

nature has been a guarantee against utopia. This is why Berger is so often closer to Heilbroner than to his fellow-Christian Ferkiss.

I nevertheless hope that *The Future of Technological Civilization* gets the wide reading it deserves. Obviously, however, I hope too that it is read by people who have also read Berger and Heilbroner. This is not because I would expect such readers to discover that the three works ultimately support one another; in fundamental ways each is at odds with the other two. Perhaps the

function of Berger in such a combination would be to insure the right kind of tragic vision—one that knows and respects Heilbroner's grim prospect without ceasing to be moved by Ferkiss's comedic hope. "The partisans of humanity," Ferkiss concludes, "know in their bones that in a world where doom portends, resistance and life are identical, and the odds against the survival of human existence can hardly be greater than those against its creation." When we cease to know this our lot may be even grimmer than Heilbroner imagines it.

The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Lévi-Strauss and the Jewish Struggle With Modernity by John Murray Cuddihy

(Basic Books; 272 pp.; \$11.95)

E. Digby Baltzell

In our age of the rude, the crude, and the decline of table manners—to paraphrase a colorful chapter heading in John Murray Cuddihy's *The Ordeal of Civility*—it is hardly surprising that a subtly rude book such as this one should have appeared on the shelves of my favorite campus bookstore last September. I purchased it at the proprietor's suggestion and read it with keen interest. Conspiracy theories of historical or intellectual causation are always fascinating.

Some time after reading this book I was asked to review it. My impulse was to decline the invitation. I felt much like Tocqueville, who delayed for some time before answering his friend Gobineau, who had sent him an advance copy of his book *Essai sur l'inégalité des races* for his comments. I too heartily dislike what Tocqueville called those "useless battles waged by the pen." At any rate, partly because my reactions to this book were so strong and unsympathetic, I eventually decided that I was duty-bound to have brief say.

The sociology of knowledge seeks the social roots of cultural values and ideas in order to make their content more understandable. This book

is a brilliant example of the sociology of knowledge-gone-wild, or the crudest kind of sociological reductionism. For it is, I think, far less interested in contributing to our understanding of the ideas of Freud and Marx, for example, than in dismissing them as impolite products of Jewish resentment.

The central theme of *The Ordeal of Civility* is that diaspora Jews in Europe and America, from the giant generation of Marx and Freud, through the puny but successful American generation of Norman Podhoretz, Norman Mailer, and Saul Bellow, down to the outrageously impolite generation of Abbie Hoffman, have all been afflicted with what the author sees as the particularly Jewish disease of bad manners, or lack of civility, brought on by their "sociocultural status-humiliation" at the hands of the *goyim*. The theme, relentlessly illustrated and elaborated in endless metaphors, is thus summed up by Mr. Cuddihy:

There is a respectable tradition that views great works of art as issuing from the psychological traumata of their creators (this is the view of Edmund Wilson's *Wound and the Bow*, for example). Socio-

cultural wounds, it is my hypothesis, lie behind the ideological creations of the giants of the Jewish Diaspora. In Freud and Marx, as we have seen, the "inferior" Jew loses his inferiority and the mighty *goyim* are brought low. The "final triumph" of the Freudian hermeneutic, with its remedial reading of social delicts as medical symptoms, is its transvaluation—"the implication," Goffman tells us, "that *socially improper* behavior can be *psychologically normal* . . . and *socially proper* behavior can be *truly sick* [my emphasis]." The "final triumph" of Marxism is Marx's refusal to give a remedial and apologetic reading of the economic behavior of the Jews, describing it with unembarrassed bluntness, only to turn around and make this crude *Judentum* the very stuff (*Unterbau*) of the bourgeois civilization of the *goyim*.

This hypothesis is surely plausible and hardly one to quarrel with. On the other hand, the author is so obsessed with the "wound and the bow" that he tends to forget the arrows. Reading this book is very much like sitting in the Sistine Chapel endlessly discussing Michel-

angelo's social origins or physical deformities without ever looking up at the ceiling.

Almost half the book is devoted to unmasking what Mr. Cuddihy calls Freud's "modernization complex." And Marx suffered from the same complex. This means that the generation of Marx and Freud felt strongly that the warm, *shtetl gemeinschaft* had been displaced by modern society's cold, *goy gesellschaft*. (The tone of this book is revealed in the author's curiously continuous use of such terms as *goy*, *shtetl*, *shiksa*, *Agunah*, *Schadchen*, *goyisherkop*, and so forth.) According to Mr. Cuddihy, in order to unmask the gentility of Gentile society "Freud installed an id-'Yid' in the personality system of each of its members. . . . Europe's social pariah, the 'Yid,' becomes in this way everybody's psychological pariah, the id. . . . In one stroke, Freud, a new 'Moses' in his own fantasy, 'passes' his Jews into the Gentile *Gesellschaft* and 'converts' his Gentiles into 'honorary Jews.'"

