be a political being, an economic being, ~~humanity~~ yesterday, is not what it means to be that tomorrow, and so what seems to be required of us ~~is~~ a new individualism, ~~and~~ a new individual is needed. We need to have individuals who are male or female in the midst of a society that is economic, ~~and~~ political, ~~and~~ cultural that is either youth or adult or elder. There are these basic phases in life. If you are not living those you are not living as a human being fully. We need to recover our uniqueness, the uniqueness of being these various modes, the uniqueness of being a white man over against a black man would be another area. Maybe we are ~~now~~ dealing with what has been dealt with as man over against nature--what it means to be not man--everything else that exists.

is taking

When you look at the social imbalance that ~~is~~ taking place, what you find if you are out to ~~discover~~ it, you find that the very key to that is the style of life that you ~~live~~ live. Within the cultural area of life is the wisdom about life, the symbols about life, and then the style, or the way you particularly manifest your life. Here is where you would find the family, and the male and female being acted out. Here is where the microcosm of society is--~~your~~ your own local community of people that you particularly associate with. So if renewal or balance is to take place within the social process, the key area, I would suggest, is the style that we live, for within the cultural area, what is happening is that our wisdom, our technical wisdom is so ~~conditioning~~ conditioning us that we cannot really see--~~these~~ these uniquenesses within our existences,

THE
PHASE
IMPLSION

THE
NEW
INDIVIDUAL

or we cannot cope with the kind of social problems that we have. The wisdom, or the educational, again, seems not to be relevant to the particular struggles our families have, the particular struggles with the youth, the struggles with all of the kinds of problems that we have. It's as though we have to recover a new symbolism that first of all shows itself in a style of life that we would manifest. You could also relate this to the economic tyranny, how this area has come to dominate our style, or we have come to identify being human with how well we can live, or how we can get the good life in economic terms. So style becomes the focus of that. But finally style is to be recovered so that the political can be empowered again in a new way. We'll be dealing with the various implications of that in the basic part of this course in the next three sessions, the economic, political and cultural roles, but I want to point out in this lecture how style is important, and the kind of cyclical roles that we live in being the youth, the adult and the elder within the midst of society.

Our society is one that has not provided the kinds of rites of passage between becoming a youth and an adult. Getting a driver's license is one of the few. ~~Someone said recently that we have~~ Someone said recently that we have more of the perpetual adolescents in our time, where people remain youth until they are in their 40's even, or longer. That kind of imbalance, that kind of perversion is what is not there for us, for to be really human is to live four great lifetimes, to live out being the youth, to live out being the adult, to live out being the elder. I'd like to suggest that within the adult there are two great phases to be lived. There is the adult that is trying to create his way in the midst of the world, and the adult who is struggling to become the responsible householder in life. Then there is the adult who has accomplished that. He has become the householder, the establishment. I mean the establishment in a very positive sense. Society could not go on if you did not have those who held that society in being and became the president of his company, the president of his countries, and those who are responsible for their society.

THE
YOUTH
ELDER

But to go back to the youth. There are no final answers for the kind of struggle ~~that youth are in today~~ that youth are in today, but one of the ways you could explain what is going on perhaps, is to say that the youth has become the young within style. You find that youth are ruling families. I mean young youth, even, at very early ages make decisions for families. We had a period recently in which we decided that youth ought to be more adult earlier, and so we had permissiveness take hold, in which you sort of let people do what they wanted, which is what adults are supposed to be able to do. But actually, a youth is a youth, and their ontology, if you will, their basic being is to be the apprentice. Any youth that hears-in-that-that to be an apprentice is not to be an apprentice to some adult. The adult is not that which the youth is an apprentice to. He is an apprentice to life. He is an apprentice to what makes up being human. He is one who is always learning, and therefore everything comes as wonders, and fantastic new occurrences within his life, and therefore he ^{should} be given the opportunity to experiment with this aspect of his life and that aspect of his life. But if he doesn't manifest that, then ~~we have fostered upon him adulthood long before he is ready to assume responsibility for being adulthood.~~ That kind of apprenticeship has a great gift for society. ~~He is the one who~~ He is the one who has the kind of pre-detachment that enables him to see far out beyond anyone else. He is always anticipating the future in a way that no one else can do. He is the one ~~from whom the visions come of what the tomorrows will hold.~~ from whom the visions come of what the tomorrows will hold.

That doesn't mean that you are finally the one you ask what you do today. relative to that future, but certainly his vision needs to be listened to, and embraced somehow within society.

