The demise of *Scrutiny* in 1953 must have been a traumatic experience for Leavis: this is apparent from the tone of his valedictory note in the last number of the journal. Certainly the event was a frightening indication of the absence of a critically adult public; his 'sanguine imagination' in this respect was laden with despair in this 'sad moment, many times postponed, but now an inevitable one.' Dissolution of the common critical platform which *Scrutiny* had so well provided left Leavis with a certain blankness which continued till about 1962 when he had the occasion to return to the concerned issues in his famous Richmond lecture.

However, immediately after 1953 Leavis found yet another means of channelling his thoughts. After the demise of *Scrutiny* and the exhausting labour of running it, Leavis made the press itself serve a purpose similar to the journal's. In fact, most of his letters to editors were written between 1953 and 1973 (these were collected by John
Tasker in a volume, *Letters in Criticism*, published in 1974). As William Walsh observed, one of the leading themes of these letters was "the concerted reaction of the hostile solidarity towards *Scrutiny* and Leavis himself among the powers of the metropolitan world, the academic milieux, and its associated cultural organs." In fact, Leavis always thought that the success of these powers constituted a major fact for the historian of literature and culture in Great Britain in the twentieth century.

Indeed, the distinction of the genuine educated public from the self-indulgent coterie groups was to become an insistent theme for Leavis in the years after 1961. As things were, even in the fifties the critical and creative talents of the time made only a pretence of offering themselves to a 'public public', while in actuality they 'confused that public with the Group, the coterie, from the consciousness of solidarity with which it draws the confidence for its callow sophistication;' and if, as Leavis observed, the 'small modish literary world' and the new intellectuals of the 'enlightenment' in the Welfare State constituted a comprehensive system of 'personal and institutional connections', chiefly metropolitan in nature, the literary and minority movements of the early and middle 1950s, such as 'the Movement' and 'the Angry Young Men' which raised their voices against metropolitan culture,
were middle-class coteries exclusively associated with provincial universities.³

The particular force and style of Leavis's arguments about an educated public, however, had to wait till 1962. This year was a landmark in Leavis's career as a writer. Preparations were made in this year by the Cambridge University Press for the reissue of *Scrutiny* in twenty volumes; and he contributed to the last (index) volume an article entitled 'Scrutiny: a Retrospect', where he took the opportunity to sum up and assess the journal's achievement and significance. Looking back in the article on the cultural revolution and the subsequent educational movement represented by *Scrutiny*, he said that if the Marxist fashion of thought in the 1930s had offered a 'doctrinal' challenge to the Scrutineers' enterprise, the material drive of civilization still continued to threaten it 'undoctrinally'.⁴ Of the latter phenomenon he was to say, "Education and the University appeared in 1943, and the subsequent years have reinforced in a frightening way the diagnosis, the admonition and the foreboding."⁵ This was yet another theme that kept Leavis engaged especially after 1961. In this period the 'material drive of civilization' came to mean for him not only the industrial and cultural implications of science and technology as well as the insistence on specialist scientific studies and business education, but also a particular vindication of a scientific culture and men of science, and
the egalitarian sympathies of the men of social 'enlightenment'.

The Richmond lecture which Leavis delivered in reply to Sir Charles Snow's Rede lecture of 1959 was the other important event of 1962; and this led to a series of polemical performances -- the various public lectures he gave between 1966 and 1971 -- which provided material for English Literature in our Time and the University and Nor Shall My Sword: Discourses on Pluralism, Compassion and Social Hope. The ensuing discussion is based chiefly on these two books which represented Leavis's 'deepest convictions,' supposedly made 'explicit and unmistakable' in these years.

The discussion follows in three sections. The first section shows how Leavis was critical of the scientists, humanists, progressivists, educationists and other men of enlightenment whose very habit of thought and expression entailed a mis-apprehension of culture and the allied issues. The second section outlines Leavis's latest ideas about an educated public which he envisaged between 1962 and 1972. He pitted against this public the coteries of literary and enlightened intellectuals which often assumed a false sense of superiority as élites, and whose solidarity was based on uncritical unanimity springing from institutional and personal loyalties. The genuine educated public, on the other hand,
was united by a sense of cultural continuity and an aversion to the mere material aspect of civilization; and its unity was the result of critical disagreements in cultural matters among its members. The third section deals with the general intellectual habits of the cultural community that distinguished it not only from the literary and progressivist coteries but also from the specialist communities of scientists and philosophers. Leavis devoted himself to this theme with certain rigour between 1972 and 1976.

I

The very first thing one would notice in Leavis’s Richmond lecture is his critical attitude to what he believed to be the fake seriousness with which Snow, in his Rede lecture, regarded himself as a novelist, a scientist, an intellectual and a 'sage' of enlightenment. Snow, he said, was a 'portent', a representative of the ethos to which he and his friends belonged. They believed themselves to be an élite of the enlightened, humanist and progressivist intelligentsia. "Élitism is a bad word, a term of condemnation in the progressivist armoury; but nothing is stronger in them than the assumption that they are an élite." The assumption of an élite standing implicitly claimed certain privileges, power and authority,
and implied their misuse which, Leavis thought, needed control and check.

Leavis's attack on the fake élitism of these intellectuals began with a criticism of their habit of thought and expression. He thought that genuine thinking was hampered in their case because of certain clichés of expression that entailed certain clichés of attitude. In other words, these men of enlightenment used their critical vocabulary without a sense of responsibility and consciousness. What was thus at stake was a genuine response to both art and life; and what was needed was the reclamation of expression from clichés for the benefit of actual thinking.

