Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION

An essential part of students role is freedom to hear, critically examine and express viewpoints on a range of issues that divide our society.

E.G. Williamson, in Student's Freedom of Expression
For more than a century, youth movements have had an important role in effecting the social change in systems of the world. In Turkey, and Korea, youth have been instrumental, in toppling governments. In the new nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, youth are often catalysts for political, social and cultural developments. They have also provided leadership to national liberation movements, political parties -- and on a more limited scale to labour organizations and cultural groups. Not only have many of the leaders of new States come from the student population even the ideological orientation of some of these societies have come from the student organizations. Since the youths deal with ideas and intellectualized concept in their academic work, they are in a better position and are able to understand abstract ideological systems as compared to the persons who regularly work in more concrete situations. As a result, youth are generally more receptive to ideologically oriented movements and causes. Having little or no practical experience in politics or the problems of economic developments, they are often more naive about the key issues facing their societies, and are more likely to seek all-encompassing solutions to societal problems than are their elders. Because of an intellectual interest, an urge to systematic, and a psychological need to find “absolutes”, students seek an ideological system which will provide them with a weltanschauung, a guide to thought and action.

Both, the left and the right wings of the ideological movements have traditionally found strong student support, although in the developing nations the left
far outweighs the right and influence. This interest in intellectualized ideological system has been an important factor in stimulating the growth of student movements and in providing them with some enduring impetus. In the non-student world, organizational initiative can help keep a movement alive. On the student level, ideological convictions among succeeding generations of students are important because of the rapidly changing nature of the student population. Organizational factors are also a key indicator of student activity. If a tradition of strong student organizational activity exists, it is much easier to sustain a movement. The organizational sophistication of the student leaders is often as important as the ideological convictions of the cadres. Physiologically and psychologically, the period of adolescence is one of adjustment and change, and this cannot but have repercussions on the educational, social, and political attitudes of the students. The desire for independence and its self-expression are immense during this period, and the tendency toward rebellion against authority, particularly that are represented by the father, are marked well. The Studies conducted on the youth in Japan and in India indicate that many of the same factors which have been documented in the

West also operate in non-Western societies. In addition to the factors which lend the individual student in a political direction there are various constant pressures on the student population which also drive them in this direction. The existence of a large number of students at one location, with similar interests and subject to similar stimuli from the environment, gives a powerful impetus for organizational activities of all kinds. It is difficult to imagine a more cohesive community from which to recruit members. The intellectual ferment which takes place as a natural result of the academic setting is also influential in moving students to action. While only a minority of any given group of students is likely to be interested in politics, the presence of substantial numbers of students in a single location tends to create a numerically significant group of committed politicized students, even though the percentages involved may remain relatively small.

Communications within the student movement are usually quite good, especially when the majority of the students in a given area are congregated on one campus. Thus, when external conditions or ideological issues move student to action, it is easy to create a substantial movement in a relatively short time. Expensive and complex newspapers, radio programs, etc., are unnecessary: All that is needed is a mimeograph machine or a few strategically placed posters. It is difficult to over

\footnote{Lewis, Fever, "Talk with Zengakuren", \textit{The New Leader}, XLIV, no.18 (May 1, 1961), p.17.}
estimate the value of good communications in the development of student movements. Even in totalitarian societies, these are one of the most difficult groups to control, partly because of the ease with which they can communicate among themselves.

The sense of community which is often built up by the students, due to their similarities in background and outlook and their common environment, provide the basis for a student movement or organization. Indeed, there are indications that as the student population becomes larger and less homogeneous, it is more difficult to organize large scale student movements. In India, for example, as higher education became available to young people from middle and lower middle class backgrounds and the educational institutions expanded at a rapid rate, the student community lost its cohesive quality and has been more difficult to organize.