If you go to the other extreme in life, of being the elder, we have done some horrific things in that area today. They are also detached, if you will, from living. The perversion is not their detachment, the perversion is that we have allowed that detachment to be useless to society, or not ~~human~~ geared into the needs of our day. So the elder is absent is quite often. In teaching any kind of a seminar these days, you find that the elder plays a great role. In any seminar. He is always bringing in some great wisdom out of the past. Maybe it will be caught in a cliché, but if you push it a little bit, you will find wisdom in it. For he is always transcending the current situation because he remembers the past and how life and humanness has been kept in being in the past. I find that that is true even if the elder doesn't know what he is doing. Sometimes the elder has drifted into a kind of senility even before his age would require. Yet just by his presence, just by being there, just by being the representative of death, if you will, he brings a depth to the situation, because it is finally over against death that we realize what it means to live, or what life is all about. In other words, the elder in society could play the role, and in fact does, although we need to be more self-conscious about it, of being a detached wisdom who can, because of his having slowed down, his having reached a peak in his life, even in virtue of his physical being, in order to ponder deeply what life is all about. Our society is one which is in great need of recovering the role of the elder today.

THE
TWO
ADULTHOODS

The kind of adulthood which takes place between the youth and the elder is one which has within it these kinds of requirements being made, of being the householder, the kind of movements that takes place within the young adult, the one I would say is from 20 to 40. He is the one who is moving toward the creation of the future that is needed. It is really upon his back to bring into the being the society that is needed in our time. This kind of unique individual that is there. The problem usually with the householder, the one who is growing creating, is that he doesn't want his assignment, if you will. He doesn't want the kind of work that is there. But that is his job. That phase in life is a great one to be lived. If one can decide to do it. The kind of sex roles that take place within that stage, for example, are precisely the arena in which that creative tension is being hammered out. Quite often it is the most conflicting area in terms of being a man or being a woman. But there is where the struggle needs to be and to be hammered out.

Whereas the established adult, the one who is mature, the one who has reached the point in life where he has either made it or hasn't made it, in either case he has the opportunity for caring for the rest of society. But caring not in some arrogant sense, of being a ruler but caring in terms of being a servant for the rest of society. He is the man who needs to be gone to to ask permission for the social change that has to take place in our time. He is the man who finally the transformation of society funneling the wisdom of the past into a new direction, rests upon his shoulders. That is a great life to live. One great lifetime to act out. ~~Instantaneous~~

THE
AGE
MALISE

I find that in dealing with the young phases of life there are just two basic approaches that you take. One is that you will just live your life. That is what I call the suicidal approach to life, that is you will just live through whatever phase you happen to be in. If you are a youth, you will just until you can get to

might be an adult. If you are ~~xxxxxxx~~ a young adult, you just live until you can reach it and make it in some way. If you have made it, you will live until retirement. But finally, those are suicidal approaches to life. The other approach is finally to see that no life comes up out of being the youth. You might draw the timelines on these two people something like this. If you tell the story of the suicidal approach, he was is always preparing for life, and then after a certain point he is always declining from really living. He is on his way ~~xxx~~ out. Camus said it would be at age 30 that you start the decline, and after that you ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ are on your way to the grave. For me that is the suicidal approach. But actually ~~xxx~~ what happens is that ~~xxx~~ comes to be out of youth. There is great wisdom in the statement that to be a human being finally is to be like a child, to be one who is always continuing the apprenticeship of life, for that never stops throughout your whole life. Certainly in our day we need to learn that because of the kind of rapid changes that are taking place. These phases are pointing to what it means to be a whole human being at whatever age you happen to be living ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ that direction. When you become the young adult and living in that phase, you are beginning to approach reaching a kind of depth understanding of life that is a wondrous time to live. So when you move out to being the elder, you are really moving toward the most wondrous aspect of being a human being. The elder is the one who gives the spirit to the culture. He is the one who brings a pure transcendent way of being a human being within that particular area. So these are four great lifetimes that are there to be lived, ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ Our problem is that we either refuse the phase that we are living in and say, "Well, really to be human is to be adult," or "really to be human is to be youth," and never really live the phase that we are in. In other words, we flee from the immediate needs, the immediate demands that are being laid upon our lives. I suspect that is why a superficiality creeps ~~xxxxx~~ into our life. We become superficial because we are not living our particular life phase and the task that is placed upon it.