Now, the one essential thing that Leavis had been emphasizing since he wrote the Mass civilization pamphlet was the essential qualities of 'first-hand judgement' and 'genuine personal response' — qualities which would counteract the currency of accepted valuations and ultimately stimulate genuine participation in the formation of contemporary sensibility. In his Richmond lecture he returned to the same issues. "Thinking is a difficult art and requires training and practice in any given field," while "a habit of expression that runs into cliché tells us something adverse about the quality of thought expressed." Though "in our time it is very necessary to insist that the
most important words ... are incapable of definition," Leavis believed that the very process of thought ought to admit of "control by strict definition of the key terms," or should at least involve a 'vigilant responsibility' in their use, and a 'consciousness' of their shift of focus in an argument.\(^8\) In *English Literature in our Time*, similarly, Leavis came to observe the general nature of the problem that was a social malady: clichés of thought that "determine the thinking of the able, powerful and influential" are in fact the clichés of the technologico-Benthamite age.\(^9\) In 1970 he summed up the problem thus:

The righteous and confident irresponsibility that is the mark of the 'humanist' intellectual, as of the enlightened in general among whom his clichés pass current, is to be seen in what he does with words. He reduces them to cliché-use and cliché-status. His clichés have behind them clichés of attitude; expression and inducers of flatteringly plausible non-thought, they make thought ... impossible. The defence of humanity entails their reclamation for genuine thought.\(^10\)

The most important word to be reclaimed for the 'defence of humanity' was, of course, 'culture', "one of those indispensable words whose use and behaviour have to be kept under observation."\(^11\) The binary split of culture into scientific and literary ones that Snow envisaged was, thus, a most ominous trait of the social malady that deserved Leavis's foremost attack. Snow had posited not only a 'scientific culture' against the 'literary culture', but also the scientist as a man of culture against the
literary intellectual. But of course Snow's 'non-thought' was implicit in the way in which he identified the literary culture with what Leavis described as 'the modish literary world' ignorant of science, and represented by the *New Statesman*, *The Guardian* and reviewing in the Sunday papers. Similarly, Snow dubbed the literary intellectuals like Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris, Matthew Arnold and Dickens as 'natural Luddites' -- anti-industrial, anti-political and anti-scientific. On the other hand, he said, scientific culture was culture in an 'anthropological sense'; and the scientists were important persons inasmuch as they were men who 'have the future in their bones' and particularly because 'without thinking, they respond alike'. ('This is what a culture means,' Snow had said.) Such propositions were, according to Leavis, supreme instances of a cliché-ridden ethos; the very definition of culture was a mark of the coterie-world which was characterized not only by wrong insistences and emphases, but also by irresponsible and unconscious solidarity.

It was obviously absurd, then, to posit a culture that the scientist had qua scientist, for culture involved "the scientist as a man, as nearly and intimately as any one" — "We are all involved" — and thus "there is only one culture; to talk of two ... is to use an essential term with obvious disqualifying irresponsibility." Snow's claim that
slightly more scientists were 'unbelievers' in religious terms and were on the Left in open politics did not, therefore, especially entitle them to the legacy of culture.

Another cliche of expression in the vocabulary of enlightenment that Leavis attacked was the 'crude antithesis, individual-social', to challenge which was "to demand genuine recognition for the fact, nature and significance of human creativity." The central cliche was, of course, 'social' "to reclaim which would be to 'place' standard enlightenment for the cock-a-hoop folly it is, callously lethal in its witless inhumanity." Snow had said in his Rede lecture that scientists saw 'no reason why just because the individual condition is tragic, so must the social condition be', and that still there was 'social hope'. Leavis discussed the issue in his essays 'Literature and Society', and 'Justifying One's Valuation of Blake'; and he dealt with it in detail in the first section of his book The Living Principle. He was aware of the individual's other-than-individual nature; but he intended to vindicate his idea against the 'social-personal' nature of the individual as upheld by the social scientists of his time. Everything depended, he thought, on the right conception of the individual. Whereas undoubtedly "it is only in the individual that society lives," there was an important difference between the 'social' conception of the individual based on the idea of
selfhood and that based on what Blake called 'identity': "The 'selfhood' is that which asserts itself and seeks to possess from within its self-enclosure. The 'identity' is the individual being as the disinterested focus of life;" it is as 'identity' that an individual knew he did not belong to himself. Accordingly, there was a difference between the social scientist's idea of 'society' and that envisaged by Eliot in his notion of 'impersonality': while "individual lives cannot be aggregated or equated or dealt with quantitatively in any way," the individuals best lived as individuals only as members of a creative, collaborative community.

