
by Roger Kimball

The eighth in a series titled “Reflections on a cultural revolution”

From the beginning it was pointless to argue about the sincerity of Radical Chic. Unquestionably the basic impulse, “red diaper” or otherwise, was sincere. But, as in most human endeavors focused upon an ideal, there seemed to be some double-track thinking going on.

—Tom Wolfe, “Radical Chic”

He oscillated … between identification with the Communists and violent hostility towards them…. At every stage, however, he endeavored to preserve his own reputation as a “Leftist,” and even to represent himself and his philosophy as the embodiment of “Leftism” par excellence. Consequently, even when attacking the Communists and reviled by them he made a point of directing far more vehement attacks against the forces of reaction, the bourgeoisie, or the United States Government.

—Leszek Kolakowski, on Jean-Paul Sartre

The New York Review of Books occupies a special place in the annals of America’s cultural revolution. Plenty of other publications—Ramparts, for example, and Rolling Stone, The Village Voice, even old-left stalwarts like The Nation—played important roles in defining the counterculture and propagating its spirit and its ideas. Some of these publications were explicitly devoted to promoting the drug culture, rock music, and sexual “liberation”; most were infused with some version of adolescent political radicalism. As the Sixties wore on, all were “against the war” in Vietnam, suspicious (to say the least) of American power, entranced by the thought of their own higher virtue. But none commanded anything like the intellectual cachet that The New York Review enjoyed and, to a lesser extent, continues to enjoy among the left-liberal intelligentsia. And none was, at that critical moment in the Sixties, quite so effective—or quite so pernicious—in helping to institutionalize the gospel of political radicalism among America’s intellectual elite.

It is a curious story. The New York Review was the brainchild largely of Jason Epstein, the publishing wunderkind who created the distinguished paperback lines of Anchor Books at Doubleday and Vintage Books at Random House. By the late 1950s, the need for a serious, general-interest review was patent. The novelist and essayist Elizabeth Hardwick, who was then married to Robert Lowell and who went on to become advisory editor at The New York Review, summed up the received feeling in “The Decline of Book Reviewing,” which Harper’s published in 1959:

Sweet, bland commendations fall everywhere upon the scene; a universal, if somewhat lobotomized, accommodation reigns. A book is born into a puddle of treacle; the brine of hostile
criticism is only a memory. Everyone is found to have “filled a need,” and is to be “thanked” for something and to be excused for “minor faults in an otherwise excellent work.”

As Philip Nobile put it in Intellectual Skywriting, his intermittently hagiographic history of the first ten years of The New York Review,[1] “everybody talked about a new book review, but nobody did anything about it.”

The necessary spur came during the 114-day printers’ strike in 1962–63. The strike shut down all the major New York newspapers, including The New York Times and the Herald Tribune, whose book pages, along with those of The Saturday Review, constituted the main sources of book reviews and, not incidentally, the chief venues for book advertising. (Looking back on the reviewing scene in The New York Review’s second issue in the summer of 1963, Edmund Wilson remarked that “the disappearance of the Times Sunday book section at the time of the printers’ strike only made us realize it had never existed.”) Although Epstein’s association with Random House precluded his being the editor of the contemplated new book review, his energy, connections, and organizational acumen brought The New York Review into being. It was a fateful stroke that led him to appoint the precocious Robert B. Silvers as editor. (Epstein’s wife, Barbara, has been co-editor from the beginning, but it was always Silvers who imparted to the Review much of its intellectual and nearly all of its ideological sheen.)

Then in his early thirties, Silvers had been working as an editor at Harper’s since 1959. Having graduated from the University of Chicago in 1947 (after just two-and-a-half years), Silvers sampled Yale Law School for a few semesters before joining the U.S. Army, which posted him to an intelligence job in Paris. In the mid Fifties, Paris was still Sartre’s Paris: a Paris in which—among intellectuals, anyway—anti-Americanism was as de rigueur as were brittle intellectual snobbery and left-wing politics. Silvers seems to have found it an intoxicating combination. After his stint in the army, he lingered in Paris for some six years, absorbing the atmosphere and working part of the time for George Plimpton’s newly launched Paris Review (to which he contributed an inconsequential interview with the novelist Françoise Sagan in 1956). When the Algerian conflict hotted up, French torture of Algerian prisoners became the topic du jour for all right-thinking (that is, left-leaning) intellectuals, and numerous first-hand accounts of atrocities were published, much to the consternation of the French authorities. (Of course, only details of atrocities committed by the French were wanted; atrocities committed by the Algerians were of little interest.) Sartre himself contributed a preface to one such contraband pamphlet, Henri Alleg’s La Question, thus conferring unimpeachable prestige on this mode of political activism. Silvers followed suit by translating La Gangrène, a grisly account by four Algerians of their torture in Paris at the hands of the French police.