Or maybe the other way of avoiding living your phase is to fixate yourself upon one phase. You find people in the 20's who are still trying to be youth. They have not taken up being responsible for society. Therefore dealing with the crucial hardheaded needs that are there. Or any time you take one of the phases and live it alone you are not being a full human being. To be a full human being is really to live all phases in the midst of your phase. Therefore, transcend life by remembering it or utilizing ~~xx~~ the memory of the past, or transcend life by trying to anticipate the future that is coming out ahead of you, or work in terms of creating the society that is needed in the midst of our time, or really just being responsible for caring for the society about you. That's what it means to be human. It's not just to be social, not just to be male or female. It's also to take responsible for it. So we have this opportunity of living four great life times. But one thing that is required when you see that there are at least four great life times is that you are always having to die to the one which you are living. There comes a time in which you are moving into another phase, therefore, you have to die to being a youth, you have to die to being a householder, and therefore the decision is there to begin to live the new.

This is three things of what it means to be human. Yet with all three of those put together--to be social, to be male and female, and to live your life phase--if that was all life was, we would still be vegetables, we would ~~xxx~~ be no more than animals or vegetables. Animals and vegetables have a society, animals

THE
TWO
WORLDS

and vegetables have a kind of maleness and femaleness, animals and vegetables have a living and dying, or growing old--so that is not all there is to ~~being~~ being a human being. There is also living in the other dimension.

I suspect this last dimension is the crucial one, although it seems to be the most elusive. But I would say that the cultural void that we experience today is because we have not really grasped the fact that human beings live in two worlds. They live in this world,--the world of society, the world of male/femaleness, the world of phases, but they also live in another world. ~~Humanity~~, This world, the first world, is the world of the mundane, the world of the practical, the world that you can organize, the world that you can control. This world is where most men live. But quickly that world becomes a desert. Secular men would like to just wallow in that desert and continue dealing with nothing but that which is tangible, that which he can manage. Actually, to be a human being, however, ~~humanity~~ he has to live also within another world.

There is something more to being human than simply his mundane, practicable, organizable world. There is something more than that. One finds that he is always not satisfied, ~~human~~ with whatever he can acquire in life. So he has to be present to the fact that there are depths to life beyond just superficial levels of life.

We are not the only age that has simply tried to live in one of these worlds. The Medieval world was one which slipped off into trying to live entirely in the other ~~one~~ world, entirely in the world of fantasy, entirely in the world of myth, entirely in the world of just spirit. So the spiritual values came to be predominant. It's no wonder that our time is rebelled against that. Rightly we should, living simply in the other world. The other world has nothing to do with religion, nothing to do with being a Christian. It is simply part of what it means to be human. Yet today we have so rebelled against that dimension of life, that we have chosen to live simply in the world of the ~~other~~ every-day.

THE
OTHER
QUALITIES

What is that other dimension of life? What is that additional thing to what it means to be a human being, that is something more? How would you begin to talk about it? It's not easy to talk about. Yet it's something that is very present, that we meet every day. Any time we meet a bit of awe seeping into our lives, any time we ~~must~~ find ourselves greatly dreadfilled. Perhaps it's the first time a youth happens into your home that is really your own, but doesn't look like your own, and a bit of awe and a bit of dread comes in how you are going to cope with that particular situation. Or in the midst of the business world where new decisions are being required in a kind of rapid-pace fire that you never imagined could happen before. So fascination and awe and dread take place in the midst of the mundane world. They don't take place any where else because there is no place ~~anywhere~~ else finally to live. But here is where it is there. To be a human being means that anything that happens, even the mundane, needs to have life breathed into it, the difference between living a dull life and living a life that is full of life and lively. And so there is a kind of unfathomable mystery about being human, finally, that human beings are always having to struggle with and embrace.

The other part about being in the other world is that man finds himself so free that he doesn't know what to do with the freedom he has. In the first instance most men find themselves, in terms of the mundane world, ~~trapped~~ not free, trapped, in a groove, unable to get loose to do this or that. Actually, he is

free. The only thing that really holds him down or holds him in any of those traps is his own attachment to those things, his own attachment to his routine, his own attachment to his acquisitions in life, his own attachments to the laws and principles that he operates out of. Man is condemned to be free, and therefore condemned to be creative. He has that constant possibility of embracing the unbelievable opportunity in any situation of creating that situation. He often doesn't want the consequences of what might happen if he reaches opposition in the midst of his creativity, but he is free. That is a part of ~~humanity~~ being part of the other world.

Another part of it, when ~~he~~ he realizes that freedom and realizes the kinds of mystery that he is as a human being, is that he then sees that to be responsible for the world, to be responsible for what's happening in the midst of your society, is not necessary. There are no three good reasons of why he should be responsible for what's happening in India or Pakistan or Latin America, why he and his family ought to be the ones who choose to be the new form of the family. Finally, responsibility is irrational. Responsibility is simply that which it means to be human. To be human is to take responsibility for your family, your community, your society. Therefore, it's an irrational decision that he is called upon to make.