Students have often been united by the experience of a common alienation from the traditional patterns of society. There is much vacillation between traditions and modernity among students.\(^3\) This very sense of alienation serves to unite the student community. Alienation also has a politicizing effect, in that the values of the “modern” Western ideologies are often combined with elements of traditional culture to form the basis of new ideological movements. Elements of “African Socialism”,

\(^3\)Edward Shils, “Indian Student: Rather Sadhus than Philistines”, Encounter, xvii, no.3 (September, 1961), p.15.
nineteenth-century Indian revivalism, and other ideological tendencies are examples of this phenomenon. Concepts of deracination are recurrent themes in student discussions in many of the new states. Thus, regardless of the truth in the notion, it is an important influence on student thinking, and hence on their actions.

The student population also provides an organizational basis for student's political and social action. The Student unions and other organizations which have been set up by educational authorities or governments often provide a meeting place for students interested in discussion or cultural activity. Often, more radical groups grow out of these "official" organizations. Even in totalitarian societies, the "official" youth movements often provide the basis for dissenting groups of various kinds. Much of the impetus for the political ferment in Poland in the late Fifties, came from the Polish student movement and its publications, which were officially sanctioned by the government.

To their own consciousness, students in their movements have been the bearers of a higher ethics than the society around. It has been suggested that in their essential character student movements are historical forces which are at odds with the "social system". Walter Weyl has said:

---


Adolescence is the true day for revolt, the day when obscure forces, as mysterious as growth, push us, trembling, out of our narrow lives into the wide throbbing life beyond self.*

No society ever altogether succeeds in moulding the various psychological types which comprise it to conform to its material, economic requirements. If there were a genuine correspondence between the material, economic base and the psychological superstructure, then societies would be static social systems, and basic social change would not take place. In every society, however, those psychological types and motivations which the society suppresses become the searching agents of social change. Thus psycho-ethical motives, which are not only independent of the socio-economic base but actually contrary to the economic ethics that the social system requires, become primary historical forces.

The civil rights movement in the United States has likewise owed much to students as the bearers of an ethical vocation in history. A wave of sit-ins which spread through Negro college towns began on February 1, 1960, when four freshmen from the all-Negro Agricultural and Technical College at Greensboro, North Carolina, sat down at the lunch counter of the local Woolworth dime store. The surrounding community was puzzled that it was precisely ‘the best educated, the most disciplined and cultured – and essentially middle class – Negro students’ who

---

took the self-sacrificing initiative. Moreover, it was recognized generally, to use one writer's words, that "for the time being it is the students who have given a lift to the established civil rights organizations rather than the other way around." Then in the next years came movements which resembled even more the "back to the people" movement of the Russian studentry. The Freedom Riders of 1961, the several hundred white students in the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964 risking their lives to establish Freedom Schools among the Negroes, were descendants in spirit of the Russian students of the preceding century.

Nonetheless, the duality of motivation which has spurred student movements has always duality of consequence. On the one hand, the student movements during the past hundred and fifty years have been the bearers of a higher ethics for social reconstruction, of altruism, and of generous emotion. On the other hand, with all the uniformity of a sociological law, they have imposed on the political process a choice of means, destructive both of self and of the goals which presumably were sought. Suicidalism and terrorism have both been invariably present in student movements. A youth-weighted rate of suicide is indeed characteristic of all countries in which large-scale revolutionary student movements are found. In what we might call a "normal" country, or one in which there is a 'generational equilibrium", "suicide",

as Louis Dublin said, "is much more prevalent in advanced years than during youth." But a "normal" country is one without a revolutionary student movement. Where such movements have existed, where countries are thus characterized by a severe conflict of generations, the rate of suicide has been highest precisely for the youthful group. Nihilism has tended to become the philosophy of student movements not only because it constitutes a negative critique of society; it is also a self-critique that is moved by an impulse toward self-annihilation. The history of civilization bears witness to certain universal themes. They assert themselves in every era, and they issue from the deepest universals in human nature. Every age sees its class struggles and imperialistic drives, just as every age sees its ethical aspirations transcend economic interest. Every society has among its members examples of all the varieties of motivation and temperament; it has its scientists and warriors, its entrepreneurs and withdrawers. Thus, too, generation conflict, generational struggle, has been a universal theme of history.