I mention these details because the intellectual and political posture—indeed, even the social posture—of The New York Review clearly owes a great deal to Silvers’s extended holiday in Paris. By all accounts, Silvers is as shy of personal publicity as Sartre was addicted to it; and where Sartre was a graphomaniac who wrote and published millions of words, Silvers seems early on to have decided against writing. According to Philip Nobile, Silvers’s only published writing, apart from the two items mentioned above, is “A Letter to a Young Man About to Enter Publishing,” which ran, anonymously, in a supplement to Harper’s about “Writing in America” in 1959. But despite these differences, Sartre seems in many ways to have provided Silvers with his model of the chic modern intellectual: relentlessly haughty, cerebral, cliquish, at once socially ambitious and disdainful of society, ever in search of approved gauchiste “causes,” instinctively anti-American.

The trick was knowing how and when to mix these qualities—which to emphasize, which to obscure—and at this task Silvers quickly proved himself a master. In the beginning, highbrow elements, leavened by celebrity, predominated. The first, trial issue of The New York Review was cobbled together on short notice in the winter of 1963. The very bulk of the issue was a testament that its time had come. It contained forty-odd pieces, including F. W. Dupee on James Baldwin’s The Fire Next Time, Dwight Macdonald on Arthur Schlesinger’s The Politics of Hope, Philip Rahv (a founding editor of Partisan Review) on Solzhenitsyn’s One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Mary McCarthy on William Burroughs’s The Naked Lunch, and W. H. Auden on David Jones’s Anathemata; there were also reviews by Norman Mailer, Lionel Abel, Steven Marcus, Susan Sontag, Gore Vidal, and Alfred Kazin; Robert Penn Warren contributed a poem, Irving Howe wrote about The Partisan Review Anthology, while William Phillips, another founding editor of Partisan Review, wrote about Elias Canetti’s Crowds and Power. Richard Poirier wrote about Frank Kermode, William
Styron wrote about Frank Tannenbaum, Midge Decter wrote about recent novels, and Robert Jay Lifton wrote about Arata Ossada’s *Children of the A-Bomb*. Elizabeth Hardwick contributed two pieces, as did Robert Lowell (an obituary of Robert Frost, who had just died, and a poem) and John Berryman (a review of Auden’s *The Dyer’s Hand* and three “Dream Songs”).

By any measure, this was an extraordinary performance. It met, deservedly, with instant and widespread acclaim, generating more than a thousand letters. A second large issue was duly published in the summer, with only a modest falling off of celebrity, and *The New York Review* began regular fortnightly publication in the fall of 1963. Printed on newsprint (and described by some as “*Partisan Review* on butcher paper”), it instantly established itself as an indispensable journal of Left orthodoxy. At first, Silvers’s main innovation was the inclusion of ever greater numbers of English writers, especially titled writers; indeed, a pronounced Anglophilia became a comically defining characteristic of the journal.

The assassination of President Kennedy marked a turning point. *The New York Review* commemorated the event with a special issue in December 1963 “largely devoted to comments … about the present crisis in America.” One contributor to that issue noted that, “as might be expected, the assassination stimulated a good deal of cant.” Indeed. And that issue of *The New York Review* provided a home for a goodly amount of cant, although what turned out to be most significant was the tone of emergency that the journal adopted. Of course the mood of the nation following Kennedy’s murder did a great deal to encourage grim rhetorical histrionics. But as one looks back over the evolution of *The New York Review* through the 1960s and early 1970s, it is difficult to escape feeling that its editors regarded the assassination more as an existential tonic than as a tragedy; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they regarded it as a tragedy that was itself an existential tonic: a Sartrean flush of extremism that had hitherto been largely missing from *The New York Review*’s persona. In any event, with that issue a new element of radical left-wing political hectoring made its appearance in the journal’s pages. It became almost deafening as the Sixties wore on; it subsequently diminished, but that was only after elite opinion in this country had migrated markedly to the left—partly under the influence of twice-monthly manifestos emanating from *The New York Review*.

