

EDITORIAL

The age-old issue of freedom *versus* control has entered a new stage in our era. Many critics have described and denounced the prevailing external control of our activities and resources, and particularly the ideological indoctrination and psychological manipulation to which we are subject through the mass media. Modern science has discovered and developed a vast repertoire of techniques which can be used to control and manipulate mind and behavior. The question: "Who controls the controller?" becomes especially crucial when man's freedom of consciousness is at stake.

We can no longer accept the notion of a value-free science or espouse a naive optimism with regard to scientific and technological progress. We need to complement our technical skill in controlling the external world with a corresponding development of our inner resources. The adulation of sheer technique, scientific and economic-technological accomplishments, organizational skill and bureaucratization lead to the sacrifice of the unique individual and to the rejection of the validity of subjective experience. The intuitive, comprehensive, direct awareness of the essential unity of phenomena, and a sense of the interrelatedness of self and world, have been neglected and allowed to suffer. Cessation of function leads to atrophy of organ.

There are, however, many groups within our culture who are trying to call man back to himself. In psychology, for instance, there is a trend which pleads for a "humanistic revolution," away from behaviorism and biological-drive models toward a consideration of values and self-directed goals in human motivation. There is the powerful existential orientation both in philosophy and in psychiatry, which is beginning to make an impact in our society with its call for authentic existence, personal freedom, individual responsibility and self-determination. The unique individual is being rediscovered and the legitimacy of subjective experience affirmed.

Such a return to an inward orientation is not by any means new. Throughout history there have been attempts to reestablish the kind of direct relationship to the world which is celebrated in the myths of Paradise. From Plato's parable of the cave to Hesse's

Journey to the East, Western philosophers have written of experiences which go beyond our everyday shadowy perception and disclose with startling force a direct vision of reality. The quest for this experience and the awareness of its implications is far more highly developed in the East than in the West; hence the program has often been stated in terms of unifying the Eastern and Western approaches. Discerning men have stressed over and over that we have much to learn from the two great cultures of the East: India with its highly differentiated practical understanding of different states of consciousness; and China with its superbly developed sensitivity to the complexities and nuances of social interaction.

The synthesis of consciousness-expanding substances, which we regard as one of the most outstanding achievements of technological society, has now provided us with a means for transcending and overcoming many of the distortions which operate in the very society that has brought about such substances. It is now possible to affirm the general character of our social technocracy without succumbing to its totalitarian demands. The creation and furtherance of internal freedom for large numbers of people through the intelligent use of psychedelic substances are now a practical reality. Julian Huxley has predicted that the further evolution of man will not be biological but will take place in the noölogical or psychic dimension. He has drawn an analogy between the exploration of outer space and the exploration of inner space on the basis of the recent advances in the pharmacology and chemistry of consciousness.

These modern substances are but the synthetic equivalents of mind-changing plants and potions that have been known for thousands of years. Through them we now have powerful aids on the inward journey, a new key to the doors of perception, new access to the ancient problems of identity and reality. We therefore take as our motto the saying attributed to Heraclitus: "You would not find out the boundaries of the psyche, even by traveling along every path; so deep is its measure and meaning."

A systematic study needs to be made of the various ways, ancient and modern, which man has used to expand his consciousness. Many religions have used sacred foods in their central rites. In this issue, R. Gordon Wasson's article on the sacred mushroom of Mexico tells of his rediscovery of this central element in Mexican religious life. In subsequent issues we hope to publish reviews of our present knowledge of naturally occurring psychedelic substances and plants.

What can modern science tell us about consciousness-expanding techniques? A review of the literature on the pharmacology of the psychedelic substances appears in this issue. Since this literature is vast, only studies on the chemical and biochemical level are reviewed; subsequent papers will review physiological and psychological aspects. Others are planned on the effects of deprivation on consciousness — fasting, sensory isolation and sleep deprivation. Hypnosis, autogenic training, yoga breathing, zen meditation are other examples of Western and Eastern methods for altering consciousness and controlling the mind.

Historical studies are needed tracing the evolution of interest in altered states of consciousness and the role this has played in the evolution of culture. Gottfried Benn's essay in this issue is a first attempt to sketch a historical picture. Other essays are planned on the history of psychiatric research with psychedelic substances; on changing cultural attitudes toward mysticism and psychosis; and on related themes.

Philosophical studies exploring the epistemological and metaphysical implications of increased flexibility of consciousness are needed. Alan Watts' essay on the philosophical problems arising out of the possibility of increased control over mind delineates one of the major themes. Psychological studies are planned, attempting to explore problems in personality structure, motivation and perception, using insights derived from psychedelic experiences. Also, descriptions of psychedelic experiences in psychological terms and attempts to devise new models for communicating altered states of consciousness will be discussed. We present, in this issue, a summary of four recent studies of the subjective after-effects of psychedelic drug-experiences. Original research reports and theoretical articles on different aspects of psychedelic research will appear in future issues.

In the lives and work of artists and writers and in the aesthetic sphere in general, visionary experience has often played a significant role. In the 19th Century French Symbolist movement, for example, the consumption of hashish was pervasive and influential. Many individual artists from Thomas De Quincey to William Burroughs have used drugs in one way or another to shape their creative vision. Studies of the associations between drugs and creativity are anticipated.

The classical literature describing the interior journey will be discussed and reviewed. In this issue we present a brief extract from

Plato on the use of consciousness-altering drugs, where he proposes a kind of psychological immunization. This idea has much relevance to the current controversy over the "psychotomimetic" property of psychedelic substances.

Each issue will also include publication of one or two subjective accounts of transcendent experiences, spontaneous or induced. These will come from a wide variety of sources, from artists, writers, scientists, laymen, students and teachers. The aim is to make available to the general reader first-hand accounts of the kinds of experiences which the articles in this journal discuss. George Andrews' "Annihilating Illumination" is an account in poetic form of an experience with mescaline.

Our lead article, by Gerald Heard, appears in *Horizon Magazine* [Vol. V, No. 5, May, 1963] and is reprinted by permission. The accompanying declamatory statements, "pro" and "con," by Dr. Sidney Cohen and the Southern California Psychiatric Society, respectively, are omitted.

Mr. Wasson's article, "The Hallucinogenic Fungi of Mexico: An inquiry into the Origins of the Religious Idea among Primitive Peoples," is presented in its complete version, except for the Appendix listing the Mexican hallucinogenic mushrooms. It is taken from the *Harvard Botanical Museum Leaflets*, Vol. 19, No. 7, 1961.

The Editors invite suggestions and ideas for *The Psychedelic Review*.