Unlike class struggle, however, the struggle of generations has been little studied and little understood. Class conflicts are easy to document. Labour movements have a continuous and intelligible history. Student movements, by contrast, have a fitful and transient character, and even seem are lacking in the substantial dignity which a subject for political sociology should have. Indeed the student status, to begin with, unlike that of the workingman, is temporary; a few
brief years, and the quantum-like experience in the student movement is over. Nevertheless, the history of our contemporary world has been basically affected by student movements. Social revolutions in Russia, China, and Burma sprang from student movements, while governments in Korea, Japan, and the Sudan have fallen in recent years largely because of massive student protest. Here, then, is a recurrent phenomenon of modern times which challenges our understanding.

Generation struggle demands categories of understanding unlike those which enable us to understand the class struggle. Student movements, unlike those of workingmen, are born of vague, undefined emotions which seek for some issue, some cause, to which to attach themselves. A complex of urges -- altruism, idealism revolt, self-sacrifice and self-destruction--searches the social order for a strategic avenue of expression.

A youth movement is defined as a combination of students inspired by aims which they try to explicate in a political ideology, and moved by an emotional rebellion in which there is always present a disillusionment with and rejection of the values of the older generation; moreover, the members of a student movement have the conviction that their generation has a special historical mission to fulfil where the older generation, other elite, and other classes have failed.
The inner dynamic of student movements leads them to an attempt to "politicalize" all the university's activities. To "politicalize the university means more than having all students take intelligent, informed stands on political issues. What is sought, rather, is that every activity in the university be linked with, infused by, and subordinated to the alienated ideology of the student movement. The students' work, friendships, readings, play, pleasures the theater and concerts he attends must all be imbued somehow with the ethos of the student movement.

By a series of manoeuvres, they managed to capture administrative control of both the orchestra and choir and began using them as bases for propagandist activities. The authorities thereupon dissolved these agencies of musical politics. In Berkeley, in 1966, a student writer characterized vividly what he called:

the life styles of the political fraternity members: The radical political fraternity has taken a hint from the old saw that a family that prays together stays together, and believes that a movement that screws together glues together. Or to be sped office, that Socialists who sleep together creep together.9

A youth movement thus is founded upon a coalescence of several themes and conditions. This tends to arise in societies which are gerontocratic -- that is, where

---


the older generation possesses a disproportionate amount of economic and political power and social status. Where the influences of religion, ideology, and the family art especially, as an uprising of the young, will be most apt occur. As against the gerontocracy as an uprising of the young, will be most apt to occur. As against the gerontocracy, a student movement in protest moved by a spirit of what we may call juvenocracy. If an element of patriarchal prevails in most governments, the student movement by contrast is inspired by a will to filiarchy. Gerontocratic societies, however, have often existed without experiencing a revolt of the younger generation. A gerontocratic order is not a sufficient condition for the rise of a student movement. Among other factors, there must also be present a feeling that the older generation has failed. We may call this experience the process of deauthorization of the old. A youth movement will not arise unless there is a sense that the older generation has discredited itself and lost its moral standing.

A youth movement, moreover, tends to arise where political apathy or a sense of helplessness prevails among the people. Especially where the people are illiterate will the feeling exist among the young that the political initiative is theirs. The educated man has an inordinate prestige in a society of illiterates. He is a master of the arts of reading and writing, and a whole world of knowledge and the powers of expression are at his command. Throughout human history, whenever people of a society have been overwhelmingly illiterate and voiceless, the intellectual elite has
been the sole rival for political power with the military elite. The intellectual elite, under such conditions, constitutes a class of managerial or administrative intellectuals. Several thousand years ago an Egyptian father told his son, “Put writing in your heart that you may protect yourself from hard labour of any kind. The scribe is released from manual tasks: It is he who commands.”

Ibn Khaldun, sociologist of the fourteenth century, meditating on his life’s observations in the North African countries, was on this question. “When the Arabs conquered many lands, founded their empire”, he noted, “the state needed many clerks”. Whereas at the beginning of a dynasty, as well as its end, “the sword plays a more important part than the pen”, it was otherwise when the state was flourishing. The requirements of administration brought the intellectual elite to the fore; intellectuals have always staffed the bureaucracy: “For all this it is to the pen that he [the ruler] must look for help, hence their importance increases”.