Another word which was relegated by the men of enlightenment to 'cheap journalistic misuse' was 'tragic' (Snow had said, 'the individual condition is tragic'). The word evoked yet another key-word in the basic vocabulary of enlightenment: 'compassion'. The term was used to arouse sympathetic response to the social condition of the underprivileged; but it often implied a self-indulgent craving for elitist status:

'Compassion' ... which goes so inseparably with 'social hope' is not the admirable thing it takes itself for. In spite of the pretension to sympathetic disinterestedness implicit in the word, the actuality is self-indulgence .... The emphasis I have immediately in view is that the ostensible grave call to imaginative responsibility actually serves as a licence for the
opposite -- for evasion and desperately reckless unrealism: that is, for irresponsibility. 18

Of course, Leavis was "no more inclined to doubt that there may be genuine magnanimity in the selectest progressivist circles than to dispute that there was genuine compassion at work in the conceiving of the Welfare State that embraces all." 19 But the 'egalitarian vein' for the underprivileged never went with a feeling of the 'faintest quiver of moral discomfort'; and this fact helped the progressivist intellectuals to maintain their 'assumed representative status': "they stand together because they are anxious to preserve their standing as an élite." 20

It will be recalled -- this has been discussed in the first chapter -- that Mannheim's word for 'compassion' was 'empathy'. But the capacity for empathy in his 'socially unattached intelligentsia' was at least a matter of moral involvement, whereas 'compassion' among the progressivist intellectuals -- 'sympathetic disinterestedness' or 'imaginative responsibility', as Leavis described it -- was a socio-political tactics. Mannheim's unattached intelligentsia and Leavis's educated public would offer an interesting comparison; but it would be enough to observe here that the former attributed to the members of his intelligentsia an essentially individual, psychological virtue, whereas the
latter insisted on a kind of concerted mental activity on the part of his public -- a collective creative response to material progress.

Now, this brings in the question of the characteristic attitude of Leavis's educated public to the material drive of civilization. He recalled in 1966 that in his early writings he was prompted to the formulation that there was a certain autonomy of the human spirit. But he didn't mean to suggest that "the higher non-material achievements of human culture, the achievements of collaborative creation ... were to be thought of as spontaneous, unconditioned expressions of an intrinsic human nature sprouting or creating gratuitously, in a realm of pure spirit. I was merely insisting that there is an intrinsic human nature, with needs and potentialities" that a scientist may remain unaware of, and a social planner may ignore "with disastrous consequences".21 The 'non-material achievements of human culture', then, was conditioned by the material achievements in a particular way. "The progressivists' acceptance of the fact of change (material progress) has for corollary a contempt for tradition, conceived as a timid clinging to old habits;" but a genuine cultural tradition consisted in "the living creative response to change in the present," to "material conditions and economic necessities" -- it was an art of living "formed in response to practical exigencies"
and material necessity through generations of settled habitation." In other words, the cultural preoccupations of the educated public were not to be with the material conditions themselves but with a 'creative response' to them. In this way would evolve a collaborative body of significances and values which would provide a more meaningful dimension of civilization. Of course Bentham's, practical reformers and statesmen could not be dispensed with; but an exclusive concentration on productivity, material standard of living, hygienic and technical progress, wages and salaries, what one could buy with them, reduced hours of work and increasing leisure meant a 'vacuum of disinheritance' or 'a general impoverishment of life.' Against these priorities Leavis posited a higher dimension of life as represented by the creative drive of great art: "What for — what ultimately for? What, ultimately, do men live by?"

Now, the 'creative response' to material conditions was what Leavis had described earlier as a 'stylization' of economic necessities, an 'art of living' involving 'codes' of human relations 'developed in ages of continuing experience.' Such a formulation, however, reflected Leavis's inclination for an essential element of popular culture, particularly of a simple and primordial folk culture. The inclination is apparent in his references to the harmony between man and nature, the seasonal rhythms, highly
developed perception involved in the traditional skills of craft, the personal relationships and other allied aspects of this culture. In fact, his concept of the organic culture, in the last analysis, was a concept of harmony between the high and popular levels of culture. From the idea of high culture he derived his notions of discrimination and first-hand judgement, and from the idea of popular culture, his notion of genuine or creative response. The two tiers of his cultural élite -- the core minority and the wider educated public -- seem to correspond to these two aspects of the cultural activity. He thus hoped to achieve a correlation of the different levels of response to art and life, and to revive a cultural homogeneity in this way. He would have done well to ponder how far the revival was feasible in the context of mass culture where the higher cultural level was dominated by coteries and the popular level was vitiated by passive and pliant masses. As it transpired, he invented an intermediary estate -- an educated class, 'still a small minority', which would act as the conscience of the masses.

However, Leavis believed that the collaborative creation of significances and values -- the 'contemporary sensibility' -- formed by an educated public in 'response to change in the present' was the essential precondition of material achievements. In other words, the latter acquired meaning only in relation to the former. There
was, thus, a "prior human achievement of collaborative creation, a more basic work of the mind of man ... one without which the triumphant erection of the scientific edifice would not have been possible" (and science was a means to the material progress).\textsuperscript{25} It must be borne in mind that this was Leavis's response to the supreme importance Aldous Huxley attached to scientific education. (This issue was discussed at large in \textit{Nor Shall My Sword}, in the chapter entitled "'Literarism' versus 'Scientism'".) This was also a reaction to Lord Todd's proposals to impose compulsory science in schools, which went well with Snow's dismissal of the nineteenth century intellectuals as 'natural Luddites.' In the long run Leavis's business transpired to be a vindication of the literary studies against encroachments by the sciences. The tradition in the field of liberal education that began with the Peacock-Shelley controversy was now reaching a climax. Thus, while Leavis never doubted that "science is obviously of great importance to mankind," "the criteria of judgements of value and importance ... can't be arrived at by science itself; they aren't, and can't be, a product of scientific method, or anything like it": in fact, specialists themselves "essentially need as such to be fully human, and can be part disabled by the life-deficiency that impairs vision."\textsuperscript{26}
To the problem at hand, however, there was no simple solution as Snow or Todd or Huxley envisaged it. "The idea of making science students attend lectures on English literature and students in humanities attend lectures on science is pitiful in its futility;" even "the collective 'social studies', in all their diversity, can't perform the function" represented by the collaborative creation of significances.\textsuperscript{27} Equally futile was the idea of a 'mixed course', as envisaged by Lord Robbins, comprising studies of natural sciences, psychology and social sciences, as well as the study of literature and arts as a pleasing adjunct. The remedy, of course, lay in the co-presence of the main intellectual disciplines in a university, with English as a liaison centre. Moreover, the English School must be in close relation with a 'creative front' as much as the science departments must be in close touch with the 'experimental-creative front'.\textsuperscript{28} Leavis desperately wanted the university to be a place where students of sciences and mathematics, aware of the standards proper to their fields of study, would be co-present with students of literary studies where equivalent standards prevailed. This explained his anxiety in the face of increasing emphasis on the sciences and growing provision for them in the universities. Whereas the material drive of civilization ensured their provision, and took care of their standards, the humane function of literary studies, he felt, was
always threatened, and standards proper to them were elusive for polemical purposes. In fact, he had the gravest anxieties regarding the peculiar difficulty involved in an effective upkeep of standards in this field, inasmuch as "English is at the other extreme from mathematics." In *Nor Shall My Sword* he explained the difficulty with some particularity:

