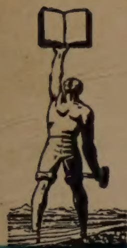

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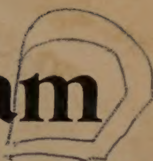

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Annette Rubinstein O'NEILL'S DARK JOURNEY

Robert Sidgwick POLITICS OF THE BOMB

MORE COMMENTS ON HOWARD FAST

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THE RUSSIAN

DAVID MARTIN

A TALL, well-dressed gentleman was sitting by himself in a window corner of the Café Fensterkucker, looking out on Kaerntner Strasse. He seemed tired and depressed and he had not finished a cup of coffee which had been standing in front of him for the past quarter of an hour. At last the elderly waiter detached himself from the pillar against which he had been leaning and came towards him. Flicking his table napkin under his arm, he smiled at the cup and, bending down, asked confidentially:

—Anything else, der Herr?

And he added with the kind of wink only Viennese waiters who have worked in the same establishment for twenty years may employ:

—Of course, one can hardly call it coffee these days . . .

The man at the table turned towards him.

—No?

—No, said the waiter. Eine furchtbare Mischung—terrible. You should have come to Fensterkucker's in the old days. Coffee fit for archdukes. Herr Capablanca used to say . . .

He did not reveal what Capablanca said, but concluded with a shrug of his shoulders:

—Natuerlich, we know where it is all going to; coffee and everything.

—Where?

—Nach Russland, lieber Herr.

—Ah, to Russia. Well, give me another, please.

The waiter removed the cup and asked:

This story is reprinted by courtesy of the Australian cultural quarterly *Meanjin*: David Martin, of Melbourne, is the author of *Tiger Bay* and *The Stones of Bombay* (novels), *The Shoes Men Walk In* (short stories), *The Shepherd and the Hunter* (play), *Battlefields and Girls* and *From Life* (poems).

—Anything to eat? What there is of it? Salzstangerln?

—No, said the man after thinking for a moment. Nothing. Just coffee; black.

The waiter nodded and shuffled behind, calling out loudly:

—Ein Kaffee, ein Schwarzer!

The man at the table looked out into the street. It was a bright, sunny day. Two British military policemen were standing by the curb and gazing down the road to where the ruins of the Opera House were throwing their afternoon shadow over the busy pavement. An old woman passed, pulling a go-cart which was filled to the top with brush-wood; she was wearing a fine black shawl.

The man drew a hand across his forehead and lit a cigarette.

His name was Nicolai Terenteyev, professor of modern languages at the University of Smolensk. During the war he had served as interpreter and intelligence officer with General Tolbukin's army. Nicolai Terenteyev had come to Vienna to visit the place where his twin brother, Dimitri, lay buried. He had just returned from his grave, from Hollabrunn.

Now that he had seen the spot where they had killed him, the strange doubt persisted, the irrational doubt that there had been a mistake. For the first fifteen years of their lives they had never been separated for a single day. When they eventually had to part, people had imagined it would be difficult; but it had been easy. He had become a scholar, a philologist, and Dimitri an architect. They did not even write to each other very often. It was not necessary.

The waiter returned with the coffee. Seeing that the guest was lost in thought, he began to attend to the table behind, where an Austrian couple were seated.

II

THEY HAD KILLED Dimitri in a pleasant place. Not the kind of place he would have liked to live in, or die: he was fond of big cities, of towns with plenty of traffic and plenty of machines. As a boy in Moscow, after the revolution, he had spent his kopeks riding on trams and buses. He was not romantic but he would certainly have liked to be buried where there was activity, 'life.' Actually, he would have liked to be cremated. But his grave was at the bottom of a long field and barley was growing there.

Now that he had seen it, there was an end of it. Everything changes: there was no sense in brooding. But what had happened that morning was still too fresh in his memory. In the life of every man there are five or six days which he will never forget. Such a day was this.

At the Kommandatura they had put an Austrian Steyr car at his
disposal, all brass and super-charged and with the old engine rattling
and knocking so that it was almost impossible to hear the driver talking.
He was a Ukrainian, very cheerful and pleased with his tremendous eight-
seater, which he drove as though he were going to a fair.

He pointed out the landmarks. Floridsdorf where Dollfus' Heimwehr
had shelled the workers' flats; the battlefield of Wagram; then Korneu-
burg with its baroque churches. Nicolai was thinking that his brother
must have come the same way, perhaps more than once. When they
took him there for the first time—did he have to walk or did they send
him by train?—he must have wondered what would lie at the end. In
the old days, when they went for walks in the country, Dimitri used to
be so eager to get to their destination. 'He's got pepper on his bottom,'
their mother used to say. It was true, he could not sit quietly. He must
still have been pretty strong at that time. Otherwise they would not have
let him to work on a farm.

Only a month ago the Soviet Intelligence had put their hands on the
archives of some small provincial police head-quarters near the Hun-
garian border and discovered a list of eighty Russian officer-prisoners who
had been sent to work on farms around Vienna. And there they had come
on Dimitri's name. The Kommandatura had checked and discovered that
out of these eighty only six had survived. The farmer to whom Dimitri
Terenteyev had been assigned, a certain Hugo Pracker, had been arrested
and was waiting trial; Nicolai had not yet seen him. The remarkable
thing was that nobody in the village had given him away, though many
must have known what had happened on his farm. They had bad con-
sciences, every one of them. There would be a clean-up now.

The land around Hollabrunn was rolling hilly country and for the
first time he saw sugar-beet fields. It reminded him of the Ukraine. Small,
strongly-built houses painted white, with sun-flowers in the neat front
gardens.

At a sign-post to the village the car turned left. They were now driv-
ing through a grove of poplars that hid the farm house from view. At
last they saw it: a two-storey red brick building with green shutters; a
handsome old house. It seemed deserted. They stopped there and Nicolai
got out. Walking round to the back, he saw the farm itself and the out-
buildings. Beyond, the fields were standing in corn, stretching away down-
hill to where a double line of trees indicated a river. It was hot.

Nicolai stood still and listened. The hour was early yet, but the yard
was as silent as the house. At last he heard the creaking noise of some
machine and, following it, came to a barn at the far end of the yard.
One of the huge doors was drawn half back on its guide rail and he

entered. There was a pleasant, sweetish smell and a twilight that grew darker under the high shadowy rafters. In one corner, partly hidden from view by a wall of flour bags, an old man was turning the handle of a turnip cutter while a lad was feeding the machine. They did not see Nicolai until he addressed them. Then they both gave a start and stopped working.

—Who are you? the man asked. He was a wizened old fellow with a red sharp face and a head completely bald. He wore a leather apron like a cobbler.

—Terenteyev is my name, Nicolai answered, watching his eyes.

The old man straightened his back and shook his head.

—So. What do you want? Herr Pracker is not here. He's gone away.

—Terenteyev, Nicolai repeated carefully. You have heard the name before.

The old man thought for a moment.

—No. I don't remember. It's a Russian name? You are a Russian?

—How long have you worked here?

—Thirteen years. Do you want to see anybody? They are all out in the fields.

—There was a Russian here, Nicolai said. During the war. I am his brother.

The old man opened his mouth and closed it again. Then he said:

—Yes, we had a Russian here. Ivan.

—A square-built man? Blond, and one finger missing?

—Yes, Ivan. A finger on his left hand.

Feeling anger rising, Nicolai said sharply:

—Dimitri. His name was Dimitri.

Looking at the boy who was leaning against the cutter, the old man smiled.

—We called him Ivan.

Then he seemed to remember something and his smile went out. Picking up a turnip and gazing down at it, he said quietly:

—So you are his brother. And you look like him, too. But he did not speak German.

—What happened to him?

The old laborer glanced up as if to say: You know what happened to him.

—He died.

—How did he die? Tell me.

The old man's fingers picked at the turnip and his lips opened again in a senile smile.

—I don't know. You must ask Pracker. Pracker knows.

—No, said Dimitri. I want to hear it from you.

The smile disappeared once more and he said in a firm, loud voice:

—Der Ivan? Den haben's erschlagen. Im winter.

Nicolai's anger died. He nodded.

—Yes, that is the truth. They beat him to death. You are not lying.

III

THE GUEST in the window corner was wondering: The old man's face when he said that Dimitri had been beaten to death! Why did he say it so loudly? That old man!

At this point his attention was distracted by an American officer who had entered the café a few minutes before, but whom he had not noticed. Now he was rising and shaking hands with the two Austrians at the next table. They were a comfortable looking couple. The woman had a fox fur over her shoulders which she dropped over the back of her chair. They were talking about some business deal. Exports, visas. The woman took one of the American's cigarettes and thanked him profusely. . . .

But the face of that old man when he said: 'Der Ivan? Den haben's erschlagen!' They probably called all Russians Ivan. 'Der Ivan? Den haben's erschlagen.'

IV

THE SMALL BOY had suddenly run out of the barn. He scuttled out like a rabbit, disturbing the grey dust on the beaten floor. Then the old man's daughter came in, a white-blond, bony woman. She was carrying a bag. Pointing his finger at Nicolai, the old man said to her:

That's Ivan's brother. He says his name wasn't Ivan.

The woman put her bag down and stared at him. Then she went out without saying a word.

Nicolai ordered the old man to show him his brother's grave. At the back of the barn—they had left it by a side-door—there was a second yard, smaller than the first. In front of a cow-shed a bareheaded man was filling liquid manure into a barrel cart. He saluted Nicolai gravely and stopped his work to follow him with his eyes. They were now walking along a rutted track leading down-hill between the fields. The old man was growing voluble; he was rummaging among his memories of the prisoner and holding them out, one by one, for the stranger to examine.

He remembered the day when Dimitri had arrived, dressed in his

artillery uniform, shabby from long wear. A policeman was with him they had both travelled up by train from Vienna. That was in May— they hadn't started hay-making. He remembered how hungry the prisone was; he ate like a wolf. They had put him to work hoeing the sugar bee (he pointed out the field, a large one which was now bearing potatoes) and at first he had been awkward at it. Pracker disiked him from th start. He had applied for an English prisoner; instead they had sent him a Russian. In the last war he had had two Italians, real peasants. This Ivan was educated, uppish. He wanted to send him back to the camp but they had warned him that he wouldn't get another. It was up to him to make his Ivan pay.

He had made him pay . . .

