The Disobedient Generation

SOCIAL THEORISTS IN THE SIXTIES

Edited by Alan Sica and Stephen Turner
just before the World Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. This ended up being the basis for my first edited book but, more important, my ticket to the congress itself, a huge academic blow-out that had aspects of a farewell to the Sixties. Sol Tax organized it right over the top, with not one but fifty edited volumes, and even an open commission from Giancarlo Menotti: *Tamu-Tamu* (The guests) polemically juxtaposed foreign war and domestic security. The Native American activist Vine Deloria was invited to give the opening speech. Drinking late one night, he told me he finally understood why anthropologists were always out bothering Indians: they didn't like to be with each other unless they were drunk.

I got a master's from Columbia's anthropology program without ever really connecting. I sampled all manner of interesting offerings around the university, from Jacques Barzun to Robert Denoon Cumming, and found myself drawn more and more to sociology. Indeed, when my alternate service ended, I briefly stayed on at Columbia as Peter Blau's research assistant, running many a multiple regression for the Comparative Organizations Research Program. I learned a great deal from Robert Nisbet and Ben Zablocki and even more from Robert Merton, with whom I started discussing a potential dissertation: making national differences in anthropology an object of the sociology of science.

Columbia was suffering a post-Sixties fatigue. Still intellectually rich, its older generation was wary of the younger ones and, relatedly, finding it hard to renew the faculty. Radical politics was receding; while I remember getting summoned away from beer and jazz at the West End for a "riot at the Sundial," streaking was displacing demonstrating. Nevertheless, a variety of political sects survived on the university's fringes. Lyndon LaRouche (then calling himself Lynn Marcus) had been expelled from the SDS but reinvinted its Labor Caucus as the National Caucus of Labor Committees. They sold *New Solidarity* on Broadway, attacked Leftists of other factions; and decried a conspiracy mounted by the National Caucus of Labor Committees. They sold *New Solidarity* on Broadway, attacked Leftists of other factions; and decried a conspiracy mounted by the Rockefeller family, the inventors of Muzac, and the Columbia anthropology department (where a former lover of LaRouche's had enrolled). Like all paranoids, LaRouche saw himself at the center; diagrams in *New Solidarity* graphically represented how nearly all of the global power structure was organized mainly to get at the National Caucus of Labor Committees. My friends and I wondered whether he was simply crazy or backed by the Central Intelligence Agency or both. But the real puzzle was that he had perhaps a thousand followers—some loyal enough that when one young woman tried to quit they took her prisoner for "deprogramming." One of the failings of the Sixties was that such people were taken too seriously by too many for too long.

I was still searching for something, perhaps a better connection among the intellectual, the political, and the personal. England and anthropology still had an allure, and Max Gluckman and I had stayed in touch. He taught for a term at Yale and this gave ample opportunities for visits. On one, we attended a memorable very-Sixties event, a performance of the Living Theater. It was Mary Gluckman who really wanted to go. Max was impatient from the outset (and in truth, the Julian Beck/Judith Malina formula had gotten a bit stale). So when, in one of the troop's post-Brechtian agitprop set pieces a young woman, wearing only some dirty rags, ran up to Max and shouted "Am I your slave?" Max rose to his full and considerable height and yelled back "Not I'm bloody well yours, but no longer." With that he headed for the door. Making one of the career changing decisions that seemed to come up a lot those days, I followed. Max said he would arrange funding for me in Manchester.

Manchester social anthropology was a somewhat more critical, conflict-oriented stream within the broad current of British social anthropology to which Sally Moore had introduced me. This which was just coming under attack for its complicity in colonialism and obscuring of the role of the colonial state in constituting the societies studied. The attacks had some purchase but not nearly as much as the attackers thought. If social anthropology had sometimes hypothesized the "peoples" studied—if, for example, Edward Evans-Pritchard's brilliant accounts of the Nuer made them seem more autonomous and self-contained than they were—it also produced substantial internal critical analysis of just this issue. Godfrey Lienhardt's study of the neighboring Dinka raised questions about that of E.-P.'s of the Nuer. Jack Goody challenged the idea of discrete "tribes" before that rejection became fashionable, showing how language, ritual, and identity varied along a sociogeographic continuum in Northern Ghana, free of sharp borders. And indeed, Meyer Fortes's extraordinary research on the Tallensi had at the least foreshadowed this point a generation earlier (and in doing so brought to the fore the concept of a social field). Social anthropology had also produced major studies of "premodern" states—S. F. Nadel's *Black Byzantium* and M. G. Smith's extraordinary series of studies of the Hausa-Fulani kingdoms, for example—and Gluckman had long stressed both the importance of historical perspective and the interrelationship of colonial state and local social relations. Indeed, he was in the forefront of arguing that anthropologists were concerned with