For the selectors of recruits to a Department of Mathematics the criteria are unequivocal; when they are arriving at their selection their integrity and disinterestedness are seriously engaged, and they are able to defy the disastrously inappropriate prompting of human nature. No such proposition holds in relation to English; and mediocrities will naturally band to keep out the disturbing presence — which is that of the truly qualified, or, if by some chance it has got in, to keep it from being what it is qualified to be — 'disturbing.'

But in the very nature of the case, the function of the English School could not be as specialist as that of the science departments. The very idea of the literary-critical training that the School would promote precluded such possibilities. Leavis explained this issue with reference to research activities in the English School itself. No one should suppose, he thought, that "research in relation to the English School could be anything analogous in status and essential importance to what it was in relation to the scientific departments;" the phrase 'a genuine
contribution to knowledge' which characterized the research activities in sciences, had a marked infelicity in relation to English. Leavis said that the Scrutiny group did a great deal to establish the distinctive Cambridge tradition of research in English. If he did not, out of modesty, refer to his own research dissertation that he submitted in 1924, his ideal of research work in English was Q.D. Leavis' Fiction and the Reading Public, a major relevant fact behind the founding of Scrutiny, inspiring several research subjects.) The representative research student in English should be "a person of some distinction of mind and exceptional enterprise and self-reliance", and would profitably engage in acquiring extra-literary knowledge that would be a part of human meaning, though that might look negligible to the specialist in each field.

Unless the business of a liberal education was explored from these perspectives, there was no foreseeable remedy to the immense problem of civilization presented at the university level by specialism: "What is the specialist's contribution if it is a contribution only to the specialist knowledge and thought? It can have its full meaning, its raison d'être, only in relation to a central human awareness. We can't produce geniuses, but if we see the need and have the will, we can hope to make the university a human centre -- a centre of intelligence." Leavis, in saying this,
came very near Cardinal Newman's assertion that the university is a great and ordinary means to a great but ordinary end.

II

In the introduction to *English Literature in our Time and the University* Leavis said that his preoccupation in the book was not with the advocacy of a university English School that should send out into the world a number of discriminating critics and a greater number of cultivated readers: to make it that -- merely that -- is to denature it. And it is not with merely literary education .... Nor is it merely with education. It is with restoring to this country an educated public that shall be intelligent, conscious of its responsibility, qualified for it and influential -- such a public as might affect decisively the intellectual and spiritual climate in which statesmen and politicians form their ideas, calculate, plan and perform. It conceives the university not merely as a place of learning, research and instruction, but as itself a nucleus (one of a number) of the greater public, the spiritual community the country needs as its mind and conscience.34

It is possible, on the basis of these remarks, to outline the structures of Leavis's cultural minority. With the meaningful copresence of all intellectual disciplines, and with the English School as a liaison centre, the university
was the nucleus of the intellectual and spiritual community. In other words, the university was the sanctuary of the core cultural élite. This tiny minority, then, comprised teachers, undergraduates and research students in the English School, and the teaching forces at the senior level of other intellectual disciplines. The two preconditions in the liaison centre that Leavis took for granted were that the teachers would be truly qualified (not mediocrities, for instance), taking genuine pleasure and profit in teaching the young and intelligent undergraduate, and that the undergraduates themselves should have high intellectual standards, and possess a sense of belonging to a collaborative community. The core élite would take upon itself the responsibility of cultural guardianship by preserving the best that has been thought and said in the past, by preserving and maintaining stands, and by pronouncing first-hand judgements on art, literature and life. The education the members of this élite got or profited from the English School ensured these functions. On the other hand, the larger community of undergraduates themselves, in English and other intellectual disciplines in the university, provided a model for the desirable educated public, 'still a minority, though a larger one'. By their genuine personal response to the core élite's first-hand judgements, the members of the model educated
public would form a body of significances and values relevant to the contemporary society. Needless to say, their response would be based on critical disagreements and qualifications. Only in this way would they be able to make the first-hand judgements influential. However, they would have enough unity among them based on their sense of cultural continuity and their other-than-material preferences. This would add a meaningful dimension to the contemporary material progress on the whole. Trained in the matters of contemporary sensibility in this way, the undergraduates would grow in later life as influential writers, teachers, publishers and journalists; and thus they would form and rally effective public opinion which would keep the practical activities and decisions of scientists, social reformers, politicians, trade union leaders, business magnates, executives and administrators in proper check and control.