Nicolai was listening to the old man. This is where he must have walked with his tools and implements. He must have climbed over thi stile, passed along these weeded furrows. Dimitri, Dimitri! How di you get to this place, what did you have to do with it? With these ten times accursed, life-forsaken Austrian clods, this dwarfed old man with his face like an afterbirth! He tried hard to see his twin brother dragging himself back through these fields, exhausted. He could under- stand Pracker hating Dimitri. He was glad that Pracker had hated him

Nicolai and his guide had reached a brook which they crossed on stepping stones. Walking eastwards along the other side, the old man was continuing his tale. The farmer had lodged the Russian in the old groom's box, in an abandoned stable without means of heating. But the prisoner did not complain, even seemed to prefer it that way. They soon discovered why. That was after his escape. One morning he was gone. But they had brought him back, the police, the same day . . the old man did not know how they had caught him so quickly. Pracker had beaten him. For his ingratitude. The stable window had been barred and the door heavily padlocked, each evening from then on.

It's here, the old man said. They were halting where a meadow and a barley field met. There was a small unevenness in the ground, a mound, covered with bind-weed and grass.

—Go away, said Nicolai. I don't need you. I can find my way back

The old man looked at him a moment in surprise. Then he turned and went away, with his arms dangling loosely by his side.

Nicolai sat down on a stone and looked around. He could see only the leathery tops of the barley and, further in the distance, telegraph poles. Somewhere a tractor was humming. He did not feel that Dimitri was near. But he was glad that he had come. He was conscious of the impossibility of truly remembering, conscious that being has no reality no existence outside itself. There was no link that bound Dimitri, leaning

against a mound of grass, somewhere on their walks in the woods near Tula, and the other Dimitri, down here.

He watched an insect moving up a blade of grass over his brother's grave. A cloud was passing across the sun and at the same time a movement went through the barley, ruffling it like the hems of a thousand skirts. The old man did not have to tell him how they had killed Dimitri. Pracker had admitted it. He had read his confession.

Nicolai wondered what Pracker could have known about his brother, of the life he had lived, his troubles, his plans. Nothing; for had he known he would not have called him Ivan. That was a peasant name and Dimitri was a builder. (This was the German mistake, their great, fatal error: they did not understand that the days of the Ivans had passed!) Dimitri had built a theatre, a library, the houses for a children's colony at Sochi and, together with two other architects, had been working on designs for a new railway station. Then the war came and he had rejoined his regiment. Pracker had made him carry heavy sacks and hoe turnips. One night he had beaten him to death with an iron chain, beaten him in a mad rage over a broken harness. Dimitri beaten to death by a beast of an Austrian farmer, a kulak . . . brother Dimitri! In the evening he would see this Pracker. They were going to have him over at the Kommandatura for him to have a look at. The barley and the brook and the bind-weed over the mound. How heavy the soil was, how heavy.

He rose and took a photograph of the grave, for Dimitri's wife and for his son. Perhaps a stone should be put up. 'Captain Dimitri Terenteyev, second regiment, eleventh division of the Guards. Born at Kostroma, April 7, 1910. Murdered in Hollabrunn, May, 1944.' But a stone wouldn't help. Nothing would make any difference to Dimitri.

Slowly he walked back. When he reached the yard, the bare-headed man who had so gravely saluted him was sitting on the shafts of his dung cart as if he had been waiting. Nicolai asked him to show him the stable where Dimitri had lived. The man immediately rose. He had a thin face criss-crossed by many small veins. His eyes were large and very blue; they looked into his without flinching. He was walking silently in front, leading Nicolai past the barn to a low building with a thatched and rotting roof. The door was closed but above it was a small barred window covered with cobwebs. Using the wooden door handle as a foot-hold, Nicolai pulled himself up and looked in. It was a square room, paved, and bare apart from an upturned trough leaning against one wall. He let himself down again.

The man who had led him was now following behind. When they reached the car, he put his hand on Nicolai's arm and said hurriedly:

—I have something for you, Herr. I want to give you this.

Out of his pocket he had pulled a small object, wrapped in a piece of newspaper and tied with string.

—It belonged to your brother, the man said. I found it and kept it. You take it.

He put the object into Nicolai's hand and walked away with long strides.

V

Nicolai put his hand in his pocket. It was still there. The waiter stood by his table.

—Another coffee, der Herr?

Nicolai looked at the clock over the plush-covered alcove where newspapers were hanging from a rack.

—Yes, he said. I should like another.

At their table behind him, the American officer and his two companions were talking animatedly. 'Ja, Kultur haben sie nicht,' the woman said and laughed; and the two men joined in her mirth. Nicolai sat back. He wanted to know who did not have culture.

The American officer, speaking fluent German with an Austrian accent, took over.

—That's nothing. Have you heard of the Russian colonel who went to a Viennese doctor and told him that he suffered from headaches? No? Well, the doctor told him to massage his scalp with toilet water . . .

The woman was tittering in anticipation. She shot a quick, amused glance over to Nicolai, drawing him into the joke.

—So the next day the colonel went back to the doctor and he was furious. 'You are not a tovarich,' he said. 'Look at this bruise on my temple!' The doctor asked him what had happened. 'What happened?" the colonel shouted. 'You ask me what happened? The toilet seat fell on my head!"

They were all three laughing. The Austrian's coffee had got into his windpipe and he was spluttering.

—Pardon me, he said. Toilet water, my God!

—About their watches, everybody knows, said the woman. They have a girl in Ottakring, a traffic policewoman, a real archetypal Siberian and she wears a watch on each wrist. With all that stealing of watches one wonders how they have time for anything else.

The civilian supported her.

—I never put mine on when I go out. The clock on the Stefan Tower

is my watch these days. My neck hurts from craning up at it.

They laughed again.

—Never mind, the American officer said. The Russians won't stay for ever. When I go home I'll send you a watch with a patent lock. They'll have to amputate your hand to get it off.

The Austrian protested.

—One can see you don't know our liberators. They'd cut your arm off if they liked the watch.

—And your head, too, the woman topped him.

—No, said the man. I wouldn't wear your patent watch. I leave my own at home . . . I beg your pardon? I beg your pardon?

Nicolai was standing by the table. The American turned to him.

—What's the idea? he said. Can I help you?

—I want to give this gentleman something, Nicolai said. I am sorry he has to crane his neck, looking at the Stefan Tower.

—No, No! the man objected.

Who are you? asked the lady.

A Russian officer.

Nicolai took from his pocket the object that had been given to him by the farm worker in Hollabrunn and put it on the table.

—I want you to have it. It once belonged to my brother.

On the white cloth lay a small silver watch, battered, the glass smashed, the leather strap stained with blood.

The Austrian shrank from it. Then he picked it up gingerly to hand it back.

—Bitte, it is yours . . .

His fingers trembled, and the watch fell back on to the table .

The waiter was looking in their direction.

—Take it away, the American officer said, staring down at the table.

You don't want it? Nicolai quietly asked.

For a moment he stood, as if undecided, contemplating the three people. Then he shook his head, picked up the watch and slipped it into his pocket. He walked out of the café without looking back.

ON TRANSLATING SHAKESPEARE

BORIS PASTERNAK

AT DIFFERENT times over a long period I have translated the following works of Shakespeare: *Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleopatra, Othello, King Henry IV, King Lear,* and *Macbeth.*

The demand, on the part both of theatres and the reading public, for readable translations is very great and will never come to an end. Every translator has flattered himself that he has gone further to meet this de-
Nor can I claim originality for my views on the essence and problems
mand than any of his predecessors; I myself have not escaped this fault.
of translation. In common with many others I consider that literal exactitude and correspondence of form by no means conduce to faithfulness of translation. Resemblance to the original, like that of a portrait to the sitter, is achieved by language which is at once fresh and natural. The translator, like the writers of the original works, must do his best to avoid a vocabulary which does not form a part of his own, and literary mannerisms. Like the original, a translation must give the impression not of literary achievement but of life.

THE POETIC STYLE OF SHAKESPEARE

The style of Shakespeare has three distinguishing features. His plays are profoundly realistic in spirit. They are natural and colloquial when prose is used or verse-dialogue is accompanied by action or development of the narrative. But the stream of his blank verse is sometimes over burdened with metaphor.

Shakespeare's command of imagery is not uniform. Sometimes i belongs to the sphere of high poetry, demanding a special attitude of mind in the reader, sometimes it is frankly rhetorical, burdened with half-a

dozen approximations instead of the one *mot juste* flitting through the author's brain, but not found by him, in his haste. However this may be, Shakespeare's metaphorical language, in its insight and richness, on its peaks and in its valleys, is true to the principle of all genuine imagery.

Man is driven to the use of metaphor owing to the fact that he is too short-lived to carry out his tremendous, self-imposed task. It is this disparity between the brevity of his life and the greatness of his task which forces him to gaze eagle-eyed at all things, and to make his meaning clear by instantaneous flashes. That is what poetry is. Metaphor is the shorthand of a great individuality, the handwriting of the soul.

The impetuosity of the brush of a Rembrandt, a Michelangelo or a Titian is not the fruit of ponderous selection. Their thirst to paint a veritable universe was so insatiable that they had no time to paint in any other way.

Shakespeare combines in himself stylistic extremes to such an extent that several writers seem to live in him. His prose is clear-cut and polished. It shows the hand of a miniature-painter of comic genius, a master of the secret of compression, skilled in the mockery of all that is absurd in life.

Shakespeare's blank verse is the exact opposite of this. Its chaotic nature, both internal and external, reduced Voltaire and Tolstoy to a state of irritation.

There are some characters in Shakespeare's plays who go through several phases of development. One of these may at first speak in blank verse, and then suddenly break out into prose. In such cases the scenes in verse create an impression of being preliminary, and those in prose of being conclusive.

Blank verse was the most rapid and direct form of expression for Shakespeare. He resorted to it as a means of the swiftest recording of thought. In many episodes written in blank verse can be sensed rough drafts of prose-insertions, as it were, jotted down in blank verse.

The strength of Shakespeare's poetry lies in the irrepressible, riotous nature of his original creative impulse.

Rhythm is the very foundation of Shakespeare's poetry. The motive power of rhythm is what defines the rate at which questions and answers alternate in his dialogue, the length or shortness of his monologues.

This rhythm reflects the enviable economy of the English language, making it possible to express a maxim made up of two or more antithetical sentences in a single iambic line. It is the rhythm of a free individuality, one which makes to itself no graven images, retaining its integrity and avoiding verbosity.

HAMLET

This rhythm is displayed most clearly of all in *Hamlet.* Here it has a triple purpose. Used as a means for bringing out the salient features of the various characters, it forms an underlying melody, continually maintaining the prevalent tragic mood, and it elevates and softens the coarseness of some of the scenes.

The rhythmic quality of Hamlet is vivid and highly individualized. Polonius, the King, Guildenstern and Rosencrantz speak in one way—Laertes, Ophelia, Horatio and the others in their own way. The queen's credulity is shown not only in her actual words, but in her chanting speech and drawn-out vowels.