According to Mr. Cuddihy's methodology, then, if we only look behind the scientific concepts of id and superego, of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, we shall find the Yiddish id and the Jewish *gemeinschaft* at war with the *goy* superego and the Gentile *gesellschaft*. All very interesting, but a bit bizarre. Surely Gentiles have shown no less longing for *gemeinschaft* than Jews.

This volume, of course, has a lot to say about Freud's "unforgiving and uncivil" treatment of the various defectors from the psychoanalytic movement. Thus, for example, he dismissed the ideas of Adler as merely the products of a "Jew boy from a Viennese suburb" who made good among the *goyim*. Cuddihy shows how Phillip Rieff "handles this 'scandal' (Freud's coarseness must always be cleaned up) by saying that 'Freud would not suffer the false civility of separating ideas from men.'" But, in contradiction to Rieff and to the whole tone of this book, Mr. Cuddihy says in the next sentence that "just such a differentiation of men themselves from the

ideas they hold is exactly what civility is, true civility." With this I should heartily agree. But the author seems to have no ability or inclination to separate ideas from the Jewish men who hold them, for he sees their ideas really as plots to unmask the shams of *goy* gentility.

Mr. Cuddihy and I would probably agree that all civilizations are based on what Yeats called a commonly agreed-upon "ceremony of innocence." As Mr. Cuddihy nicely puts it, Western civilization has been based on "the ancient idea of 'charity,' feudalized into 'chivalry' in the Middle Ages, secularized into 'courtesy' (and 'curtsy') in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, undergoing a final metamorphosis in the nineteenth century into the 'civility' of the emergent civil societies in the nation-states of the West." I would agree too with one of the major assumptions of this book—as Freud and Herzl, among many others, have put it—that all of us are anti-Semites. But there are two kinds of anti-Semitism: the pogrom and the polite variety. In America, from the generation of Edmund Wilson (a "WASP philo-Semite," according to Cuddihy) to our own, liberal intellectuals have taken the polite position. This position is, of course, opposite that of Marx, whose position, according to Mr. Cuddihy, "looks like anti-Semitism, but it isn't. It is anti-philo-Semitic."

At the moment there are an infinite number of signs that liberalism and polite anti-Semitism too are in retreat in America. In his self-assigned role as the unmasker of the unmasking ideologies of Freud and Marx, Mr. Cuddihy, in my opinion, is obsessively opposed to the liberal "ceremony of innocence." Between every line of this book lurks a kind of ill-mannered obsession with exposing the unreality of liberal philo-Semitism. He is, for instance, bound to expose the Jewish "eleventh commandment": "Thou shalt not reveal in-group secrets to the *goyim*." And of course this is exactly what Hannah Arendt did, Mr. Cuddihy is pleased to tell us, in her well-known

series of articles in the *New Yorker* on the Eichmann trial.

But (or so it seems to me) there is all the difference in the world between a Jew telling an anti-Semitic joke and his Gentile friend doing the same thing. This distinction is at the very heart of the liberal code, as opposed to the code of the members of the Racquet Club. And it has not been due to the *innocence* of liberals (most of the revelations about the Jewishness of Marx and Freud here have been covered, if in different and more judicious ways, by others), but rather to their observing an agreed-upon code of civility, or *ceremony*, of innocence. And ironically, John Murray Cuddihy, in exposing the weaknesses of polite philo-Semitism, has placed himself in the same impolite and tactless position he attributes to Marx and Freud. In other words, if one reserves impoliteness for the Jew, how is one to explain this very impolite book by a Gentile? Freud was free to admit his own impoliteness in "saying in public" what others of his circle, such as Breuer, Charcot, and Chrobak, saw but dared not say. By the same token, there is no doubt that Mr. Cuddihy has cleverly revealed, in a colorful style, what others of his turn of mind have seen but preferred not to say. I suppose that now all those whom Merton once called "fair-weather liberals" will feel more free to speak out.

What I am saying is that the clever and colorful parts of this book add up to an appalling lack of civility. Though Mr. Cuddihy may have the gift of prophecy and an understanding of all mysteries, he surely has not charity. Which, as Corinthians I:13 has taught us, is to have nothing—or, in any highly serious sense, to have not even the truth. All of which brings me back to Tocqueville and Gobineau. On January 8, 1856, Tocqueville wrote to his friend as follows: "What I disapprove of in the book I have told you before: it is less the work itself than its tendency, which I consider dangerous. . . ." Tocqueville's observation is pertinent to this book.