

moment. Yet Roszak, by seeming to field one counter-argument, has slipped out of the net of much the most powerful one: that these experiments are products of, not alternatives to, the culture in which they marginally subsist. I once visited a commune in Massachusetts where a dozen people were living in a half-built Buckminster Fuller dome in the woods. A crudely carved sun-god was cut into the door; an antique shotgun was propped beside it. The communards were boiling up cans of La Choy chinese vegetables on an ancient wood-burning stove. Their children had names like Aquarius and Tuesday Morning. They were, said the enthusiastic student who had taken me to visit them, 'really into self-sufficiency'. I inquired into the economics of the dome. The women, in their late twenties, were still getting handsome allowances from their fathers; the men were all on welfare. Everyone was a college graduate. To keep this dream of *Whole Earth Catalog*-living afloat, tax lawyers in Los Angeles, harassed government executives in Washington and high-cholesterol bond salesmen in New York were working overtime.

My example is an extreme, perhaps a cruel one. Many communes have a less exaggeratedly dependent relationship on their industrial host society. None, as yet, though, are 'alternative' to it, any more than the *NEW STATESMAN* is an 'alternative' to *The Press*. The word is simply being misused in a basic violation of the categories of language.

Such lacunae belong only in the rhetoric of religious transcendence. Professor Roszak was brought up as a Catholic; he has merely swapped a theology of great intricacy and conscious paradox for a simpler, louder, fundamentalist creed. For 'soul' read 'person'; for 'Original Sin' read 'History'; for 'salvation' read 'salvation', but pronounce it in the swooning bass accent of the Californian TV-gospeller. But regard with scepticism any prophet who comes among you describing an earthly paradise in which society and the individual 'work together in a supportive and symbiotic relationship'. The vision of Aquinas is to be infinitely preferred.

Walter Kaufmann

Authentic

A Study of Nietzsche by J. P. STERN Cambridge £9.75

This book might be a little better if the author had done more outside reading instead of copying once again his own work. 'A shortened version of this *Study* has appeared in the Fontana Modern Masters series,' says the author in his preface. In fact much of the *Study* duplicates, word for word, the paperback of 1978. The review of that book in the *TLS* pointed out that 'every single chapter, with the apparent exception of Chapter 4, in part repeats previously published material, either verbatim or nearly so. The result,' said the reviewer, is 'a scissors-and-paste discontinuity'. When the author took exception to this statement, the reviewer documented his charges in detail and added that one of the

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sources of *Nietzsche*, an earlier Stern book, had been criticised in the *TLS* in 1971 because 'Dr Stern had regrettably chosen "to take over verbatim, or with only slight verbal alteration - and without special acknowledgment" passages of a still earlier Stern book. Still, this *Study* is not merely an expanded version of the paperback *Nietzsche*, which costs £1.00 instead of £9.75; the pieces have been rearranged a bit, and the overall tone is less hostile to Nietzsche.

In his own way, Professor Stern lives dangerously. He writes about areas in which he is not by any means at home. But repetition may ease his sense of unfamiliarity. In 1975 he published a book on German history that represented an act of extraordinary daring, considering the state of his knowledge of the subject. He actually claimed that the Great Elector, who reigned 1640-88, was the 'draconic father' (rather than the great-grandfather) of Frederick the Great (born 1712, reigned 1740-86). The Nietzsche books are also full of errors and display a striking lack of philosophical sophistication.

This lack would not have to be a crippling defect. Two of the most perceptive critiques of Heidegger have been written by men who were professors of German literature like Stern; but Robert Minder dealt with Heidegger's language in his less technical writings, and Walter Muschg with his attempts at literary criticism. Stern concentrates on Nietzsche's philosophy.

On the first page we are urged 'to abandon a number of traditional distinctions: between literature and philosophy, between formal, published statements and informal notes,

between life and work'. The results of ignoring the first and the last of these distinctions should be obvious. Regarding the second, Nietzsche insisted repeatedly - for example, in the prefaces to *Dawn* and *Genealogy* - that his books should be read with close attention to the context. Stern refuses to do this, as a matter of principle.