But it is in Hamlet himself that this rhythmical undercurrent is the most striking. It is so marked that an illusion is created every time Hamlet appears, of a kind of rhythmical pattern or theme, which, however, does not really exist. It is, as it were, the almost tangible pulse of his whole being. Here are his impetuous gestures, his long, firm stride, the proud turns of his head. The ideas within his monologues leap and soar, he tosses to right and left his arrogant and mocking replies to the courtiers who caper round him, gazes with fixed intensity into the unknown distance, from which his father's ghost has already called to him once, and may call to him again at any moment.

The music underlying *Hamlet* is also impossible to capture. It cannot be cited as a separate rhythmic pattern. Despite this immateriality, however, it forces itself so ominously and integrally into the very texture of the drama that one is tempted to think of it as mythical and Scandinavian at once, like the subject of the play. It is a music formed of the measured alternation of solemnity and anxiety. It thickens the atmosphere almost unendurably, thus enabling the prevalent mood to be displayed in the sharpest relief. But in what does this mood consist?

According to traditional criticism, *Hamlet* is a tragedy of the human will. The definition is correct. But in what sense is it to be taken? Lack of will was unknown in Shakespeare's time. No interest was felt in it. The image of Hamlet created by Shakespeare in such detail is perfectly comprehensible, and does not fit in with the idea of a neurotic. According to Shakespeare, Hamlet is a prince of the blood, never for a moment forgetting his claim to the throne, the darling of the Court in his father's time, an original character, made self-assured by his great talents. The features with which the author has endowed him leave no room for flabbiness; indeed, they exclude any such possibility and the spectator is free to judge of the greatness of Hamlet's sacrifice, since with such brilliant prospects

he neglects his own advantage for the sake of higher aims.

From the moment of the appearance of the Ghost Hamlet renounces his own will in order to "do the will of Him who sent him." *Hamlet* is not a drama of weakness of will, but of duty and self-sacrifice. When the apparent fails to tally with the actual, when an abyss divides them, it is of no importance that the reminder of the world's falseness comes in supernatural form, and that it is the Ghost who demands vengeance of Hamlet. It is much more important that Hamlet should have been chosen as the judge of his own times and the servant of remoter times. *Hamlet* is a drama of high density, of lofty achievement, of vocation.

The rhythmical principle is an almost tangible embodiment of the general tone of the play. But this is not its only function. Rhythm exercises a softening influence on certain jarring elements in the tragedy, which, were they not brought within the sphere of its harmonies, might be intolerable. Here is an example:

In the scene in which Hamlet adjures Ophelia "Get thee to a nunnery," he tramples on the self-respect of the girl who loves him, with a ruthlessness worthy of some self-infatuated Byronic outcast.

His own love for Ophelia, which he suppresses painfully, is no justification for his taunts. And yet what is it that has led to this callous scene? It is preceded by the famous "To be or not to be," and the first words, in blank verse, spoken by Hamlet and Ophelia at the beginning of the offensive scene are saturated with the music of the monologue, whose strains still hover in the air. The monologue, in the rueful beauty and chaos with which Hamlet's bewildered phrases jostle one another and halt, is like the abrupt sounds of an organ being tested before the performance of a requiem. It is not to be wondered at that the monologue serves as a prelude to the cruelty of the rapidly developing denouement, preceding it as the funeral rites precede the burial. After such a monologue anything may be expected to happen. All is expiated, purged and glorified, not only by the thoughts contained in the monologue, but by its ardour, and the purity of the tears underlying it.

ROMEO AND JULIET

If the role of music is so important in *Hamlet,* what shall we say of *Romeo and Juliet?* The theme of this tragedy is first love and its strength. In what other work is there such scope for melodiousness and rhythm? And yet the lyric quality is different from what we expected it to be. Shakespeare writes neither duets nor arias. He follows quite another path.

The function of music in this play is far from benign. It stands for

the power—so inimical to the lovers!—of worldly falseness and vanity.

Before meeting Juliet, Romeo burns with a conventional passion for Rosalind, who is only mentioned, and never once appears in the play. This was a romantic affectation in the spirit of the prevailing fashion. It drives Romeo to lonely nocturnal prowlings, which he must sleep off in the day, behind closed shutters to keep off the sun. All through the first scenes, so long as this continues, Romeo's speeches are written in unnatural rhymed verse. Romeo utters high-flown nonsense in the manner of the drawing-rooms of the epoch, and in the most musical strains. But the moment his eyes fall on Juliet at the ball he stands transfixed before her, and his melodious forms of expression desert him completely.

Among the emotions, love occupies the place of a cosmic element in temporary abeyance. Love is just as simple and integral as consciousness and death, nitrogen and uranium. It is not a spiritual state, but the foundation on which the world rests. It follows that love, as a basic and primal element, is equivalent to creative art. It is no less important, and its manifestations stand in no need of embellishment. The highest attainment to which art can aspire is to overhear the voice of love, to record its language, ever new and wonderful.

Like all Shakespeare's plays, *Romeo and Juliet* is written mostly in blank verse, and the hero and heroine declare their feelings in this form. But the metre is not emphasized; there is no studied elocution. The form does not overshadow by self-infatuation the infinitely modest content. This is an example of sublime poetry, the best specimens of which are always as fresh and simple as prose. The language of Romeo and Juliet is a model of cautious, broken, secret conversation, carried on under the breath. It is just what the nocturnal language of mortal risk and agitation ought to be.

The street scenes and the crowded indoor scenes are deafening and rhythmical. In the streets clang the swords of the kinsmen of the Montagues and Capulets; blood flows; in the kitchen, before the endless feasts, the cooks quarrel to a clattering of knives and pots and pans; the tragedy of suppressed emotions, mainly carried on in the low whispers of conspirators, is played out to the noise of all this fighting and kitchen clatter, as to the sounds of a brass band.

OTHELLO

Shakespeare himself did not divide his plays into scenes and acts. This was the work of later editors. But there is no violence done by this —the plays themselves yield easily to such division by reason of their

internal construction, and although the original texts were printed continuously, without interruptions, the absence of divisions did not prevent them from having a strictness of form and development unusual in our own times.

This applies especially to the middle parts of Shakespeare's plays, in which the plot thickens. The third act, overlapped to a certain extent on either side by the second and fourth, may be regarded as the middle of a given play. In Shakespeare's dramas they play the part of the hidden spring in a mechanism.

At the beginning and end of his plays, Shakespeare arbitrarily joins up the loose threads in his plot, in order, with equal ease, to get rid of any left-over. His expositions and finales are full of life and taken from reality, in the form of pictures rapidly succeeding one another with the utmost freedom and a dazzling wealth of imagination.

But Shakespeare does not allow himself his usual license in the middle parts, where the knots are drawn tight and the process of unravelling begins. Here in his false conscientiousness he shows himself to be the child and slave of his age. His third acts are subjected to the mechanics of the plot to an extent unknown to later dramatists, whom he was the first to teach audacity and truth to life. Here prevails a blind faith in the power of logic and in the existence of moral abstractions in real life. Characters endowed with the light and shade of real life give way to generalized images of vice and virtue. Artificiality creeps into the sequence of action and events, which begin to follow one another with the specious regularity of rational conclusions, like syllogisms in argument.

When Shakespeare was a child, medieval "moralities" were still being acted in the English provinces. These breathed the formalism of a moribund scholasticism. Shakespeare may have seen them. The old-fashioned conscientiousness of the way in which he worked out his denouements might have been a hang-over from those ancient performances which captured his childish fancy.

Four-fifths of Shakespeare lies in his beginnings and endings. It was these which people laughed and cried over. These it was which made him famous and started the talk of his truth to life, as against the dead soullessness of pseudo-classicism.

But just observations not seldom lead to spurious conclusions. Enthusiasm is often expressed over the "mouse-trap" scene in *Hamlet* or the inevitability with which some passion grows, or some consequence follows crime in the works of Shakespeare. Enthusiasm waxes high on false reasoning. We should keep our enthusiasm not for the "mouse-trap," but for the fact that Shakespeare is immortal even when he is artificial, and

that, while a fifth of his work, represented by his third acts, is sometimes mechanical and lifeless, he still remains great. He lives despite this fifth part, not because of it.

For all the passion and genius to be found in *Othello,* and for all its popularity with theatre audiences, what has just been said applies to a great extent to this tragedy.

Here are the brilliant quay-sides of Venice, the emergency nocturnal meeting of the Senate, Othello's naive relation of the gradual development of the love between himself and Desdemona, the storm on the coast of Cyprus, and the drunken brawl in the castle at night. Here is the famous scene of Desdemona's undressing for the night, and her singing of the still more famous "Willow" song—the acme of tragic realism before the terrible finale.

But here also, in the very middle, when Iago stirs up his credulous victim as if he were winding up a clock, we have, by a few turns of the key, a demonstration of jealousy, with its snortings and tremblings, like some worn-out mechanism, displayed before us in superfluous simplicity and wealth of detail. It may be said that such is the nature of this passion, and that all this is merely a tribute to stage conventions, requiring a flat literalness. This may be so. But the harm done by such tribute would not be so great if it had been rendered by a poet of less consistency and genius.

In our days another detail has acquired interest. Is it mere chance that the hero of the tragedy is a black man, and that all that he holds dear is white? What does this choice of colors signify? Does it mean only that men of all races have an equal title to human dignity? No, Shakespeare's thoughts in this respect went a great deal further.

The idea of racial equality did not exist in his time. A much broader conception, that of the absence of racial distinctions, was prevalent. It was not what a man was at his birth that was of interest, but what he made of his life, what he became. For Shakespeare the black Othello was a member of the Christian era, all the more that side by side with him was the white Iago, an unconverted prehistoric animal.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

Shakespeare has individual tragedies like *Macbeth* and *King Lear,* which form worlds of their own, each in its own way. There are also comedies, revealing a realm of infinite invention and inspiration, the cradle of romanticism. And there are historical chronicles from English life, passionate praises of the native land, sung by the greatest of her

sons. Some of the events described by Shakespeare in these chronicles were still going on in the world around him, and he was unable to regard them with strict impartiality.

Thus, despite the inner realism of Shakespeare's work, we may seek in vain among these plays for objective truths. These may be found in his Roman dramas.

Julius Caesar and, even more, *Antony and Cleopatra* were not written for the love of art, or for the sake of poetry. They are the fruits of the study of daily life in its true colors. This study is the intensest passion known to the artist. It led to the "physiological novel" of the 19th century, and the charm of Chekhov, Flaubert and Tolstoy.

But how was it that the mistress who inspired realism in her adorers was such a very old lady—none other than ancient Rome? There is no cause for wonder in this. It was this very remoteness which enabled Shakespeare to call things by their proper names. He could say whatever he liked in the political, moral or any other sense. Before him lay a remote, alien world, long-perished, withdrawn, immobile, explained-away. What desires could it arouse? The desire to paint it.

