

ESSAY ON STYLE

Collection of notes from JWM's file

1. 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. **Practices**

1. The Religious Mode

1. **Always there and Abstract**
2. **Contemplative**
3. **Meditation**
4. **Prayer**
5. **Ur and Four fold**
6. **Practices**

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

1. 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 to do with the structures of humanness in society such as the domestic and the broader communities. The last first, 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

1. Futuristic or

1. Pluralistic or multi-grounded

4. Dynamic or changing

1. Inventive or creative

1. 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.