But Leavis thought that there were always hostile forces in society which defeated the formation of an educated public. The enemies often came from the metropolitan literary world, the specialist science departments in universities and the progressivist intellectuals. These hostile forces, often in the form of small, specialized elite groups or coteries, were usually backed by institutional and personal authorities and offered to serve the
establishment. It was the task of the genuine educated public to counteract these forces and to free society from their debilitating influence. This often needed a kind of organization on the part of the educated community.

The idea of the educated public, then, had to be vindicated against the whole hostile milieu. Particularly hostile, for instance, was that comprehensive system, the metropolitan literary world which had its own forces, journalistic organs and institutional centres. At its midmost was the B.B.C., with its organ The Listener. This world was its own public, and was immune from control by the educated public that did not take such worlds seriously.

When Leavis said that in Matthew Arnold's time "England contained an educated class and an educated public," and hoped that nobody would contend "the university had nothing to do with their existence," he was expressing hopes similar to those of Coleridge whose 'clerisy', in the last analysis, derived from the teaching community in schools and universities. Leavis also shared Arnold's assumptions about the existence of an educated community which was dissociated from the idea of social privilege, but shared the education and manners of the governing class. It was from this educated community that the Victorian intellectual climate derived its support.
It was, then, the business of the university to 'replace' the educated public, "now decayed ... replace it by creating a new educated public, and being in relation to it a centre of concentration and a maintainer of standards." In other words, the university was to be a centre of informed and responsible opinion which the educated public made influential. This would help the growth of a general climate of healthy public opinion. Thus, neither the College of Technology nor the Open University was a university in the important sense; the real university was 'a creative centre of civilization', with the copresence of the specialist studies in general, representing unequivocally high standards, and with a strong humane centre. But everything depended on a small proportion of the total academic personnel which would have a decisive effect on the statistical majority.

Leavis had no doubts that there were in the England of his time a great many cultivated and responsible individuals; but he knew that they did not form an effective community. The consequences of the technologico-Benthamite revolution precluded them from forming a public in that way. A non-specialist intellectual journal, for instance, could rally such individuals; but the growing impossibility of running these journals except on commercial lines proved their function an up-hill task. However, a
public "that doesn't know that it exists as such is hardly one;" and without such a public "the currency of ideas, attitudes and valuation-tips ... remained without effective challenge."^38

The matter of creating an educated public, thus, called for an idea of organization. Now, organization presupposes common social exposures, experiences and interests. The effective groups or communities in society have been either those which share common interests or those which uphold these interests at an ideological level. The dominant social group presents its interests as belonging to the whole society. Its ideological supporters, accordingly, present their values and significances as relevant to all sections of society. The academic and metropolitan literary establishments, and the progressivist circles to which Leavis was so much opposed had behind them personal and institutional support, often official. To try to keep these establishments in check and control by a disinterested educated public was an ineffectual tactics.

Leavis's latest elaborate discussions about an educated public were contained in a chapter in Nor Shall My Sword entitled 'Elites, Oligarchies and an Educated Public'. Here he attributed to the educated public functions analogous to those of the democratic system of check and control. He was of course aware of the inherent defect of
democracy: the levelling-down of standards implied in its principle and spirit of majority-decisions. But he was willing to condescend to democracy in so far as it meant "the arrangements and the habits that save us from the plight of Russia, where a privileged and self-perpetuating bureaucracy is clamped down on the country, and knows that it can't be moved or intimidated," in so far as, that is, it meant the accepted right and power of the country to change and replace political systems. The exercise of such right and power, Leavis thought, presupposed the existence of an intelligent, responsive and influential public.

But Leavis's metaphor of political democracy was not to serve him well. The actual affair of check and balance in a democratic state is, more often than not, an instrument in the hands of certain contending oligarchies and élites rather than a disinterested community. He himself was quick to recognize the fact. As it was, even in the most democratic conditions the aristocracy, the industrialists and finance-capitalists held sway. Whatever party was in office, the higher civil service in Leavis's time continued to be dominated by the upper classes. Both high politics and the diplomatic corps, too, were the traditional occupations of these classes. By the mid-1950s, also, journalism, publishing, films, radio, television and advertising had become their classic refuge; and even in
the 1960s society was in no way classless. Leavis also knew that different forms of oligarchies and élites did exist in the Welfare State of his time, and that even those who professed to do away with oligarchies themselves belonged to oligarchies. While he believed that "democracy ... won't function unless the community has a strong educated nucleus," he knew "the executive authority and power and the final processes of decision" were 'necessarily' vested in oligarchies and élites; but "it doesn't follow," he said, "that 'oligarchies' don't need to be kept aware that they are subject to criticism, check and control. Even good 'oligarchies' need that -- as good 'oligarchies' don't often need to be rudely reminded."41

This is how Leavis summarized his notion of the educated public in Nor Shall My Sword:

The educated public, even when it is called the educated class ... couldn't possibly be called an oligarchy, and, for all the hazy incitement of 'élitism' it should be obviously absurd to call it 'an élite'. It isn't a class, either, in the politico-economic sense commonly attached to that word ... The educated class or public, intelligently conceived, comprehends people of widely varied social position, economic self-interest and political standing .... Its importance, in fact, is conditioned by its lack of anything like ideological unity. When ... it is moved to indignation ... by one of those casual threats to human life which characterize our age of accelerating progress, that response tells because it so clearly transcends sectional interest or bias.
Ordinarily, the educated class presents its vital unity as essentially a matter of diversities — diversities that make it the public without which there couldn't be the creative differences. ... that maintain the livingness of cultural continuity. It is, in fact, the presence of the continuity; and that constitutes its unity.

