

The Circle of Violence Rolls On

Stellan Lindqvist, on the culture page on October 21 (1995), writes: Fascism must be eradicated by force and by political and cultural superiority; his solution is similar to the "fascist final solution" that he, together with the philosopher Umberto Eco, considers to be one of the characteristics of fascism.

Lindqvist is right when he says that the keys to society's dilemma must be sought far beyond what we see. But does he know what's hiding out there in the darkness? He says that we must seek the roots and power of fascism (and violence) in history. But history has no power of its own. The power lies in the living, and history lies in the experience gathered in our writings and memories.

Despite this access to human experience, we learn little from the past. Why do we falsify history and use it to justify our need for violence and war? Why has humanity failed in all its attempts at moral and social reform, from Judaism to Christianity to socialism? If we do not find the solution to this riddle, we will wander around in this vicious and bloody circle in our fight against "evil."

Lindqvist is right when he says that fascism seeks a holy grail. But somewhere inside us, we are all, consciously or unconsciously, driven by the myth of a lost land and pure primordial state.

The paradox is that we, who seek this ourselves, close the door to it while, simultaneously, we forcibly try to break down the door (and possibly the whole world) to regain "Lost Paradise."

It is said that there are genes that induce insanity and violence. If one day, in our fight against fascism, we find ways to eradicate unwanted genes through genetic manipulation, we will create a peaceful world. A world without van Gogh. Without geniuses, without power, a world that dies not by violence but by resignation.

Throughout the ages, great empires have been created by the sword. They have thrived, expanded, oppressed their enemies, and eventually degenerated and collapsed.

The world was bigger in the past, and somewhere, there was always a niche of hope for the oppressed. Out of these niches grew new empires in search of the Holy Grail.

Today, the world is small, and the niche of hope that can remain deep in our souls is encapsulated in society's dream of welfare and Virtual Reality.

But those on the fringes, on the periphery of the good life, those who experience the meaninglessness and isolation, continue to seek the Grail. These individuals can become active fascists.

The rest of us are passive fascists, and we hate active fascists. As Lindqvist says: How can we calmly drink our white wine and eat our shrimps when they disturb our unconscious and our belief in welfare, democracy, police control, and that "moderation is best"?

When the "moderate-is-best-citizen" gets neurotic symptoms and seeks therapy, it is my job to get them to experience the fascism in themselves. When patients dare to face this side of themselves, they have made a big step towards health.

In the sense that the fascist is conscious of his desire to kill, the fascist is healthier than the everyday man. The difference between the two is – and it is not insignificant – that my

patients experience the fascist within them as sick and that they can control it. The fascist, on the other hand, feels that he is healthy and fully entitled to kill.

We are born in a primordial state of purity and freedom. When somehow this freedom is taken away from us, we become fascists. Since time immemorial, our civilizations have deprived their children of contact with themselves.

Wise men have said that "God is within yourself." One of the oldest scriptures found in Mesopotamia reads, "My God has forsaken me and is gone."

How should our society be planned so that our great-grandchildren will one day be able to drink from the Grail?

Bruno Adler, psychologist MS, and psychotherapist, specializes in psychosomatic diseases.