Antony and Cleopatra is a tale of a rake and a siren. Shakespeare paints their dissipations in the tones of a miracle play, as a true bacchanalia in the antique sense.

The historians have stated that neither Antony and his boon-companions nor Cleopatra and the court circles nearest to her expected any good to come of their now routine dissipations. In anticipation of the outcome of it all, they had given one another, long before its fulfilment, the names of immortal suicides, and had vowed to die in one another's company.

And this is how the tragedy actually ends. At the critical moment death itself turns out to be the draughtsman contributing the unifying contour the tale had lacked. We bid farewell to the two principal characters separately, against a background of campaigns, fires, treachery and military defeat. In the fourth act the hero, in the fifth act the heroine, commit suicide.

SHAKESPEARE'S AUDIENCES

The English chronicles of Shakespeare abound with hints at current events. There were no newspapers in those days. People met in the coffee-houses and theatres to find out the news, remarks G. B. Harrison in his *England in Shakespeare's Day.* It is not to be wondered at that the com-

mon people understood these hints as they did. They were very obvious, very close to all.

The contemporary political atmosphere was created by the arduous war with Spain, embarked upon with an enthusiasm which soon deteriorated into boredom. The war was waged for fifteen years on land and sea, off the coast of Portugal, in the Netherlands, and in Ireland.

The sceptic Falstaff's jests at the overworked martial phraseology of the day amused the simple, peace-loving audience, who thoroughly understood their drift, and when Falstaff was seen rounding up recruits and releasing them for a "consideration," the spectator recognized his own trials and was convulsed with laughter.

But there is a still more remarkable quality which shows how quick on the uptake Shakespeare's audiences could be. The works of Shakespeare, like those of all Elizabethans, are studded with allusions to history, quotations from ancient literature, and mythological names. Their full understanding nowadays requires a commentary and a classical education. And yet we are told that the average Londoner of that day instantly caught and assimilated the classical references continually coming up in *Hamlet* or *King Lear!* Is this to be believed?

The conception of what constitutes common knowledge has completely changed. A knowledge of Latin, now the mark of a highly educated individual, was at that time a requirement of ordinary education, just as Church Slavonic was in old Russia. In grammar schools, like that which Shakespeare attended, Latin was the daily speech of the scholars, who, according to Trevelyan, were forbidden to use English even while at play in the streets. So that Fortuna, Heracleus and Niobe were as much commonplaces for those of the London apprentices and shop assistants who could read and write, as internal combustion and the elements of electricity are for the adolescent inhabitants of modern towns.

Shakespeare was born at a time when the culture of bygone centuries still flourished in the minds of men. This culture was accessible to all. Shakespeare's time was the heyday of English history. The next reign brought about a disturbance of the equilibrium.

SHAKESPEARE'S AUTHORSHIP

Shakespeare's integrity is intact, and he is always true to himself. Under various names he transfers his characters from one play to another, ringing the changes in innumerable keys. Amongst all these paraphrases his repetitions within the confines of a single work are particularly noticeable.

Hamlet tells Horatio that he is a real man and not passion's slave, that he cannot be played upon as if he were a pipe. And a few pages further on he invites Guildenstern to play the pipe in the same symbolic sense.

In the Player's tirade against the cruelty of fortune, citing the murder of Priam, the gods are invoked to "break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel," the symbol of her power, and then "bowl the round nave, down the hill of heaven, as low as to the fiends." Another few pages, and Rosencrantz, in talk with the king, compares the power of the monarch to

> *. . . a massy wheel,*
> *Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,*
> *To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things*
> *Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,*
> *Each small annexment, petty consequence,*
> *Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone*
> *Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.*

Juliet seizes the dagger from the side of the dead Romeo, and stabs herself with the words: "Oh happy dagger! This is thy sheath!—There rust and let me die!" And a few lines lower the aged Capulet makes a similar exclamation with regard to the dagger which "is mis-sheathed" in his daughter's bosom. And so on *ad infinitum,* at almost every step. What is the meaning of this?

The translation of Shakespeare is a work demanding toil and time. It is necessary for its fulfillment to work daily, breaking up the task into portions big enough to prevent it from dragging out, otherwise there is a risk of dragging it out endlessly. This preoccupation with the text places the translator in what was once the author's position. Day by day he follows in the path laid down by the master. One becomes initiated, in practice as well as in theory, into some of the master's secrets; one gets to feel the very texture of them. When the translator comes across the repetitions already alluded to, he realizes, by experience, the short time elapsing between them, and, in his amazement, involuntarily puts himself the question: Who is there that is competent to explain such forgetfulness in the course of so few days?

Then it is that the translator, with an intimacy not given to the research student or the biographer, discovers the definite personality of that historical personage whose name was Shakespeare, and who was a genius. This personage wrote thirty-six five-act plays in twenty years, over and

above two epics and a sonnet sequence. This means that, forced to write two plays a year, he had no time to read through what he wrote and, time and again forgetting what he had written the day before, in his haste, repeated himself.

If this is admitted, the "Bacon" theory becomes still more incomprehensible. One wonders still more why the simplicity and inherent probability of Shakespeare's biography had to be involved in trumped-up mysteries, far-fetched incidents and pseudo-revelations.

Surely the Earl of Rutland, Lord Bacon, or the Earl of Southhampton, while taking such pains to conceal his identity from Queen Elizabeth behind a code or a "dummy," would not have exposed himself so recklessly to posterity! What hidden meaning or cunning ruse is to be sought in the carelessness of this (undoubtedly real) individual, whom no slips could embarrass, who yawned shamelessly in the face of history, who apparently had less knowledge of his own works than a modern schoolboy. It is in these very weaknesses that the strength of his case lies.

And again: what makes mediocrity busy itself so eagerly with the rules of what is great? Mediocrity has its own idea of the artist, an idea which is idle, sugary, false. It begins by admitting that Shakespeare must be a genius in its own sense of the word, and according to its own measurements, which Shakespeare is unable to satisfy.

His life seems too obscure and prosaic for such a name. He was not the owner of a library, his signature to his will was too scrawly. It seems suspicious that one and the same person could know the earth, its plants and animals, and all the hours of the day and night as well as only the common people know them, and at the same time be so much at home in questions of history, the law and diplomacy, and know the Court and its morals so well. And those whom this surprises so much forget that a great artist like Shakespeare must inevitably comprise within himself the whole of humanity.

PRINCE HAL

There is one period of Shakespeare's biography as to which we feel pretty sure—the period of his youth.

He arrived in London an unknown young provincial from Stratford-on-Avon. No doubt he at first lived somewhere on the outskirts of the town, just where the coachman, who would go no further, put him down. The perpetual movements of those coming and going probably gave to such places an aspect, by day and by night, not unlike that of a railway station, but there would be a wealth, too, of ponds and groves, vegetable

plots, carriages, places of amusement, pleasure gardens and show booths. There might even be theatres. And the aristocracy in search of entertainment would come here from London itself.

The youthful newcomer was at that time without any definite occupation, but with an extremely definite star of destiny. He believed in it. Nothing but this belief had brought him from the obscurity of the provinces to the capital. He did not know as yet what part he would be called upon to play, but his feelings told him that he would fulfill it to a marvel.

Whatever he took up had been done before—verses and plays had been written, parts acted on the stage, aristocratic revellers pandered to, every way of making a career had been thoroughly explored. But whenever this young man put his hand to anything such an overwhelming torrent of strength rose in him that the best thing he could do was to break with tradition and do everything in his own way.

Until he made his appearance only what was artificial, unnatural, unlike real life, was regarded as literature. This unlikeness to life was the necessary distinguishing mark of art, to which artists had resource in order to conceal beneath false conventionality their inability to depict, their spiritual impotence. But Shakespeare had an eye so keen and a hand so sure that it was to his positive advantage to overthrow all this.

He realized how much he would gain by approaching life, from the prescribed distance, not on stilts but on his own feet, and by his unwinking gaze forcing it to lower its lids.

There was a certain company of actors, writers and their patrons who strolled from tavern to tavern, taunting at and molesting strangers, laughing at everything in the world, carrying their lives in their hands. The most desperate and unscathed (he always got off scot-free), the most insatiable and yet sober (his head was strong), arousing the most immoderate laughter, but always reserved himself, was this morose youth, stepping into the future in seven-league boots.

Perhaps there was a stout old glutton like Falstaff in this company. Or perhaps this creation arose from later memories of this time.

These times were dear to Shakespeare not merely for their past gaiety. They were the days in which his realism was born. His realism first saw the light not in a solitary study, but in the room of some inn, in the slovenly morning hours, thick with the stuff of life. Shakespeare's realism is not the portentous solemnity of a reformed rake, not the much-heralded "wisdom" that comes with later experience. His art, grave, tragic, solid, was born of the sensation of success and strength during these early

follies, fraught as they were with extravagant inventiveness, audacity, ingenuity and mad, mortal risk.

KING LEAR

King Lear is always interpreted too noisily. The arbitrary old despot, the meetings in the resounding palace hall, the shouts and orders, and then the wails of despair, the curses merging with the rolling of the thunder and the noise of the wind. . . . In the play, however, it is only the nocturnal tempest which makes a noise, the mortally terrified people huddled together in the hut speak in whispers.

King Lear is just as still a tragedy as *Romeo and Juliet,* and for the same reason. In *Romeo and Juliet* it is the love of a youth and maiden which is hidden and persecuted, in *King Lear,* a daughter's love, and, in a broader sense, the love for one's neighbor, the love of truth.

In *King Lear* it is only criminals who flaunt their sense of duty and honor. They alone are hypocritically eloquent and rational, logic and reason serving as the pharisaical basis of their forgeries, cruelties and murders. All that is decent in *King Lear* is almost inaudible, or expresses itself by stammering inarticulateness, leading to misunderstandings. The true heroes of the tragedy are fools and madmen, perishing and defeated.

THE TRAGIC AND COMIC PRINCIPLE

Shakespeare has no pure comedies or tragedies; his plays present a mixture of these elements. In this he is true to life itself, in which horrors and delights are also finely blended. English critics, from Dr. Johnson to T. S. Eliot, have praised him for this.

In the tragic and comic, Shakespeare saw not merely what is elevated, what is common to humanity, what is ideal and what is real. He regarded them as something like the major and minor modes in music. While arranging the stuff of his drama in the order he wanted it, he employed the alternations of poetry and prose and their traditional stages as composers employ the modulation from one key to another.

These alternations form the distinction of Shakespeare's drama, the soul of his theatre, the broad inner rhythm of thoughts and mood, which have been touched on in the note on *Hamlet.*

Shakespeare used these contrasts systematically. All his plays contain a succession of scenes ranging from the comic to the tragic. But once he used this method with particular consistency.