... The human problem is complex and multiform: élites and oligarchies — and great men too — are necessary, but so is that which can check, control and use them, and, except as such a public, it can't exist — there is no other conceivable presence.42

Some confusion is introduced here by the word 'class'. Leavis had earlier referred to 'an educated class and an educated public' (emphasis mine) that had existed in Shakespeare's time; in view of his explanation that Shakespeare's art appealed at a number of levels of response, the phrase meant two different entities. When, again, he had referred to Arnold's concern with an 'educated class' dissociated from the idea of social privilege, he was speaking of a community of the educated which, in Arnold's times, still shared the education and manners of the governing class.43 But when he now spoke, in the passage just quoted, of the 'educated class or public' (again, emphasis mine) he betrayed an ambiguity of his attitude to its social status.

Though Leavis made it clear that this public lacked any ideological unity, he still insisted on its unity based on a sense of cultural continuity and a general aversion to the merely material. It was, after all, a 'spiritual
community the country needs as its mind and conscience'. The members of this community were to be the potential moulders of public opinion, on a healthy state of which depended the quality of executive activities and administrative decisions. But Leavis disapproved of all active participation in practical affairs on their part. In other words, he relegated their role to the purely superstructural level of society. Thus his educated public carefully excluded from its domain all men of practical affairs -- professionals, politicians, social reformers, trade union leaders and civil servants.

On the other hand, Leavis never thought of a radical change in the status quo of the social structure. Changes of significant nature, he thought, were essentially gradual and slow. Bentham's were to continue; science and its benefits were not to be shunned; and even élites and oligarchies, 'great men' and 'majority decisions' were 'necessary'. Industry, science and politics were to continue as they did; but somewhere, somehow, there had to be moderating forces, checking and controlling the exclusive, mechanical and reductive insistences on the merely material. By entertaining such a hope, Leavis was betraying an attitude analogous to the Liberal ideology in politics. (It is not entirely without relevance that he had subscribed to the Liberal election fund, and signed the Liberal candidate's
nomination paper. Thus, while he let the bourgeoisie to continue with their hegemony, he could allow his educated public mere ineffectual disinterestedness. Indeed, the coteries and elitist groups which Leavis so much detested were the hegemonic agencies of the establishment, with official power and authority vested in them, and with all the means of subjugating public opinion in their favour. Leavis's educated public would find it impossible to check and control these agencies unless, of course, it itself was a meaningful component in what Gramsci called the 'civil society'.

III

From 1972 the main preoccupations of Leavis were with 'Thought, Language and Objectivity' (this was the title of the first section in his book The Living Principle: 'English' as a Discipline of Thought, published in 1975). It was observed in the third chapter how Julien Benda, reacting to the political partisanship among modern intellectuals, had insisted on a philosophical disinterestedness on their part. Leavis's difference from Benda consists in his insistence on the kind of intelligence appropriate to the literary-critical training. Now, the disinterestedness that Benda expected of intellectuals implied an inclination
for objective or neutral knowledge. Leavis was mistrustful of such inclinations which he thought usually went hand in hand with mathematico-logical disciplines; and he strove for what he called 'non-specialist intelligence'. He believed that his educated public and its nucleus should have an adequate notion of such intelligence which could be achieved through intelligent engagement with literature. This section deals with his notion of the intellectual habits he expected of his cultural minority, the interrelatedness between these habits and the mathematico-logical craving for neutral knowledge, and the peculiar felicity of the literary-critical training to promote the kind of intellectual habit he so much valued.

Intelligence about the nature of thought and about the criteria of good thinking, Leavis insisted, was inseparable from intelligence about the nature of the subtle use of a language. Since "major creative writers are concerned with a necessary kind of thought" akin to such intelligence, the intellectual training of the educated public had to be based not on the theoretical or philosophical aspect of thought, but on the essential quality of thought embodied, for instance, in English literature. English was at the other extreme from Mathematics, and so the thought in question was "antithetically remote from Mathematics." Leavis, therefore, strove to emancipate his educated public from
"a routine conception of sound thought as controlled by la clarté and la logique", from "the kind of intellectual- ity that starts, as so much philosophical writing does, from a mathematico-logical assumption about the criteria of valid thought." 47

The history of Leavis's attitude to theoretical dis- positions can be traced to his reply to René Wellek when the latter had demanded explicit exposition and systematic defence of the former's ethical, philosophical and aesthetic choices implicit in his Revaluation. Later Leavis was to describe his stance as that of an 'anti-philosopher'. He made his attitude plain in 'Mutually Necessary', an article he wrote in reply to Michael Tanner's 'Literature and Philosophy', one of the group of articles published in the December 1975 issue of The New Universities Quarterly, where majority of contributors concentrated on The Living Principle. In his article Leavis envisaged fruitful relations between philosophy as emancipated from mathematico-logical addiction, and English at the senior level in a university -- relations that would generate a climate which would have educational consequences at the student level. 48 "Where the conditions were ideal," he had said in Nor Shall My Sword, "there might very well be a small group of students being helped by a qualified guide to appreciate the significance of Whitehead, Collingwood and Michael Polanyi. Such a group might be
itself a liaison group," bringing profit to both philosophy and English, because these philosophers represented "a line of creative thought that is clearly of major significance for non-specialist intelligence and sensibility." 