Kennedy’s assassination initiated a movement toward political fulmination, the Vietnam war precipitated a stampede. It was then, for example, that Noam Chomsky began contributing his lugubrious diatribes against American foreign policy, replete with such delicacies as his description of the Pentagon as “the most hideous institution on earth” (“On Resistance,” December 7, 1967). It was then, too, that Mary McCarthy filed her three-part report on the socialist paradise being prepared in North Vietnam and that I. F. Stone began bludgeoning readers with his interminable essays on the American military establishment (sample title: “The War Machine Under Nixon”), which read like neo-Stalinist equivalents of those multi-part articles on staple crops with which *The New Yorker* used to anesthetize its readers.

*The New York Review* never lost its taste for upper-class English dons, but in the mid Sixties the dons were joined by a more demotic element. Suddenly, political firebrands like Jerry Rubin, Stokely Carmichael, Andrew Kopkind, and Tom Hayden began appearing (Rubin, Carmichael, and Hayden once each, Kopkind with ten pieces). The nadir came with the notorious issue of August 24, 1967. Headlined “Violence and the Negro,” the cover announced in outsize type Kopkind’s piece on Martin Luther King and Black Power and Hayden’s report on the riots—what he called “The Occupation”—of Newark. Underneath was a large diagram instructing readers on the exact composition of a Molotov cocktail. (To his credit, the *Review*’s resident caricaturist David Levine, though a self-described “radical-socialist” who cheerfully supplied malevolently grotesque send-ups of President Nixon and other political figures, refused to provide a drawing of the incendiary device.)
It was about this time that even some of The New York Review’s ideological allies began having doubts about the direction that the journal was taking. The late Irving Howe, himself a socialist and founding editor of Dissent, noted scathingly in 1968 that the Review had managed to achieve “a link between campus ‘leftism’ and East Side stylishness, the worlds of Tom Hayden and George Plimpton.” Howe continued:

Opposition to communist politics and ideology is frequently presented in the pages of the New York Review as if it were an obsolete, indeed a pathetic, hangover from a discredited past or worse yet, a dark sign of the CIA. A snappish and crude anti-Americanism has swept over much of its political writing. . . And in the hands of writers like Andrew Kopkind … liberal values and norms are treated with something very close to contempt.

Howe was not the only former contributor to express alarm. The sociologist Dennis Wrong, who had appeared in The New York Review’s inaugural issue, wrote a lengthy and thoughtful piece on the journal for the November 1970 issue of Commentary. Noting, with basic approval, The New York Review’s early campaign against the Vietnam war, Wrong pointed out that

by 1966 and 1967 a new tone of extravagant, querulous, self-righteous anti-Americanism began to creep into the NYR’s reports on Vietnam, especially those of Noam Chomsky, Mary McCarthy, and I. F. Stone. The war seemed increasingly to provide the occasion for an extreme and bitter repudiation, marked by an unmistakable touch of Schadenfreude, of a great deal more in American life than the Johnson administration’s foreign policy, the Pentagon, the military-industrial complex, and the wretched clichés of cold-war propaganda.

The May 1971 Esquire went even further, predicting in a press note that “from among [The New York Review’s] authors the next Stalin, and his speechwriters, will emerge.” In Philip Nobile’s phrase, what began as “a literary proposition … infused with liberal politics” had become a “politicized platform of the radical Left.”

As Dennis Wrong suggested, although the Vietnam War occasioned much of The New York Review’s radicalism, the real target was not America’s policy about Vietnam but America itself. Indeed, anti-Americanism—a prominent feature in almost all countercultural rhetoric—became a major leitmotif, almost a unifying theme, in The New York Review. For example, Mary McCarthy traveled to Vietnam early in 1967 for The New York Review; she began the first installment of her report—the cover story for April 20—with this acknowledgement: “I confess that when I went to Vietnam early in February I was looking for material damaging to the American interest and that I found it, though often by accident or in the process of being briefed by an official.” In the course of her reports, McCarthy naturally places the phrase “Free World” in scare quotes and consistently portrays Americans as venal monstrosities (when she converses with a CIA agent, his “lips flexed as he spoke like rubber bands”). Glorifying the industry and pluck of the North Vietnamese, she tells her readers that the “sense of fair play” “has atrophied in the Americans here from lack of exercise.”