At the freshly-dug grave of Ophelia the audience laughs at the prattle of the philosophical grave-diggers. At the moment of the carrying out of Juliet's dead body a Nurse's servant makes fun of the musicians invited to play at the wedding, who, in their turn, haggle with the Nurse. Cleopatra's suicide is prefaced by the appearance of a half-imbecile Egyptian snake-charmer and his absurd reflections on the uselessness of snakes.

Shakespeare was the founding father of realism. His influence on Pushkin, Victor Hugo and others is well known. The German romantics studied him. One of the Schlegels translated him, another founded his doctrine of romantic irony on the plays of Shakespeare. Shakespeare was the forerunner of the symbolism of Goethe in *Faust*. Finally—to confine ourselves to the most important things—he was the herald of the modern spiritual drama of Ibsen and Chekhov.

It is in this spirit that he interrupts the funeral solemnity of his finales with the horse-play of vulgar mediocrity.

These interruptions push the mystery of death, so remote and inaccessible to human comprehension, still further away. The respectful distance we keep between us and the threshold of the sublime and the terrible becomes yet a little greater. For the thinker and the artist there is no final situation; all are penultimate. Shakespeare seems to be afraid the spectator will believe too firmly in the finality of his denouement. By continual shiftings from light to shade at the end, he restores the violated continuity. In the spirit of all modern art, as opposed to the fatalism of the ancients, he dissolves the temporality and mortality of the separate symbol in the immortality of its general significance.

MACBETH

The tragedy of Macbeth could be called, with perfect justice, "Crime and Punishment." I could never shake off the parallel with Dostoyevsky while translating it.

When preparing for the murder of Banquo, Macbeth addresses the hired assassins as follows:

> *Within this hour, at most,*
> *I will advise you, where to plant yourselves,*
> *Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,*
> *The moment on't; for't must be done tonight,*
> *And something from the palace. . . .*

A short time after (Act 3, Scene 3) the murderers lie in ambush in the park. The guests arrive for the feast at the castle. The murderers watch for Banquo, among the guests.

SECOND MURDERER

Then it is he; the rest,
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.

FIRST MURDERER

His horses go about.

THIRD MURDERER

Almost a mile: but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Murder is a desperate, perilous affair. Before its fulfillment everything must be thought out thoroughly, all possible contingencies provided for. Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky, putting themselves into the minds of their characters, endow them with the gifts of foresight and imagination which belonged to their creators. The ability to grasp in good time the significant detail is here equally that of author and character. It is the dual, enhanced realism of the detective novel, as cautious and furtive as crime itself.

Neither Macbeth nor Raskolnikov are real malefactors; they are not criminals by nature. It is their false intellectual make-up, their erroneous and shifting deductions which make them criminals.

In the case of Macbeth the prophecies of the witches, kindling a veritable fire of ambition in his breast, provide the impetus. In that of Raskolnikov it is provided by the nihilist argument, driven too far, that, since there is no God, everything is permissible, including therefore murder, which in no real way differs from any other human act.

Macbeth appears to be utterly protected from the consequences of his crime. What can harm him? A wood walking over the plain? A man not born of woman? But such things are impossible, obvious absurdities. In other words, he may shed blood with impunity. Indeed, what law can be used against him when, once having attained royal power, he himself, and no other, will make the laws? Everything would seem to be clear and logical. What could be simpler or more obvious?

And the crimes are committed one after another, many crimes over a prolonged period, and then the woods suddenly leave their place and move on their way, the avenger not born of woman appears.

A word as to Lady Macbeth. Will-power and presence of mind are not the main features of her character. It seems to me that more common female traits take the upper hand in her. Here we have the image of a practical, determined wife, a woman who is her husband's partner and support, who identifies her interests with those of her husband and who takes all his intentions on trust. She does not judge them, does not subject them to analysis. To think, to doubt, to plan—these are for her husband. She is the one who fulfills; she is steadier, more consistent than he. She undertakes an excessive burden and, over-estimating her strength, perishes, not from remorse, but from her feeling of spiritual impotence, from heart-sickness and exhaustion.

Boris Pasternak is the Soviet Union's leading lyric poet. Selected writings of his are available in a volume published by New Directions in 1949.

YOUNG PHOTOGRAPH
(GENEVIEVE TAGGARD)

In her old letter for re-reading now
The photograph was young,
Not as I knew her. Meeting late
In the storm light of our time
I saw unchanged the marked and personal brow,
Clear symbol of her song and headlong rhyme—
A brow, the gift of fate
To a dauntless girl.

Yet flesh was daunted and the eyes
Had learned to narrow and suspect;
The face wore age.
Unwilling knowledge as a sad disguise,
Days scored and meanly checked
Had shaped their mask,
Although the unforgotten voice could rage
Against the false respect
Paid to the wicked, and could loudly ask
An innocent question tethered to the skies.

Loved by the hated, she kept close to song
And made bold music on a theme that could not end
In victory; saw cowards mock the strong,
Knew well the ring of foot on paving-stone,
Fatigue no sleep could mend,
And heard in darkness her heart beat alone.

So it is well to look on her young face,
Not smiling yet holding mirth,
The eyes expectant as the untilled land,
Nor over-trustful, knowing her own worth
Beyond the tint and fragile trace
Of beauty—one moment's pause to stand
For all life took from grace
And loveliness—to hold long in the hand.

HORTENSE FLEXNER

LANDSCAPE

Nature spreads out contours and unfolds
Seasonal contrasts; brightness with dun,
Liveness with death. But as one holds
A bouquet so the colors run.

Tired, summer sags, and the dull rose
Clings to the ruin. Countenance
Of blind earth beneath its patches shows
But rouged and fussed up with ornaments.

This is the portrait of a woman: flowers
Only emphasize, shielding from sight
Decrepitude or grief. Features become
The bright shell of steel of leaning towers
Over shadowed pits—neon to light.
A land of waste, penury and slum.

JANE CAMPBELL

PADRAIC PEARSE

He stood in the Dublin Easter
At the Post Office door
Summoning Ireland's free
And speaking for her poor.
To that fallen soldier Pearse
I lift a turgid pride in verse.

Merchants buy and weigh and sell
Still as if our days were the same—
As if the quicklime over him
Could hide his passion-bannered name!
To the poet-soldier Pearse
I lift this turgid pride in verse.

RAY SMITH

REMEMBER THE LONG YEARS

Remember the long years when the mountains were upside down,
When the days were soaked with dark obscurities like clots,
When the bones had the purity of rust
And the boys lost their ears and arms,
When the eyes ticked constantly from side to side
While men drowned in the sky.

Everywhere the scaring and sordid world
Appeared in the head as unwanted.

Remember the long years when men had the weight of bubbles,
Or the logic of statistics, and of fright,
Years of clouds devoured by shadows,
Years of war with its freight of death
When men emerged from their adolescent womb
Into a tomb of a world.

Remember the long years,
Columns reflected in the water,
Fire reflected in the windows,
The shattered air of gun thunder,

And voices rising from the dying plain of stone,
Intoning

Who caused the wars?
There is an answer that I desire,
There is the answer that we desire.

David Gallatin

THE DARK JOURNEY OF EUGENE O'NEILL

ANNETTE RUBINSTEIN

LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT is neither a great work of art nor is it O'Neill's best work. We may, I think, finally decide it is not even a very good play; but it is nevertheless an honest and moving one.

Clearly much of its emotion is due to the intimate biographical material it explores, and to O'Neill's courage in facing the deep pain of such an exploration. It is not yet quite as clear how large a part of the feeling it arouses depends on our own keen awareness of the play's personal truth.

Certainly even if one did not know that the Tyrones were the O'Neills and that the mother's drug addiction, the father's pathological miserliness, the older brother's self-destructive debauchery and the younger one's apparently fatal consumption were all taken in factual detail from O'Neill's own background it would still be evident that they had been drawn from life. And even if she were not his mother Mary Tyrone would still be O'Neill's spokesman in her statement of the play's ostensible theme: "But I suppose life has made him like that, and he can't help it. None of us can help the things life has done to us. They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self forever."

This is, of course, a familiar and almost obsessive idea for O'Neill. As early as 1921 his Anna Christie had similarly concluded:

"There ain't nothing to forgive anyway. It ain't your fault and it ain't mine, and it ain't his neither. We're all poor nuts, and things happen and we yust get mixed in wrong, that's all."

And in *Mourning Becomes Electra* Christine declared:

"God won't leave us alone. He twists and wrings and tortures our lives with others' lives until—we poison each other to death."

But here in this almost naturalistic personal drama we find ourselves at once more moved to pity by the pathos of his gloomy determinism, and more moved to resist the total flattening out of values—dramatic as well as ethical—in which it results.

It is both the strength and the imperfection of the play that it projects its characters so powerfully that we see relationships its author seems not fully to have grasped, and are impelled to judgments he did not quite dare make.

He attempts to hold the scales level, giving as much weight to the stinginess and bohemian tastes of James Tyrone as to the snobbish vanity and self indulgence of his wife in their mutual destruction and the destruction of their sons. But the weights do not balance, and it is only by main force that they are, even on the stage, briefly made to appear equal. In reading the play there is no such momentary illusion, and we find ourselves realizing with undiminished pity, but with a clarity her son could not bear, the shallow egotism of a girl who claimed at once the vocation of a nun and that of a concert pianist; a woman married thirty-six years to an actor, who boasts: "I was brought up in a respectable home and educated in the best convent in the Middle West. . . . I've had little to do with the people in his company, or with anyone on the stage"; a wife who treasures as the high point of her marriage the memory of a wedding gown "made of soft shimmering satin, trimmed with wonderful old duchesse lace, in tiny ruffles around the neck and sleeves, and worked in with the folds that were draped round in a bustle effect at the back. . . . My father told me to buy anything I wanted and never mind what it cost"; a young mother convinced that her seven-year-old first-born, Jamie, jealously murdered his infant brother by infecting him with measles, and an older one who refuses to comfort her twenty-three-year-old Edmund by sharing with him the knowledge of his deathly illness.

The blight on her home which, as she truly says, has never been a home, is surely due far more to this self-engrossed coldness at its heart than to the "stupid, lazy greenhorns" she has to put up with as servants, the substitution of a "second hand Packard" for the new Mercedes she envies, or even her husband's mania for investing in worthless real estate while turning out electric light bulbs to save money. Her repeated refuge in morphine, which finally destroys the last semblance of family life, is certainly better explained by Edmund's bitter comment: "The hardest thing to take is the blank wall she builds around her. Or it's more like a bank of fog in which she hides and loses herself. Deliberately, that's the hell of it! You know something in her does it deliberately, to get beyond our reach, to be rid of us, to forget we're alive!" —than it is by the "cheapness" of the doctor who attended on his birth and gave his mother drugs to dull the pain.