He also fails to make clear the meaning of his central concepts. On the rare occasions when definitions are offered, they are unhelpful. *Ressentiment* is explained as 'a reactive grudgingness whose endless, "eternal" chronicle is all of human history' (p.120 = *Nietzsche*, p. 82). 'Authenticity is the deliberate coincidence of what a man is with that he can become' (p.115 = *Nietzsche*, p.77). A whole chapter is devoted to authenticity, which is alleged to be one of the central ideas of Nietzsche. Stern never mentions that he has not found a single passage in which it is mentioned. In fact, Nietzsche's elaborate and fascinating philosophy of masks stands opposed to the existentialist cult of 'authenticity'. But the many passages about masks are simply ignored, along with Nietzsche's repeated claim that he was a psychologist.

Stern makes much of his own Christianity and of Nietzsche's allegedly untenable critique of Christianity, but fails to mention Nietzsche's most important criticisms. First, Nietzsche offered a 'psychology of faith' from which Stern rather drastically misquotes part of one sentence (p. 117 = *Nietzsche*, p. 79) before he projects into section 54 of *The Antichrist* a 'pathos of personal authenticity' that allegedly 'was the chief tenet of fascism and national socialism. No man came closer to

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the full realisation of self-created "values" than A. Hitler.' Actually section 54 denounces people like Hitler and the Nazis unequivocally, and in the next section, which begins 'One step further in the psychology of conviction', we read: 'Of necessity, the party man becomes a liar' and 'An anti-Semite is not any means more decent because he lies as a matter of principle.'

Secondly, Nietzsche charged Christianity with *ressentiment*. Stern says (p. 147 = Nietzsche, p. 96) that Nietzsche 'merely denies - he does not attempt to disprove - a loving and merciful God, and Christ as the son of that God'. But Nietzsche produced evidence to show that the Christian God was not loving and merciful but exceedingly cruel. Stern does not mention hell. And presumably he himself merely denies and does not attempt to disprove the existence of Shiva or Aphrodite, or Heracles as the son of Zeus. His own notions of proof and disproof seem odd. In the very next sentence philosophical Idealism is 'disproved' once again as 'the same solipsist-idealist trap'. A couple of pages earlier Nietzsche is reproached for saying 'next to nothing about the *pietas loci* which (as Hölderlin's poems show) is an essential part of the Gospels ...' This piece of one-upmanship hardly suggests a very subtle understanding of proof or argument.

Stern's main criticism of Nietzsche is, nevertheless, that he was not a sufficiently consecutive thinker and that his arguments are often inadequate. It is hardly news that Nietzsche rarely offered careful, old-fashioned arguments, but Stern keeps suggesting that he himself has arguments. This is one of the oddest features of this book. The many sentences that have no recognisable meaning do not help. On p. 153 we are suddenly brought up short by the startling dictum: 'Here the lure of ontology is irresistible: *Christ simply is*.' The context does not help.

Stern makes much of Nietzsche's failure to keep valuations out of descriptions. Yet he himself repeatedly refers to the 'lurid' phrase that 'God is dead.' Elsewhere Nietzsche says, 'You shall become that you are.' ('That' instead of 'what' or 'who' is a solecism Stern repeats whenever he quotes this adage.) I pointed out in 1950, as he mentions in a footnote, that this formulation was inspired by Pindar's *genoi hoios essi*. Nietzsche did not mention Pindar in this connection, except in a letter, 15 years earlier. That does not keep Stern from speaking of Nietzsche's 'egregious reading of Pindar' (p. 148). And a page later we are told that 'Freud invented in the early 1930s' the death drive. 'Introduced' would have been a more neutral term, but Stern wants us to know what he thinks of Freud, although he does not know that Freud introduced this idea in 1920, or that Freud's book on religion is *The Future of an Illusion* (not *The End of an Illusion*).

Stern's detailed misrepresentation of Nietzsche's relationship to Lou Solomé is due to the fact that he has not done his homework. Otherwise he would not keep saying that she later married a Protestant theologian, when in fact Fred Charles Andreas was an erudite Orientalist and Zarathustra specialist, a professor with weak eyes who was much older than she was, and only two years younger than Nietzsche. He called himself Charles, she called him Fred. But I lack the space to catalogue all the mistakes that should be kept out of future versions of this material.