At the beginning of her second installment, McCarthy famously declared that “the worst thing that could happen to our country would be to win this war.” Years later, in 1979, after the horrific spectacle of the Vietnamese boat people and similar phenomena consequent on America’s losing that war, she was asked if she had changed her views on Vietnam. Noting that her ideal was still “socialism with a human face” (one might as well wish for a wooden iron), she nevertheless acknowledged that “as for my current views on Vietnam, it’s all rather daunting. I’ve several times contemplated writing a letter to [the Vietnamese premier] Pham Van Dong (I get a Christmas card from him every year) asking him can’t you stop this, how is it possible for men like you to permit what’s going on? … I’ve never written that letter, though.”
The combination of arrogance and naïveté implicit in McCarthy’s retrospective musings about Vietnam was a staple of The New York Review’s anti-Americanism. Jason Epstein provided a truly vertiginous example in an essay called “The CIA and the Intellectuals” (April 20, 1967). Following up on the revelation that the CIA had provided covert funding to some student and cultural organizations (including, most famously, Encounter magazine in England), Epstein’s piece was a meditation on how “organized anti-Communism had become as much an industry within New York’s intellectual life as Communism itself had been a decade or so earlier.” Among other things, “The CIA and the Intellectuals” was an early masterpiece of what came to be called “moral equivalence.” In one remarkable passage, Epstein writes that Stalin

not only purged and tortured his former comrades, killed millions of Russians, signed the pact with Hitler, and suppressed the writers and artists. He had also done something which directly affected their own lives, much as the CIA and the State Department have not only burned the crops and villages and peoples of Vietnam, but have also brought so much anguish into the lives of so many young people today. What Stalin did to the generation of intellectuals who came of age between the Thirties and Fifties was to betray the idealism and innocence of their youth. By perverting revolutionary Marxism, he cheated them, as it were, in their very souls.

Where to begin? Epstein concludes sadly that certain radical intellectuals, robbed of their Communist ideals by nasty Joe Stalin, devoted “the rest of their energies to retribution.” Hence, you see, the birth of Neoconservatism. It’s not simply that Epstein transforms a principled rejection of Communism into a psychological tic; he also insinuates an equivalence between the murderous behavior of Stalin and the activities of the American CIA. What Epstein does not see is that his friends who turned against Communism did so not because Stalin perverted “revolutionary Marxism” but because they finally understood that Stalinism was the natural fulfillment of revolutionary Marxism.

Epstein’s essay is notable for its exhibition of the way liberal disillusionment can be elevated into a kind of metaphysics of anti-Americanism:

The facts are clearer now than they were ten years ago. Then it surprised us to find that the country seemed to have fallen into a frenzy of self-destruction, tearing its cities apart, fouling its landscapes, poisoning the streams and skies, trivializing the education of its children, and not for any substantial human happiness, … but for higher profits and rapidly increased economic growth…. What we were experiencing was the familiar philistine expansionism (of which the Vietnamese are only the latest victims), this time attached to a formidable technology whose alarming possibilities were as yet unclear, but which was even then depressingly out of human scale and growing larger and more autonomous every day.

Now at last, Epstein concludes, it is clear that “pursuit of money and power became openly America’s main, if not its only, business.” Again, where to begin? And which is worse, Epstein’s moralism, or his hypocrisy? By psychologizing politics and attempting to replace basic political commitments with a melodrama of virtue, Epstein is really engaged in a species of moral blackmail. As Diana Trilling observed in a withering response to “The CIA and the Intellectuals,” Epstein would have us believe that “depending on how we respond to the poisoning of our streams and skies we will take either a Left- or a Right-Wing position on —say—the Vietnam War. Whoever abhors polluted air and desecrated landscapes will have adequate grounds on which to judge American foreign policy. He will recognize it in all its ‘philistine expansionism.’ What further guide to decision in foreign affairs does anyone need?”
In the end, *The New York Review*’s anti-Americanism has to be seen as part of a larger project of political, intellectual, and moral delegitimation. For example, over the years, the *Review* has run some distinguished pieces on science. But its has also been prey to a kind of countercultural technophobia that borders on irrationalism. Consider, for example, John McDermott’s “Technology: The Opiate of the Intellectuals,” which appeared in July 1969. The amazing conclusion of this long and tedious piece is that the spirit of scientific curiosity and promotion of technology should be frankly recognized as a conservative or right-wing ideology… . it succeeds in identifying and rationalizing the interests of the most authoritarian elites within this country, and the expansionism of their policies overseas. Truly it is no accident that the leading figures of laissez innover … are among the most unreconstructed cold warriors in American intellectual life.