O'NEILL himself, not in the play but in the dedication to his wife which accompanies it, obliquely recognizes that it was this lack of love which destroyed his brother and distorted his own life, when he says: "For Carlotta, on our 12th Wedding Anniversary. . . . I mean it as a tribute to your love and tenderness which gave me the faith in love that enabled me to face my dead at last and write this play—"

There are in the play itself other similar realizations which break the surface for only a bare minute at a time, but which we feel uneasily stirring within its depths throughout.

These all center about the powerful figure of the father—a figure which might have achieved real tragic stature and raised the drama itself to tragic heights had it not been for its creator's insistence on imposing the mechanical equations of forgiveness, and his rigid refusal to admit human responsibility or value judgment.

The enduring warmth of the lonely, disappointed, aging but still passionate man; his vital lifelong love for the beauty of the spoken word; the generosity of spirit which enables him to appreciate the novel poetry of Baudelaire whom he hates as well as the familiar greatness of the Shakespeare he loves; the disciplined professional self-respect which has kept him from missing a performance in almost forty years of heavy drinking, and the self-disciplining human loyalty which has kept him from unfaithfulness through over thirty years of an often interrupted and frustrating marriage; the pride in his Irish peasant ancestry—all the solid strength of the man as well as his "tragic flaw" are crystallized for us in the most moving moment of the play, the only one O'Neill allows him for his own defense.

"A stinking old miser. Well, maybe you're right. Maybe I can't help being, although all my life since I had anything I've thrown money over the bar to buy drinks for everyone in the house. . . . I can't feel that way about it when I'm sober in my home. It was at home I first learned the value of a dollar and the fear of the poorhouse. . . . When I was ten my father deserted my mother and went back to Ireland to die. Which he did soon enough, and deserved to, and I hope he's roasting in hell. . . . My mother was left, a stranger in a strange land, with four small children, me and a sister a little older and two younger than me. . . . Twice we were evicted from the miserable hovel we called home, with my mother's few sticks of furniture thrown out in the street, and my mother and sisters crying. I cried, too, though I tried hard not to, because I was the man of the family. At ten years old! There was no more school for me. I worked twelve hours a day in a machine shop, learning to make files. A dirty barn of a place where rain dripped through the roof, where you roasted in summer, and there was no stove in winter, and your hands got numb with cold, where the only light came through two small filthy windows, so on grey days I'd have to sit bent over with my eyes almost touching the files in order to see! . . . And what do you think I got for it? Fifty cents a week! It's the truth! Fifty cents a week! And my poor mother washed and scrubbed for the Yanks by the day, and my older sister sewed. . . . We never had clothes enough to wear, nor food enough to eat. Well I remember one Thanksgiving, or maybe it

was Christmas, when some Yank in whose house mother had been scrubbing, gave her a dollar extra for a present, and on the way home she spent it all on food. I can remember her hugging and kissing us and saying with tears of joy running down her tired face: 'Glory be to God, for once in our lives we'll have enough for each of us!' A fine, brave, sweet woman. There never was a braver or finer. . . . Her one fear was she'd get old and sick and have to die in the poorhouse. It was in those days I learned to be a miser. A dollar was worth so much then. And once you've learned a lesson, it's hard to unlearn it. You have to look for bargains. If I took this state farm sanatorium for a good bargain, you'll have to forgive me. The doctors did tell me it's a good place. You must believe that, Edmund. And I swear I never meant you to go there if you didn't want to. You can choose any place you like! Never mind what it costs! Any place I can afford. Any place you like—within reason."

A little later Tyrone's true crime is poignantly revealed, not in terms of whatever accidental part his parsimonious choice of a doctor may have contributed to his wife's drug-taking, but in the terrible and decisive part it played in destroying his own creative life. Here again, with a power for transcending that of its ostensible determinist theme, the play's potentially tragic protagonist achieves a moment of profound tragic recognition when he declares:

"I've never admitted this to anyone before, lad, but tonight I'm so heartsick I feel at the end of everything, and what's the use of fake pride and pretense? That God-damned play I bought for a song and made such a great success in—a great money success—it ruined me with its promise of easy fortune. I didn't want to do anything else, and by the time I woke up to the fact I'd become a slave to the damned thing and did try other plays it was too late. They had identified me with that one part, and didn't want me in anything else. They were right, too. I'd lost the great talent I once had through years of easy repetition. . . . Thirty-five to forty thousand dollars net profit a season like snapping your fingers! It was too great a temptation. Yet before I bought the damned thing I was considered one of the three or four young actors with the greatest artistic promise in America. . . . In 1874 when Edwin Booth came to the theater in Chicago where I was leading man, I played Cassius to his Brutus one night, Brutus to his Cassius the next. Othello to his Iago, and so on. The first night I played Othello, he said to our manager, 'That young man is playing Othello better than I ever did!' That from Booth, the greatest actor of his day or any other! And it was true! And I was only twenty-seven years old! . . . What the hell was it I wanted to buy, I wonder, that was worth—"

IT WOULD, of course, be absurd to analyze O'Neill's characters in an effort to apportion blame more fairly among the "four haunted Tyrones" or to seek the villain of the piece.

> *"In tragic life, God wot,*
> *No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:*
> *We are betrayed by what is false within."*

Nevertheless a realization of how heavily the scales have to be weighted to justify the play's explicit theme is important if we are to understand the way in which O'Neill's intention and creation have so often diverged. He himself has repeatedly declared: "Most modern plays are concerned with the relation between man and man, but that doesn't interest me at all. I am interested only in the relations between Man and God"; and "I'm always, always trying to interpret Life in terms of lives, never just lives in terms of character. I'm always acutely conscious of the Force behind—."

Yet his most successful plays from *The Long Voyage Home* and *The Hairy Ape* through *Desire Under the Elms* and *Mourning Becomes Electra* to the final despair of *The Iceman Cometh* have all derived much of their power from the concrete social implications of varying "relations between Man and God" and from the specific social and cultural forms assumed by "the Force behind" individual characters.

The symbolism of his earlier work often made it possible for O'Neill to write two plays at once so successfully that we seldom realized they were only tangentially related to each other. But here his almost naked presentation of fact throws into startling relief the contradiction between the philosopher's false conclusion and the artist's truthful presentation. He tells us people are essentially equal, demanding from us only pity for their pain and absolution for their guilt. But he shows us that they are enormously unequal in potentiality and accomplishment, and that they demand judgment as well as compassion. He tells us that essential causes are undecipherable and that character as well as fortune depends on the inscrutable decrees of a malicious fate. But he shows us the social causes behind both character and fortune, and draws his deepest emotional insight from their revelation. And, significantly, he departs from autobiographical actuality once and only once—to make possible his nihilistic assertion of the futility of the human will. For while no one can doubt that Edmund Tyrone is fated to die as soon as the last curtain falls on his long day's journey into night, his prototype, Eugene O'Neill, lived to assert the triumph of his determination, and to reclaim his father's squandered gifts. His genius has borne bitter fruit, but it has also borne indubitable testimony to the creative human strength that his pessimism denies.

NO HIDING PLACE

ROBERT SIDGWICK

EIGHT years ago P. M. S. Blackett's *Political and Military Consequences of Atomic Energy* (published in this country as *Fear, War and the Bomb*) provoked cries of rage in the United States, largely for two reasons. In the first place, it laid bare the political basis for the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "So we may conclude that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not so much the last military act of the second World War, as the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress." (p. 139, *Fear, War and the Bomb.*) Secondly, it exposed the Baruch plan as a "specious" proposal for control, actually designed to perpetuate the American monopoly of atomic weapons. Professor Blackett has not changed his mind, but the situation with regard to atomic armament has changed so drastically since 1948 that he has made a new assessment in three essays published as *Atomic Weapons and East-West Relations.** By now the Baruch plan has become a curiosity of history, and the policy of the West has changed sufficiently that, although we could hardly expect official endorsement of Blackett's view as a whole, we shall see that General Gruenther's statement, to which I will return below, made the same day that this book was published, echoes its main thesis.

Blackett's essays grew out of three lectures on Military Science given at Trinity College, Cambridge, in the spring of 1956. In the first, he outlines the main contentions in the controversy as to the role of atomic weapons in Western military planning. The second essay is devoted to a collection of published facts which seem most important for understanding the present controversies. In the last essay, entitled "Retrospect and Prospect," he attempts to assess the subjective factors which have

* *Atomic Weapons and East-West Relations,* by P. M. S. Blackett, New York Cambridge University Press. $2.00.

played an essential part in molding the climate of opinion in the West, and gives a tentative outline of guiding lines for a more realistic future military policy. As an expert in military operations, Blackett discusses the questions of war and peace as coolly as if there were no moral and ethical issues involved. The strength of the book rests in this coolness and objectivity. The persuasiveness of Blackett's arguments depends on the unquestioned premise of "Western" interests. Humanitarian motives may play a large role in propaganda, and ethical considerations may affect morale, but the cold facts are that no military action is taken if it is clear beforehand that there is no chance of its success.

Moreover, Blackett leaves out of account the biological poisoning from large-scale use of atomic weapons, since it is "not at present thought in the West to be serious enough to prevent the large-scale use of at least some types of atomic weapons in war. It is possible, however, that further research work may make this assumption untenable." He attributes growing recognition that the danger of all-out war is quite small to the possession by both sides of atomic and hydrogen bombs. It does not matter that the West undoubtedly has many more bombs than the East—the East has enough to inflict vast destruction, and for planning purposes there is atomic parity.

But any consequent insurance against total war comes not from parity itself; what is decisive is the superiority of offense in strategic bomb delivery over defense. This applies to both East and West, and this is what General Gruenther said in retiring from command of NATO on November 14. According to the *New York Times* of that date: "Of the possibility that anyone in the Soviet Union might be tempted to press a button launching guided missiles against the West, General Gruenther remarked that 'No nation is going to press that button if it means national suicide.' Pausing to emphasize his words, General Gruenther added, "That is just what it would mean.'" According to the dispatch, General Gruenther went on to assert that "the West's power of *offense* in air strength,, nuclear and guided weapons still has 'great superiority' over the Soviet Union's powers of *defense*." (Italics ours.) This last remark is also true in reverse; there is no question but that the Soviet power of offense has great superiority over the West's powers of defense.