A youth movement is the most mobile and tense section of the intellectual elite. It usually differs in its ethic, and motivation from the mature, elder intellectuals; for within the ranks of the intellectual class itself, a sharp cleavage along generational lines usually takes place, quite apart from economic factors. In


11 Ibid.
the early period of the century. For instance, Russian, Social Revolutionaries declared that the chief difference between them and the new democratic liberals had nothing to do with class origins or affiliations with the bourgeoisie; they claimed indeed "that the awakening democratic liberal movement was really not tied to the bourgeoisie at all -- that it represented, rather, an older generation of the intelligentsia, the members of which were elated to the revolutionaries as 'fathers' to 'sons.'" It was a question, they wrote of a liberalism which "unites only the 'fathers' of the intelligentsia while the 'sons' constitute confirmed fighters for the revolution....The 'fathers' are distinguished from us by the moderation of their tactics and demands..."12 Moreover, the fathers as established professional men and bureaucrats, as members of the Establishment, have often become realists, forsworn illusions, and made the inevitable accommodations of ideals to actualities which their existence requires. The student movement is rather an idea in its purity, a Platonic Idea seeking for a brief period an entry into time. Sometimes student movements have been called the "striking force" of the intellectual elite. A "striking force" it is because students, in the nature of things, congregate in campuses, classrooms, and academic halls. A student audience or crowd is the easiest one in the world to assemble. They are not dispersed over distances as peasants are, and their studies are rarely so demanding that they do not have time on their hands. They are not

bound and exhausted by work schedules as workers are, and they usually have no families to support.

Nevertheless, the student movement's relationship to the adult section of the intellectual elite is an ambiguous and shifting one. Where an oppressive military elite rules the country, where the avenues of democratic politics have been closed, the young and old of the intellectual elite will tend to make common cause. But where the elder intellectuals share power with the military elite, or where the possibilities of political compromise have opened themselves for the elders, a divergence between the generations of intellectuals makes itself felt.

The varieties of student activists all appear in this first portrait of the student movement. There was the everlasting student non-student, prolonging his adolescence and re-enacting each semester his revolt against his elders, Balorel, a student of law, "a student in his eleventh year", who "liked nothing as much as a quarrel unless it were a riot, and nothing so much as a riot except a revolution. He was ever ready to break a pane of glass, tear up the paving-stones, and demolish a government, in order to see the effect..." His motto as a law student: "never a lawyer". There was the believer in the rule of the intellectual elite, intelligarchy, Come before, who "declared that the future is in the hand of the schoolmaster, and busied himself with educational questions". There was his more sociological fellow-student, Prouvaire: "the whole day long he studied social questions, wages, capital,
credit, marriage, religion, liberty of thought, liberty of love, education, the penal code, wretchedness, partnership, property, production, and distribution, that enigma of the lower world which casts a shadow on the antheap....” In all these students “the pure blood of principle flowed in their veins.” Only one of them was a skeptic, and he was emotionally fixated, in a feminine, homosexual way on the student leader, Enjolras:

This skeptic, however, had a fanaticism....it was a man -- Enjolras...His mind could do without a belief, but his heart could not do without friendship...His soft, yielding, dislocated, sickly, and shapeless ideas attached themselves to Enjolras as to a spinal column...”

From the combination of youth, intellectuality, and altruistic emotion, there arise certain further basic traits of student movements. In the first place, a student movement, unlike a labour movement, has at its inception only a vague sense of its immediate goals; indeed, its “ultimate aims” are usually equally inchoate. A trade union, as we have mentioned, comes into being because a group of workers have certain specific grievances relating to wages, hours and conditions of work, seniority rights, safety precautions. It is only with difficulty that political propagandists can get workers to think in generic terms of opposing the “system”. A student movement, on the other hand, arises from a diffused feeling of opposition to things

"Victor Hugo les Miserables , Part III, Book IV, Chapter I (Boston, 1887), pp.113-27."
as they are. It is revolutionary in emotion to begin with, and because its driving energy stems largely from unconscious sources, it has trouble defining what it wants. It tries to go from the general to the particular, and to find a justifying bill of grievances; what moves it at the outset, however, is less an idea than an emotion, vague, restless, ill-defined, stemming from the unconscious. A Japanese student leader of many years' standing, Shigeo Shima, remarked,

One cannot understand the student movement if one tries to understand it in terms of the labour movement. The strength of the student movement lies in its energy of consciousness trying to determine existence, instead of the other way around."