Leavis particularly stressed the bearings of Majorie Grene's philosophical writings on the kind of 'non-specialist intelligence' he wished his educated public to acquire. In the first section of The Living Principle, 'Thought, Language and Objectivity,' where he discussed the nature of this kind of intelligence in great detail, he made frequent references to the Chapter-6 of Grene's The Knower and The Known, 'Facts and Values'. There Grene criticized the antithesis between facts and values which represented the Cartesian-Newtonian world view -- the antithesis stressed by Andreski and later by Russell. Grene said that the antithesis, expressed as the dualism of matter and mind, the objective and the subjective, continued through Kant, and came to be represented in the modern linguistic philosophy (of the Wittgensteinians) by a distinction between statements of fact and statements of value. The dichotomy, she said, was formulated effectively by Ogden and Richards in their Meaning of Meaning, and further formulated by Richards in his Science and Poetry as scientific and pseudo-statements. Grene herself maintained that facts were not value-free but depended on individual judgements -- a thesis which showed
her affinity with her teacher Michael Polanyi. Leavis said, "Polanyi as an epistemologist insists that what for philosophers is 'mind' is 'there' only in individual minds, and that an individual mind is always a person's and a person has a body and a history. His mind is the mind of his body, and his body is the body of his mind. The dualism that has defeated so many epistemologies is eliminated here." The addiction to the dualism in the conventional discipline of philosophy debilitated the mind to challenge the Cartesian antithesis; therefore, "a radically different kind of training from the philosophic" made such a challenge "a duty, something intellectually incumbent." It was with this kind of profit in mind that Leavis recommended to his pupils a study of Grene's The Knower and the Known, her selection of Polanyi's essays, Knowing and Being and Coolingwood's The Idea of Nature.

This theory of knowledge that Leavis adduced was already a familiar phenomenon implicit in his thought about the nature of literary criticism which he now reaffirmed. "Analysis is a process of re-creation in response to the black marks on the page": "A judgement is personal and spontaneous, or it is nothing," but "The form of a judgement is 'This is so, isn't it?', the question asking for confirmation that the thing is so, but prepared for an answer in the form, 'Yes, but ---,' the 'but' standing for corrections,
refinements, precisions, amplifications." 52 Only in this way, for instance, a poem is 'established' among the readers and critics who 'possess' it in a collaborative participation. Discussing how a collaborative value judgement is arrived at in this way, Leavis said that "There is no such thing as neutral possession." 53

Analogically, for Leavis, neutral or objective knowledge was a mere chimera. The literary-critical training of intelligence and sensibility, leading to the essential habits of thought, belonged to what he called the 'Third Realm' — "the realm of that which is neither public in the ordinary sense nor merely private," a realm "in which the Human World is created and, in constant renewal, maintained." 54 (These were formulations that he had offered years earlier in the course of defining the nature of the literary-critical discipline.) It was in this pursuit of non-specialist intelligence, Leavis believed, that a mere aggregation of critics and readers became a homogeneous 'community' engaged in creative collaboration.

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Gramsci had said that there are two superstructural levels in every society, 'civil' and 'political', and that at the civil level hegemony of a social group or class is exercised through the ensemble of private bodies such as unions, pressure-groups and class-parties, whereas at the political level State's direct domination is exercised over dissenting groups through its judicial apparatus. In so far as intellectuals are the agents of certain values and ideas, trying to strengthen or subvert the existing power-structure in society for a better and fuller realization of these, it may be said that they too tend to form groups and exercise their hegemony in a similar way.

Viewed in this light, the cultural élite, as Leavis envisaged it, acquired a peculiar nature. As has been made clear in the foregoing chapters, his cultivated community had marked affinities with what Mannheim called the 'socially unattached' modern intelligentsia. Itself independent of the economic and political concomitants of social life, it was to perform its role in society by cultivating, fostering and propagating a certain kind of intellectual habit that was uninhibited by the material conditions of society.
What is still more peculiar about Leavis is that he hoped to subject a whole way of social life to the ameliorating forces of this cultural élite.

It has also been made clear that in this respect Leavis inherited the legacy represented by Coleridge and Carlyle, Newman and Arnold. These men of letters had emphasized philosophical and moral illumination as the mark of individual perfection; and they had considered individual perfection as the essential precondition for general social progress. In their anxiety to bring intellectual and moral amelioration to all sections of society, they often attributed certain functions to social classes and groups, extinct or prevailing, whose actual social nature they hardly realized.

In fact, in a class-society, where social classes and groups are bound to exist, a cultural élite of any kind has to be affiliated to some class or the other in the long run. But society, like culture, was an abstract entity for most of these thinkers. Neither Leavis nor his predecessors, therefore, saw the actual hegemonic nature of their cultural élites.