THIS conclusion brings into sharp focus the question of why the West should continue to develop and stockpile atomic and hydrogen bombs at an ever increasing rate. According to Blackett the effect of unsound military policy seems "not so much that of increasing the risk of a

major war as of incurring a great waste of national resources and of risking the loss of power and influence in such areas as the Middle East, on which so much of the present prosperity of the West depends." Previously it was assumed that atomic bombs would be used strategically against cities, civilian populations and industrial areas. Present Western military planning (in fact, though not in its declarations) is essentially based on the limited tactical use of "small" atomic bombs in conjunction with land armies, which is generally believed to favor the West. The assumption here is that the problem would be one of stopping by inferior manpower a land invasion of Europe from the East, and that even tactical small scale use of atomic bombs would tend to favor the defense. Blackett thinks it most important to note that this prediction might prove false, but there is another more basic problem involved: "The question of the feasibility of making in peace and maintaining in war valid distinctions between the tactical and strategic use of atomic weapons is very complex and very difficult to answer." As yet this question has not been answered publicly, and probably no clear answer exists in the military command.

The public assumption is still that an all-out atomic attack would be launched from Western bases if large-scale land fighting broke out between East and West in Europe. Blackett points out that such exhortation mixes dangerously with military analysis, since "strategic atomic attack on enemy cities can only be envisaged as a last resort of a nation driven to the last and suicidal extremity." And he believes that unless a distinction between tactical and strategic bombing can be clearly drawn, limited wars will have to be fought without the aid of tactical atomic support. The essay on Western military policy in regard to atomic weapons ends with the trenchant remark: "If it is in fact true, as most current opinion holds, that strategic air power has abolished global war, then an urgent problem for the West is to assess how *little* effort must be put into it to keep global war abolished."

EXCEPT for its clarity and cogency in bringing together available facts on the atomic arms race—the power of bombs, possible methods for delivery, and a comparison of the relative military strength of the great powers—the second essay contains very little that is new. Blackett does point out that the roots of East-West competition are much older than the Cold War. In relating the (to the West) amazingly rapid rise of Russian military technology to the production of technically trained personnel he notes that the present large output of Soviet scientists and technologists is the result of a plan initiated in the 'thirties—the "fifty-year

plan"—with the avowed object of first equalling and then surpassing the technology of the West.

Meanwhile the West came to believe that its whole survival depends on its military technical superiority: "The attempt to meet Soviet armed manpower by atomic weapons led the humane and civilized West to adopt as the mainstay of its military policy the attack on civilians and cities. This 'true use of Air Power'—as it is called by our Air Marshals—is a Western invention, both in theory and in practice: it long predated atomic bombs." Blackett does not agree that the new Russian technology spells push-button disaster for the West: "What is clear now is that those in the West who make these prophecies of disaster, are in fact projecting on to the Soviet Union what they thought American policy was or perhaps should have been. Actually, there is no evidence that I know of, and much to the contrary, that the USSR ever thought that a war between continental powers could be anything but long drawn out and fought with all arms. Aerial Blitz Krieg theories, whether with conventional or atomic weapons, have always been derided. In historic fact such theories are entirely of Western origin." Again, "In fact, many which they have repeatedly asserted in the past they do not believe and of the lurid prognostics which are so widespread today in America are the result of attributing to the Soviet Union a Western military theory which is certainly now fallacious."

THIS last quotation is taken from the third essay, which is of somewhat more general interest than the first two in that it attempts to analyze the shifts in Western atomic military policy from a political standpoint. The dominant doctrine of the first period after the war was stated by Churchill in 1948: "Nothing stands between Europe today and complete subjugation to Communist tyranny but the atomic bomb in American possession." This clearly implies that Western civilization would have collapsed if the atomic bomb had not been invented before the end of World War II, although the West suffered relatively little damage in the war as compared with devastation and industrial destruction in the USSR. Clearly, atomic bombs did not save Western civilization, but they did play a large role in the Cold War. Blackett notes that, historically speaking, the most active period of the Cold War coincided with the period of Western atomic superiority and so of atomic unbalance. Relaxation has occurred only since both sides have developed the hydrogen bomb.

The hydrogen bomb, a weapon which could hardly be used in war except by madmen, has played an important part in East-West relations.

Blackett devotes a section to the Oppenheimer case, which grew out of the attendant controversy. The three issues in that case that were of outstanding military importance were: (1) whether the USA should undertake a crash program to develop the H-bomb as an answer to the Russian atomic bomb; (2) whether the main use of atomic bombs should be strategic, against cities, etc., or whether they should also be used tactically in support of land forces, and (3) how much of the national effort should go toward air defense in comparison with that spent on offensive bombers and missiles. On the second and third of these issues, the Oppenheimer views against the exclusively strategic use of atomic weapons and on the importance of considering defense as well as offense came to be considered orthodox. On the first issue the military and most of the scientific advisers took opposite positions during the period (1949-1951) when the decision was made. Within the limits of rational military theory both sides were wrong in basing their arguments on the assumption that the Soviet atomic program was largely imitative; this was proved when the first Soviet fusion test was found to be of a different type from that tested nine months earlier by the United States.

BLACKETT thinks that much of the opposition to the H-bomb program by atomic scientists was in fact the price paid by the American government for lack of candor in 1945. "If the scientists had been matic victory, since it kept the Soviet Union out of the Japanese peace but that the dropping of the bombs won for America a vital diplomatic victory, since it kep the Soviet Union out of the Japanese peace settlement and so avoided the difficulties and frictions inherent in the German surrender, I expect most would have accepted, however reluctantly, the practical wisdom of the act. They were not told this, but they were told that the bomb saved untold American lives. When they later learned that this was rather unlikely, many of them must have begun to fear that their Government might not be abl eto resist some future temptation to exploit America's atomic superiority before it was too late." In this it is impossible to agree entirely with Blackett. He forgets that although it may have been clear to General Groves and others in the military establishment as early as 1943 that Russia was the "enemy," the American people, including the atomic scientists, did not fight the war on that assumption. "Candor" on this point in 1945 might easily have made impossible the crash program that culminated in the bombing of Japan.

In considering the question of whether it is really the success of the Soviet atomic program which has brought reassurances against global war,

Blackett discusses briefly the possible military effect of Stalin's death. He thinks there has been little change in the defense policy of the USSR. "With our present knowledge there can be little doubt that for many years past an important element in Stalin's policy was to attempt to impose co-existence on the West by achieving atomic parity. This was, in fact, achieved within six months of Stalin's death. . . . In so far, then, as the present détente is a result of the present Soviet leaders' confidence in their strength, it is a result not of Stalin's death but of the ruthless methods by which he drove his country to the scientific, technological and industrial efforts, without which atomic parity would have been long delayed."

What the success of the Soviet atomic policy has undoubtedly achieved is to deflate the false doctrine of the feasibility of preventive war. While preventive war was never firm policy in the West, there was for a time "strong support for policies which, *if put into practice,* would have amounted to it." The "liberation" policy, with its "year of decision" set for 1952 or 1953, amounted to such a threat. By the middle of 1954 the policy was everywhere recognized as dead.

Blackett thinks that at no time could a preventive war have been militarily successful, and that the actual danger of its being launched was always unlikely except perhaps during a short period of the Korean war, but this could not have appeared certain to the Soviet military authorities.

This raises questions of great interest that Blackett does not discuss. If the present relaxation of former Russian "intransigence" is due to Soviet confidence that the West has not atomic superiority with which to threaten to impose a settlement, and if the West now recognizes that it must negotiate instead of trying to impose, what were the mistakes of the post war Stalin era from the point of view of humanity as a whole? Should the Soviet leaders have staked the future on the assumption that the West would pursue a rational military policy? What is here left out of account is the internal political price for achieving parity so rapidly; in retrospect, since the West did not in fact attack, this price seems too high, and the USSR was probably slow to anticipate the changes that would be possible on the basis of the new international balance. The answers to these questions will probably not become entirely clear for some time, but the matter is obviously very complicated.

Blackett says very little about international control of atomic weapons and general disarmament, despite its importance, because he is convinced that real progress toward disarmament can only come from a real-

istic appreciation of the global military situation. In his view the UNO's abortive attempts at control in 1946 were disastrous for the immediate interests of the West. "The Baruch Plan, with its fatal doctrine of 'instant and condign punishment' against a great power, was the illegitimate offspring of the idealism of conscience-stricken scientists and the conservative realism of hard-bitten statesmen. It was based on the military absurdity that a few dozen atomic bombs could defeat a continental power cheaply and quickly, and so nourished—for many the fear and for a few the hope—of a preventive war." His optimism for the future is based on the fact that there is now "bargaining between effective atomic equals, and this gives much greater hope for agreement." He concedes that many difficulties stand in the way of settlement, and expects no startling immediate outcome. But "every year we life with (bombs) without using them is one step towards the possibility of a real agreement on how first to control them and how then to abolish them." The assurance is tenuous but real.

Right Face

Windfall

The record Federal peacetime spending in the next fiscal year will cost every man, woman and child in the country an average of $416 each.

At the same time each person's share of the record revenue to be collected will amount to $427 each. The extra $11 each makes up the expected surplus for debt reduction.—*AP* dispatch.

The Man in the Grey Flannel Flop

One of the major reasons why the Administration is running into difficulty with Congress over the proposed Middle East policy was made crystal clear by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. This difficulty lies in what public relations experts call "the art of communicating."

This art is the ability to make people understand in precise language what you are talking about.—The *New York Herald-Tribune.*

Naturally

Miss Arlen is a pink blonde who wears pink wool dresses so tight they bulge over veins . . . drives a pink Thunderbird which matches hair and dresses, has a pink-tinted poodle. . . .

"Do you consider yourself a character?" we asked.

Oh yes, I certainly am. I guess I'm one naturally, because I'm myself and I play me. I always say there's nothing wrong with being commercial, if it sells. . . ."—Joe Hyam's "This is Hollywood" column in the *New York Herald-Tribune.*

God Forbid

The raising of the Fifth Amendment—in no way involving communism—caused the Nella Bogart vice trial to adjourn suddenly yesterday.

Samuel H. Altman, Miss Robert's lawyer, explained to reporters that "she wants to take the Fifth as a protection against any possible future prosecution by either state or Federal authorities." It was emphasized by others that "this has nothing to do with communism." The *New York Post.*

MORE COMMENTS ON HOWARD FAST

Herbert Aptheker

HOWARD FAST, eminent American novelist, felt it necessary to leave the Communist Party, and advisable to announce this decision in an exclusive interview with Harry Schwartz of the *New York Times*. At the request of the editors of *Mainstream*, Mr. Fast explained at length, in its pages, the reasons for his decision.

As one who is himself a member of the Communist Party and has come to his own decision—to remain a member—I propose to comment, briefly, since space limitations are severe, upon Howard Fast's article.

Essentially, his decision is posited upon a particular estimate of the world today. This estimate finds the government of the Soviet Union to be the main danger to the perpetuation and purification of socialism in one-third of the world; it finds this government to be a central source, also, of the war danger; it is, furthermore, according to Mr. Fast, the major obstacle to the realization of mankind's progressive and democratic aspirations. The obverse of this finding is also explicitly affirmed. The Government of the United States is chargeable, he finds, with "petty tyranny" and an undefined "assorted madness" in its foreign policy; but what one really has here is "that most splendid thing, American Democracy."