As he struggles with this he finds one more thing of what it means to live in this other dimension of life. He finds he has no personal problems. When you are living in terms of this freedom, when you are living in terms of the mystery in the midst of every situation, when you are living in terms of deciding to take responsibility for, all your problems are secondary--there really are none. There is a great image out of the past that enables us to see our temptations here. We are always being lured, we simply to live in this world. We are always being lured to deal with the mundane and the practical and the everyday, because there is that force which is present in the world. ~~Humanity is used to~~ calls it Satan. Satan was always there luring you back into living just a vegetable existence, when actually there is more to being a human being. Satan is always there to keep you from being the creative, free, responsible man that you are in the midst of society.

THE
SOCIAL
FUNCTION

Finally this other dimension does have its practical, mundane, everyday function in the midst of society. It is that without which there is no life. It again is that which brings life into the ~~mundane~~ dullness. There is a kind of artistic leap that takes place in this other dimension of life, that means that creativity takes place within a company, within an industry, a family, a school, or wherever you are. There are creative human beings even against those who are not. It is that leap that enables you to go over barriers that occur in the midst of life. So it has an important social function in the midst of society.

You also find that it is that which is constantly intruding in the midst of your life. You know how you feel about the guy who is really being excited about his work? The one who is really being creative about what he is doing? He is always calling you into question, just by virtue of what he does, and is saying to all of us in effect that there is no excuse for ~~that kind of~~ our kind of sloth and our thinking that we are trapped in the midst of our daily life.

This other dimension finally brings a kind of detachment in the midst of life. It brings a healing quality into being a human being. To be human is finally not to be serious about being human at all. To be human is to back off from life and allow it to be created ~~within~~ and lived. The man who lives in this other dimension of life as well as in this worldly dimension of life is not loyal to anything. He doesn't ~~depend~~ ^{depend} upon whether he keeps his job or not. He doesn't depend upon whether he keeps his family ~~happy~~ in being or not. Finally, he is the disinterested one who then can take responsibility for his life. To ~~call~~ call upon us to live this way is to call upon us to really be in charge of our lives, or really be in charge in the family, the community, ~~and~~ the work and the whole of society.

THE
CURRENT
MALAISE

The problem today is that our malaise is such that every one of us sitting around the table ~~examines~~ finds an emptiness in his social existence. He finds that it is he ~~who~~ who is not finding and not pouring meaning into his job, his family, his peer group relationships and his work. We want to look at those kind of relationships as we move through our vocational area of life and move through political engagement,--that finally there is no one responsible for that but us. We are the ones who are either living it or not living it. ~~It~~

It's no wonder when we wake up in that kind of malaise that some of us just decide to take a sensual plunge. We just decide to throw ~~ourselves~~ ourselves into life and get out of it what we can get out of it, for the sake of the kind of enjoyment that is there, ~~or~~ or maybe just getting more experiences. ~~Exotic~~ ~~experiences~~ I guess that is one way of understanding the youth today. They are just wanting more and more rare experiences. Therefore they have a kind of antsy about the future. That is when they have perverted their phase, when they see that because they have a some dream or ideal of what they would like to bring into being in the world, that someone ought to pay attention to them immediately. That is what I would call antsy action. Finally it is not the kind of action that is responsible for the world that is there.

You and I are people who deal with all of these areas, because we know that we see what all we see. There is a kind of acute lucidity in our time, seeing so much that we become paralyzed because we do see beneath everything that is going on, seeing through the various kinds of heroes that are raised--in fact, our heroes have become heroic failures. They are people who finally do not come off as human beings. /We have not finally grasped that living is a nevertheless ~~thing~~ ~~thing~~ / and so a desperation enters in.

living. It is knowing what it means to be human, to be creatures that we are, and deciding in the midst of being creatures what it means to be creatures.

Finally, what grasps hold of the spirit of our times is to see that we are very religious. We are religious in a thousand different ways. We are religious not in terms of historical Christianity necessarily, although we might play around with various kinds of religious movements within Christianity. But finally we are religious just in terms of some value that we hold up to be ultimate. But none of that finally is going to enable us to be human. To be human is to be the beings that we are. That means doing ~~the~~ the things we are doing. That means being ~~diverse~~ a man or a woman. That means being the life phase that you are living. When you decide to be all that, you have to stand out and see that within all the other implosions, there is the implosion through ~~that~~ those. It is what I call a transparent implosion, pushing the very surface of life to see the depth of what it means to be human.