The mid-twentieth century saw an increasing centrality of the idea of 'common culture' (in the works of Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart, for instance) based on the
notion of participation of all social classes in the production and consumption of culture. But the recognition of the idea had come earlier from elitist quarters: it was T. S. Eliot who combined his concern for a common culture with considerations of social classes and groups. In his Notes towards the Definition of Culture (1948) he distinguished three senses of culture "according to whether we have in mind the development of an individual, of a group or class, or of a whole society." 1 "As society develops towards functional complexity and differentiation," he said, "we may expect the emergence of several cultural levels: in short, the culture of the class or group will present itself." 2 Connected with this idea of cultural levels was Eliot's notion of an organic relation between conscious and unconscious parts of a culture. What was not emphasized by 'men of letters and moralists,' he observed, was this sense of a 'total culture': "the way of life of a particular people living together in one place," the culture "made visible in their habits and customs, in their religion" 3 -- in short, in both the conscious and lived parts of their way of life.

There is something simplistic about the 'levels of culture'; the 'functional complexity', with its attendant implication of the attribution of certain functions to social classes, would hold good of a simple and primitive society,
but would be much less relevant to modern societies than Eliot would desire. But the idea was part of the notion of common culture in the early twentieth century. When Leavis talked of 'the genuine national culture' of Shakespeare's time, and of the various levels of response at which the playwright's art made its appeal, he was speaking, in effect, of the sophisticated and popular levels of culture. Like Eliot, too, he recognized that the unconscious or lived culture of a people formed a large part of their total culture; but he was neither persistent nor very clear about its correspondence to the conscious part of culture. He believed that the correspondence was manifest in the organic communities of the past; but he transformed it into his idea of 'cultural continuity'. The 'unconscious' part of the total culture had become in him a matter of conscious cultivation. A kind of homogeneity existed, according to him, among different levels of culture in the past. In course of time a split appeared between them; and a growing insulation of these levels in modern times had made possible the creation of high-brow, middle-brow and low-brow cultures. When Leavis came to talk of a collaborative apprehension of contemporary sensibility which was to accrue from the critical exchanges between the core-élite and the educated public, he seemed to have abandoned the idea of the lived part of culture. In fact, he had created his own paradigms of the merely conscious levels of culture.
Eliot's other major concern in his book was to distinguish between 'class' and 'élite'. He was quick to recognize that many members of an élite group occupied situations "for which neither their character nor their intellect qualified them," just as a large number of members of a social class were always conspicuously deficient in culture." Eliot rejected Mannheim's reference to 'blood' and 'property' as the distinct principles of selecting élites in the aristocratic and bourgeois societies, and 'achievement' as the criterion in modern societies dominated by élites. His contention was that Mannheim was confusing élites with classes. A society dominated by élites rather than classes was a mere chimera. Historically, too, there was no evidence about the perpetuation of government by an élite, although it is true that certain élites could serve society well in times of crisis, and for a short while. But he observed that in societies with even the sharpest class-divisions, on the other hand, there always existed an élite. Therefore both class and élite must exist in society, Eliot thought, with some overlapping and constant interaction between them. But then he did not appear to notice the fact that each class in society has its own élite or élites; and so he soon reverted to the idea of 'the élite'. The following lines from Eliot's book present his central thesis:
I think that in the past the repository of culture has been the élite, the major part of which was drawn from the dominant class of the time, constituting the primary consumers of the works of thought and art produced by the minority members, who will have originated from various classes including that class itself. The units of this majority ... who compose the nucleus of the cultural élite must not thereby be cut off from the class to which they belong, for without their membership of that class they would not have their part to play. It is their function, in relation to the producers, to transmit the culture which they have inherited; just as it is their function, in relation to the rest of their class, to keep it from ossification ....

It is the function of the superior members (of this class) ... to preserve the group culture, as it is the function of the producers to alter it.

In an élite composed of individuals who find their way into it solely for their individual preeminence, the differences of background will be so great, that they will be united only by their common interests, and separated by everything else. An élite must therefore be attached to some class, whether higher or lower: but so long as there are classes at all it is likely to be the dominant class that attracts this élite to itself.5

The constitutional similarities between Eliot's élite and Leavis's cultivated community are striking; but the dissimilarities accrue chiefly from their response to class-theory and power-structure. Eliot was right in attaching his élite to the dominant class; but like all the thinkers in the élitist tradition he believed in a correspondence between 'class' and 'function'. So he believed in 'the élite' rather than in a plurality of élites.
But Leavis, like Mannheim, appeared to believe that society is primarily dominated and governed by élites alone; and his particular concern, like Eliot's, was 'the élite', a literary-intellectual community which he placed outside all social classes, and which he set above all other élites. Towards the end of his career he came to recognize the necessity, and even the inevitability of these other élites which were attached to the dominant class. There were, for instance, the administrative and executive élites at the political level of social superstructure; and then there were the official academic and literary coteries as well as other ideological élites comprising educationists, humanists and progressivists at the civil level. These élites were, Leavis thought, 'inevitable'; but they needed to be, if not replaced, checked and controlled by an intellectual élite. By contending that his cultivated community would have to mediate between these élites and the masses, he came very near to saying what Gramsci had observed about the formation of organic intellectuals. But Gramsci's intellectuals, like his élites and masses, belonged to a particular class in society; Leavis's community belonged to none.

This explains the Scrutiny movement's repeated failures to effectively rally such a community. In fact, the
teachers in schools and universities had, for a time, formed their pressure-groups; but since these had no class-affiliation and thus provided no effective hegemonic apparatus at the civil level of society, the movement soon gave way to the bourgeois scheme of things.

Thus, the kind of common culture that Leavis strove to achieve through his cultural élite was no more common than Eliot's common culture based on the idea of a rigid preservation of social classes. As it was, Leavis's cultural élite was just another coterie, subject to the same criticism as he had made of the literary and academic worlds.

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