An intellectual has been defined as a person whose consciousness determines his existence, in the case of the young intellectuals of a student movement we might add further that their ideological consciousness is founded on the emotional unconscious of generational revolt.

The student movement strives further to fill the role of the conscience of society. In a gerontocracy, the older generation embodies the powers of the cultural conscience. A student movement, however, is an instrumentality of psychological revolution; in a world where the fathers have been de-authoritized, the sons step forward as the self-appointed bearers of authority. People then pay tribute to the

"Toshio Kamba Saigo No Bisho (Last Smile: Tokyo, 1960), pp.16-17.

students as the only group in society who can speak their minds honestly. We might call this process a “displacement of the superego”. Toshio Kamba, whose daughter was killed when the Japanese students forced the diet grounds in 1960, described this reverence of Japanese society towards its new student superego.

Vietnam, of course, is the most organized and coherent of the self-determination movements, but the seemingly structureless riots in Watts heralded the beginnings of the organized build-up of Negro militance and even violence in this country....Watts was a “people’s uprising”, as the Liberator said. There were no illusions about who the enemy was -- the Los Angeles police and “imperialist” merchants of the Watts shopping areas...the sniping and guerrilla action had become tightly organized...The Chinese Communist Party maintains that at this time the Negro struggle, like the Vietnamese, is a national struggle, and Mao Tse-tung has said, “In the final analysis, a national struggle is a question of class struggle....” Revolutionary action by the black citizens of the US is neither foolhardy nor an adventurist fantasy -- in truth there is no other choice."

The student as a “guerrilla fighter” came to be the image which most appealed to young student activists. The beatnik metamorphosed into a “guerrilla” fighting in the fastnesses of the city. In 1962, for example, the San Francisco Mime

Troupe had called themselves disciples of the “theater of the absurd”. They went to the people in parks with their pornopolitical plays. Five years later they said they were a “guerrilla theater”, attacking the System, making money, withdrawing, attacking. The absurd had evolved into a guerrilla; the unconscious generational violence became conscious.\footnote{Ibid., pp.255-56.}

The activists of the student movement feel a need to define their virtues as unique to their generation, as distinct from those of the middle-aged and middle-class generation. Student leaders enumerate the virtues of their generation — authenticity, courage, truthfulness. One might say that every virtue they could name had been expounded and argued for by some philosophy of the older or past generations. One might even say that all virtues are “bourgeois” virtues, in the sense that they have been defined and advocated by “bourgeois” philosophers. “Authenticity”, apart from the word, received its magisterial advocacy from John Start Mill in \textit{On Liberty}, in which he argued for individuality and character. Immanuel Kant carried truth-telling to its last consequence. Spinoza, Russell, Tillich have written philosophies of courage.

Nevertheless, the students’ underlying emotion is undeniable — their will to define themselves as different, as uncorrupted (unlike the elders), as determined to
change the world the elders transmit to them. Each successive generation has a tendency to want to blame its elders for the kind of world it inherits, forgetting the element of truth in Marx's statement that men, at any given social stage, "enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will".