Truly, it is no accident, either, that this sort of politicized attack on science and technology became a prominent item on the menu of academic radicalism.

Although Jerry Rubin—former Yippie and author of the once-influential *Do It!* — made only one appearance in *The New York Review*, his “Emergency Letter to My Brothers and Sisters in the Movement” (February 1969), written while he was in custody, is nonetheless significant as a reminder of the kinds of views Silvers and his colleagues were willing to countenance in its pages. Rubin begins by boasting that, although the forces of repression are on the rise, “We are stealing the youth of America right out of the kindergartens and elementary schools.” After some remarks about how “America’s courts are colonial courts,” her jails “black concentration camps,” he goes on to declare that “smoking pot is a political act, and every smoker is an outlaw. The drug culture is a revolutionary threat to plasticwasp9–5america [sic].”

Who the hell wants to “make it” in America anymore? The hippie-yippie-SDS movement is a “white nigger” movement. The American economy no longer needs young whites and blacks. We are waste material. We fulfill our destiny in life by rejecting a system which rejects us.

Accordingly, Rubin calls for widespread demonstrations near jails and court houses to “demand immediate freedom for Huey P. Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, Rap Brown, all black prisoners, Timothy Leary, the Oakland Seven, all drug prisoners, all draft resisters, Benjamin Spock, … . me,” etc. Of course, Rubin was always something of a buffoon. And his conversion from Yippie freak to Wall Street investment counselor makes his adolescent antics seem even more puerile than they perhaps were. Today, it is tempting to look back on erstwhile countercultural heroes like Jerry Rubin as comic figures, more preposterous than menacing. But it is a great mistake to believe that the preposterous is the enemy of the malign. On the contrary, such qualities often feed upon and abet each other.

In any event, if Rubin’s appearance in *The New York Review* was something of an aberration, the same cannot be said about Andrew Kopkind’s many appearances in its pages. Perhaps his most notorious contribution was “Soul Power,” which appeared as the lead essay in the infamous Molotov cocktail issue of August 24, 1967. Ostensibly a review of Martin Luther King’s *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*, it was really a guerrilla manifesto. Arguing that America was “a society infused with racism,” Kopkind declared that King’s policy of nonviolence was obsolete and that King himself (whom he described as “shuffling between Chicago and Cleveland”) was now “an irrelevancy.” In an oft-repeated and oft-castigated phrase, Kopkind announced that “morality, like politics, starts at the barrel of a gun.” (The echo of *Der Stürmer*—“When I hear the word ‘culture,’ I reach for my gun”—was not lost on the *Review*’s critics.) Even more troubling than Kopkind’s thuggishness was his embrace of revolutionary anarchy. It is worth quoting the opening of his exhortation at length (note the allusions to *A Tale of Two Cities*, one of the most sentimentizing portraits of the French Revolution extant):

The Movement is dead; the Revolution is unborn. The streets are bloody and ablaze, but it is difficult to see why, and impossible to know for what end. Government on every level is ineffectual, helpless to act either in the short term or the long. The force of Army and police seems not to suppress violence, but incite it… . It is the worst of times.
It is the best of times. The wretched of this American earth are together as they have never been before, … No march, no sit-in, no boycott ever touched so many…. The subtle methods of co-optation work no better to keep it intact than the brutal methods of repression; if it is any comfort, liberalism proves hardly more effective than fascism. Above all, there is a sense that the continuity of an age has been cut, that we have arrived at an infrequent fulcrum of history, and that what comes now will be vastly different from what went before.

It is not a time for reflection, but for evocation. The responsibility of the intellectual is the same as that of the street organizer, the draft resister, the Digger: to talk to people, not about them. The important literature now is the underground press, the speeches of Malcolm, the works of Fanon, the songs of the Rolling Stones and Aretha Franklin.