Michael Harloe

Urban Scapegoats

Urban Poverty in Britain by JAMES H. TREBLE
Batsford £12.50

The Politics of Urban Change by DAVID H. MCKAY and ANDREW W. COX *Croom Helm*
£11.50 and £5.50

Urban Deprivation and the Inner City edited by Colin Jones *Croom Helm* £9.95

Living Cities by GEORGE TREMLETT *Temple Smith* £7.75

Urban Politics: A Sociological Interpretation by PETER SAUNDERS *Hutchinson* £12.50

Most of us live in cities and like to complain about them. They are squalid, congested, impersonal and violent places. Such themes can be found in literature and popular comment from the earliest days of urban society. But a second theme is also present, for cities have also been seen as centres of opportunity, culture and 'progress'. Ideas about urban policies have reflected these themes of poverty and progress in ways which have changed over time. The Depression had focused attention on the growth of the big cities, especially London, and the decline of older, industrial towns and regions. After the war planning policies sought to restrict the growth of the conurbations and disperse population to smaller, supposedly more human settlements. The aim was to restrain urban growth, to prevent the big cities from draining all power, wealth and culture from elsewhere. Less notice was taken of the fact that these supposedly prosperous areas also contained a mass of low-income households living in a deprived environment. The poor - it was thought - would benefit from dispersal too.

Recently, however, these policies have been under attack and are now largely discredited. Suddenly urban poverty and the 'inner city problem' is news. The reasons for this shift of emphasis are arguable, but the big cities, far from being centres of opportunity whose remaining problems of poverty and bad housing are withering away under the influence of beneficent policies, are now seen to be dying. Pictures in the colour supplements show elegant wastelands of dereliction; journalists investigate the Stalinist excesses of architects and local officialdom; and politicians construct a heady rhetoric which mixes race, violence and unemployment as equal constituents of disorder. So a new orthodoxy emerges: encourage small business in the cities, co-ordinate planning and reduce bureaucracy, try to persuade the better-off not to flee to the suburbs and so on. If one set of policies fails, try another.

Yet, will it all really make much difference? One way of answering what ought to be an important question is to explore the material underpinning of the two faces of the city which have so dominated our consciousness. Too close a focus on anything produces blurred vision, and if our universe of thought about cities is bounded by our policies for them, the political and economic forces which mould the urban scene will remain indistinct. Such myopia is not just a product of ignorance, however, for policies are generated

within a set of assumptions about what is and is not important, about the limits of change and the interests to be given priority, and those which must - regrettably perhaps - bear the costs. To step beyond policies to issues of power and economics is to open up dangerous ground. Better by far to put the blame on the surface phenomena of previous policies, and to construct a new and equally superficial version of what needs to be done, than to expose the deeper foundations of urban decline.

Four of the five books reviewed here are concerned with urban policy in Britain today; three of them reflect the contemporary concern with the inner city. But James Treble's study of urban poverty in the 19th century, the most comprehensive and scholarly account yet published, provides an interesting contrast. Capitalist growth and development produced the two-faced city of Victorian England - rising incomes and a better standard of life for some, but low pay, unemployment and poverty for many others. Circumstances have changed today, but the underlying reality is much the same. There are parallels too between the difficulties that the Victorians had in understanding this fact and present-day confusions. Just as informed Victorian opinion believed that deplorable urban conditions were the product of the moral failings of the individual, today we often blame the moral failings of previous policies.

George Tremlett's book is an extreme example of this latter tendency on the part of one who is concerned to advertise and justify the urban policies now being implemented by many Conservative local authorities. In 1977 Tremlett became leader of the Greater London Council Housing Committee. He stopped all council house building in the suburbs and cut it back in the inner city, making a determined attempt to reduce the Council's involvement in housing to one of supporting the private market and encouraging owner-occupation. His analysis of what is wrong with the inner city concentrates almost exclusively on blaming previous policies, especially those which involved large-scale council house building. Apparently the inner cities have been covered with municipal estates and, by a process that is never really explained, blight and urban disorder have inevitably followed. Nor was the practice of some cities in building suburban housing any better: that simply left the inner city to the poor and the blacks (about the latter Mr Tremlett seems to be a liberal, though he worries about the problems they cause - unless, presumably, they are owner-occupiers). But this is all mere demonology, a quite unconvincing attempt to explain urban ills in terms of municipal housing policies. Nor is it strengthened by the startling observation, two-thirds of the way through the book, that housing is *not* the main cause of inner city decline; it is economics, a truth which shoots across the author's vision only to disappear as rapidly as it appeared, without materially affecting his diagnosis.

McKay and Cox make a more serious