To overcome alienation, to achieve a new mystical community, the striving of the new student movement is for an all-embracing generational consciousness. At the National Co-ordinating Committee Convention to End the War in Vietnam, in Washington in November 1965, for instance, Delmar Scudder, described as "the new travelling salesman of 'soul'", said, "First people have to touch one another. That's where program comes from." His words were said to have been the "most penetrating" spoken at the meeting. The theme of "touching one another" was dearest to the new activists, so that soon they felt discomfited by hardened organizational operators who were less interested in tactual mysticism. The theoretician of the Free Speech Movement lamented, "Unfortunately once the convention had started it was perhaps too late to have a convention in which people could touch one another." The old-fashioned Trotskyist Young Socialist Alliance was described as having 'fuelled the fires of mistrust by its failure to practice the candour which we have the right to ask of those who believe in democratic

"Lawrence H. Battistini, The Post-War Student Struggle in Japan (Tokyo, 1956), p.33."
centralism". Staughton Lynd has said that the New Left must regard itself as a "blessed community, a new society". "The left must not lose all the beautiful elements of spontaneity and comradeship".

What, then, have been the achievements and failures of student movements in the history of the United States? The movements were always a source of intellectual ferment on the campuses; they had a sense of the drama of ideas. They made the average undergraduate and professor more aware of the emerging problems and realities of the world. They were a channel for the noblest idealist aspirations of adolescence. At the same time, they were also a channel for emotions of generational revolt. They tended, therefore, to extremes of doctrine, the rejection of the elders' liberal values and a choice of self-destructive means in political action.

The most notable achievement of the sixties was the Mississippi Project of 1964; but the student civil rights movement came repeatedly into conflict with the leadership of the older generation, a conflict which reached its climax in 1965 at Selma, Alabama, in the clash with Martin Luther King. Legislative victories followed, but the success of the movement depended on the maintenance of a generational equilibrium within it. Persons of all ages and classes were summoned to the movement; it was not allowed to become a student movement. The distinctive

student vector has emerged in its advocacy of violence, guerrilla warfare, and its hostility to the liberal democratic process.

The student movements are presumed to have been a remarkable training ground for political action and initiative. Too often, however, they burned out their participants. The activist lived at a level of excitement which he could not long maintain. Activist at twenty-one, deactivated at twenty-two became a familiar pattern. Political action born of generational revolt tended to be self-terminating it ended when some measure of generational independence was achieved. Meanwhile, the leading political student leaders were often disabled by extreme commitments from assuming the role of leadership they might otherwise normally have filled.

Youth movements have always been laden with emotion and doctrine concerning themselves as the elitist makes of history. Unlike the labour movement, they have often tended to represent not the reason of the studentry but its unreason. If students in the United States have generally held aloof from student movements, it was not always because of smudginess of selfishness but because they felt that social idealism too readily went hand in hand with social irrationality. Student movements as agencies of generational revolt have distorted and thwarted the generous emotions which were also their partial inspiration.
The conflict of generations is a universal theme in history; it is founded on the most primordial facts of human nature, and it is a driving force of history, perhaps even more ultimate than that of class struggle. Yet its intensity fluctuates. Under fortunate circumstances, it may be resolved within a generational equilibrium. Under less happy circumstances, it becomes bitter, unyielding, angry, violent; this is what takes place when the elder generation, through some presumable historical failure, has become de-authoritized in the eyes of the young.

Every student movement is the outcome of a de-authoritization of the elder generation. This process can take place in small colleges as well as impersonal universities, in industrialized countries as well as underdeveloped ones, in socialist as well as capitalist ones.

Youth movements have been the chief expression of generational conflict in modern history. As intellectual elite of the younger generation, they have had their special ethic of redemption, self-sacrifice, and identification. They have attained the greatest heights of idealistic emotion even as they have been entralled by compulsions to destruction.

These youth movements are more than an episode in the "modernization" of developing nations, for they can affect advanced industrial societies as well as traditional or transitional ones. They arise wherever social and historical
circumstances combine to cause a crisis in loss of generational confidence, which impels the young to resentment and uprising. Student movements have arisen in recent years in “underdeveloped countries” because generational disequilibrium is likely to arise in traditional societies which are sustaining the impact of advanced ideas. At the same time, student movements are likely to arise in advanced industrial, prosperous societies precisely because such societies do not afford environments with real, objective tasks, material challenges to youthful, aggressive energies. America in the nineteenth century was changing rapidly; it was neither in a class nor an economic equilibrium; it was, however, in a generational equilibrium. Rapid social change in and of itself does not necessarily involve youth unrest.