“Liberalism proves hardly more effective than fascism”; “it is not a time for reflection, but for evocation”; the works of Frantz Fanon and Malcolm X, the pseudo-Dionysiac drivel of the Rolling Stones: by publishing this screed, The New York Review made itself party to the sanctimonious, anti-cultural nihilism preached by the worst elements of Sixties radicalism.

It did nothing to redeem itself with Tom Hayden’s long report on the 1967 Newark riots later in the same issue. This future California assemblyman reported on the looting, arson, shooting, and mayhem that swept over the city with a mixture of glee and revolutionary amoralism. He clearly loved every minute of it. The riots were sparked by an incident of police brutality against a black taxicab driver; over the next couple of days, tensions mounted inexorably: “regardless of what the Mayor did, regardless of what civil-rights leaders did, regardless of what planners of the demonstration did, the riot was going to happen. The authorities had been indifferent to the community’s demand for justice; now the community was going to be indifferent to the authorities’ demand for order.” Once the riots got underway, Hayden provided a steady stream of equivocating patter: the looting was “spirited”; “many missiles were thrown at cars driven by whites but not often with murderous intent”; whites were stopped and intimidated, but “very few, if any, were shot at.”

People voted with their feet to expropriate property to which they felt entitled…. A common claim was: this is owed me. But few needed to argue. People who under ordinary conditions respected law because they were forced to do so now felt free to act upon the law as they thought it should be.

Moreover, Hayden said, “most of the people were taking only for themselves. One reason there was so little quarreling over ‘who gets what’ was that there was, for a change, enough for all.” Besides, “most of the rage” was directed at white store owners, not at “schools, churches, or banks,” which —Hayden assures us in one extraordinary aside—are “oppressive” but “contain little that can be carried off.” Clearly, Silvers and his colleagues were pleased by Hayden’s endorsement of violence and illegality, for they allowed it to be used in an advertising campaign for The New York Review that fall: “If you want to bring a Molotov cocktail to your next cocktail party, arm yourself with Tom Hayden’s ‘The Occupation of Newark,’ in which the Establishment’s version of what went on there is blown to bits.”
Philip Nobile believed that The New York Review’s flirtation with the radical Left was brief, aberrant, and basically harmless. In fact the journal’s sudden jerk leftward revealed something essential not only about its politics but also about its attitude toward ideas and the life of the mind. In brief, The New York Review was a journal of blithe political opportunism, ready at the first hint of a change in the public mood to embrace extreme, even revolutionary, ideas that were totally at odds with its ambition to be (as the editors declared in their first issue) “a responsible literary journal.” In “Radical Chic,” his brilliant 1970 dissection of high-end radical posturing, Tom Wolfe mentions the New York Review’s Molotov cocktail issue. The journal, he notes,

was sometimes referred to good-naturedly as The Parlour Panther, with the -our spelling of Parlour being an allusion to its concurrent motif of anglophilia. The Review’s embracing of such apparently contradictory attitudes—the nitty-gritty of the ghetto warriors and the preciosity of traditional Leavis & Empson intellectualism—was really no contradiction at all, of course. It was merely the essential double-track mentality of Radical Chic—nostalgie de la boue and high protocol—in its literary form.

One possible synonym for what Wolfe describes as the “double-track mentality of Radical Chic” is “hypocrisy.” Another is “unprincipled opportunism.” It has often been pointed out that there was plenty about the Sixties counterculture that The New York Review did not endorse—the fatuousness of Pop Art, for example, or the intellectual swamp of deconstruction. This is true enough. But it is hardly exculpatory. The New York Review’s mandarin posture has naturally made it wary of much that is meretricious. What matters, though, has been its willingness to let radical politics trump its commitment to high culture. Quite apart from the irresponsibility of the politics, there was an intellectual irresponsibility at work here, a preening, ineradicable frivolousness toward the cultural values that the journal was supposedly created to nurture. That is why, as one looks back over the course of the The New York Review, it seems less an intellectual than a sociological phenomenon: not so much a distinguished literary review as, in Tom Wolfe’s perfect phrase, “the chief theoretical organ of Radical Chic.” More than any other journal, The New York Review of Books made America’s cultural revolution seem like an intellectually respectable enterprise.

Notes
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2. The book was published in English as The Gangrene (Lyle Stuart, 1960). An excerpt was published, without identifying the translator, in the March 1960 number of Harper’s. Go back to the text.

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