Hitherto, Howard Fast had believed "that the only truth about the Soviet Union was the picture presented by friends of the Soviet Union"; but now he knows this to have been false, and the Khrushchev revelations concerning the crimes and brutalities associated with a period of Stalin's rule, shows him that, believing as he did, he was "a victim of the most incredible swindle in modern times."

We have, in the U.S.S.R., Mr. Fast now believes, something monstrous, a "socialism without morality," and in the period since Khrushchev's report, we have been treated, in Hungary, to "a new kind of socialism—socialism by slaughter and terror." This new kind of socialism has a foreign policy befitting it: "From the crisis in Egypt we learned of the new brink-of-war tactics of Soviet foreign policy." All in all, while Howard Fast announced a retention of his own basically optimistic outlook for humanity, he persisted in this despite the Soviet Government: "Nor do I believe that mankind will be turned aside from socialist democracy and from the vision of the good world we will one day create. No power-clique of men of small soul and less humanity can long resist the tide of history."

When charges gush from an extraordinarily prolific pen with one major charge per sentence, another writer may well be appalled at the task of explaining his rejection of the charges, especially where not a line, but a book

is required for each. Yet, within the limits of this brief note, we will hazard a few remarks.

In Hungary, the slaughter and terror were fundamentally the work of counter-revolutionary forces, internal and external, who took advantage of a popular bona-fide, peaceful effort—culminating a three-year-old process of change—at speeding up the very much delayed purification of socialism; these forces then turned this mass effort into a violent movement to destroy socialism and restore landlordism and capitalism.*

In Egypt, there was not a "crisis"; there was an imperialist war of aggression and intimidation. When Howard Fast writes from a sense of outraged morality, let him beware of demagogy. Egypt was attacked by the air, sea and land forces of Israel, France, and Great Britain. One month, Premier Ben-Gurion said: "Preventive war would be madness"; and he promised: "We will never start a war. We do not believe that wars provide comprehensive solutions to historic problems." The next month, that Premier's army and bombers attacked Egypt in force. And within 24 hours of that assault, Britain and France bombed the city of Cairo. The whole attack was coordinated by all three powers; it was a contemptible outrage, seeking, in ways reminiscent of the worst features of white-supremacist imperialism, to destroy the national liberation movements of North Africa. Even the London *Manchester Guardian* said it was "wrong in every count—moral, military and political"; it said the attackers were "guilty of an atrocious act of war."

But Mr. Fast, in his moral dudgeon, calls it a "crisis," and can find nothing to criticize in it except his false version of Soviet reaction thereto. It is easy to be contemptuous of the Socialists in World War I days (and some in the days of World War II, like the Hungarian Socialists) who in the name of "patriotism" forgot their Socialism, and defended the Czar or the Kaiser or the Prime Minister, or the Premier, or the President (or Horthy); the test is what one does when he himself is faced with this choice. Mr. Fast ran to his own private tent, in this case; in doing this he is neither defending the cause of Israel, nor freedom, nor democracy, nor peace, nor decent morality—let alone, Socialism.

The U.S.S.R. did not use "brink-of-war tactics" when Egypt was attacked. In that case, as so often in the past, the Soviet Union took a stand in defense of peace and against imperialist assault. In notes unprecedented for their firmness and directness, it demanded the immediate cessation of the use of force against Egypt. This stand, buttressed for the moment by U.S. support, stopped that colonial war and for the first time in history there followed the relatively quick withdrawal of imperialist aggressors with their aims not accomplished.

Those are the facts; it is these facts that Mr. Fast must square with his newly-discovered picture of a world where the Soviet Union is the source of the war danger, and the fountainhead of repression. Finally, we turn to the revelations of personal tyranny and of criminality in the leadership of the Soviet Union and of other So-

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* The present writer has completed a 256-page book attempting to convey his understanding of the recent Hungarian events; it is scheduled for publication very soon.

cialist countries for various periods of time.

We observe that in the list of teachers whom Howard Fast names as most influential in his own life there occur the names of fourteen individuals from Jefferson to Bernard Shaw, Upton Sinclair to Marx, Douglass to Engels, but there is no room for Lenin.

He is, I think, an important teacher, too; indeed, in my view, Lenin is the greatest figure in the whole galaxy of world revolutionary leaders. He is, certainly the greatest analyzer of and fighter against imperialism. I believe it is no accident that in the United States today, Howard Fast does not see American imperialism, but rather "that most splendid thing, American Democracy"; and that at the same moment, dazzled by the splendor, he forgets Lenin.

One can, I suppose, forget Lenin, but it is unwise to forget American imperialism if he wishes to understand the world today. The fact is that if one forgets the imperialism of American Big Business he omits a basic aspect of the reality of the American economic, political and social order; and he omits a fundamental component of the world today.

The ultimate source, but not the only one, of the difficulties, mistakes, aberrations, and crimes marking the transition from capitalism to socialism lies in imperialism. It lies, internally, in the vestiges of capitalist society; it lies, externally, in the hostility of the capitalist world. We do not here have reference simply to imperialist plots.

These conspiracies, and the internationally organized apparatus for counter-revolutionary subversion certainly exist, on a scale hitherto unprecedented in history, and their center is our own country. But this apparatus of counter-revolution, with its budget reaching into the billions each year, constitutes only one manifestation of the policy and strategy of imperialism—the destruction of socialism. It is in this sense that the *system of imperialism*—which encompasses its apparatus of reactionary terror and subversion—is at the root of many of the mistakes and worse than mistakes that have so far marred the building of socialism.

More important than the billion dollar annual budget of the American Central Intelligence Agency are the fifty billion dollars annually appropriated for arms, by the United States. More important than the saboteurs sent to East Europe, are the twenty-five additional air bases (nine of them capable of handling aircraft carrying atomic bombs) now being built in West Germany at a cost of $375,000,000 (*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 7, 1957). More important than the Western efforts to assassinate Communist leaders (which in the case of the leader of the Belgian Party succeeded, and in the case of Togliatti barely failed), is Secretary Dulles' calm announcement that "U.S. forces almost everywhere were equipped with atomic weapons" (A. P. dispatch from Canberra, March 13, 1957). More important than the filthy shenanigans of Allen Dulles and his partner, the Nazi chief saboteur, Reinhard Gehlen, is the announcement that General Hans Speidel ("scholarly soldier," the *Times* delightedly called him) formerly in charge of the Nazi occupation of France, is now Commander of Allied Land Forces in Central Europe, and that General Adolf Heusinger, formerly Operations Chief of Hitler's General Staff, is now in charge of the Armed Forces Department of West Germany.

These are facts—and there are a thousand more like them. They show the policy of Western imperialism to be reactionary, aggressive and war-like. They are buttressed by acts, by deeds, from the policy of remilitarizing West Germany and Japan, to propping up Franco, from destroying democratic governments in British Guiana and Guatemala, to warring upon Egypt and Algeria.

In terms of what one is dealing with and what kind of a world is the "free world" which is headed by the American imperialism that Howard Fast now forgets, one may glance at just one of the less publicized of its continuous acts of atrocity. For example, here is an item in the *N. Y. Times* of November 8, 1956, telling of "a strange war" which "the outside world ignores." It is the war of suppression waged by servitors of American imperialism now looting the nation of Colombia. Stuck away in this item is the President's remark to the *Times* newsman "that more than 100,000 civilians and soldiers have been killed since the civil war erupted in 1949." That is, over one hundred thousand dead in a nation whose total population comes to less than twelve millions. This is one of the "minor" illegalities (or shall we say, pieces of "petty tyranny") in a "forgotten war" in a side alley off Wall Street.

When it comes to "illegality" as a whole, one must bear in mind the *essential* character of law in a capitalist society—i.e., the maintenance of capitalism. There are differences among capitalist countries; in some there are democratic rights, most of them won from the bourgeoisie through mass struggle, and more or less implemented, depending upon time and place and circumstance, but always and everywhere precious. Yet basically the great American journalist and crusader, Henry Demarest Lloyd, expressed the nature of bourgeois law, half a century ago, when he said, apropos of political prisoners: "The bird of freedom has always been a jail bird"; and of law enforcement in general: "Only the rich can get justice, only the poor cannot escape it."

It is pressures from this kind of system which is the basic source of the difficulties experienced in building socialism. He who ignores or minimizes this—who does not estimate it in its full and overwhelming significance—does not comprehend the world today.

When Howard Fast speaks of "that most splendid thing, American Democracy," he opens up an area of judgment too vast for even the beginnings of comment herein. Here I want to say only this: sometimes "little" things are more revealing of the essence of a matter than bulky tomes. We had such a little thing recently. The United States Government sent Richard Nixon to the inauguration of the Prime Minister of Ghana; despite Nkrumah's personal request, it refused to allow Dr. Du Bois to be present at this ceremony. If that incident is weighed and probed, it will reveal more about "that most splendid thing," American imperialism, than ten thousand words.

It is the system which dominates the Government and compels the choice of Nixon over Du Bois which is the central foe of adherents of socialism and the source of basic contradictions in today's world. But this is not the sole source of the fearful blunders, errors, and crimes that mark the rise of socialism. These arise too from the fact that this leap into a new quality of social relationship must be made and

can only be made by human beings evolved out of an exploitative social order. And in making this unprecedented social transformation, on a national and international level, there are limitations in personnel and profound psychological problems, hardly stated, much less solved as yet. In addition, there is the whole question of power per se, of its own logic, its own energy to distort, and to deceive, to corrupt. These and other questions—national feeling, religious belief, different levels of technique, for example—are new questions in large part, because socialism has operated nowhere more than forty years.

The effort to resolve these problems, and contradictions springing from them, is the work of Communist Parties, to begin with, assisted by all friends of a purified, fully democratized socialist life. The struggle comes basically from Communists, and is conducted in the first place within Communist parties. This does not prove a "swindle"; it proves that all life is a struggle. It proves that building and perfecting socialism—a new enterprise for mankind and the most difficult it has yet attempted—is not simple and does not proceed smoothly. It proves, too that socialism, within itself, generates the forces leading to its own purification, because unlike capitalism, inequality, injustice and tyranny are alien to the system of socialism.

Howard Fast cited Frederick Douglass as one of his teachers. Let him remember that Douglass faced many moments of despair, but none was so bitter as those which came just before victory. Let him remember that it was Lincoln's Government which ordered its Army to return fugitive slaves to their masters; which refused for two years to pemit Negroes to fight in its Army. It was in the North that Negroes were lynched by the scores during the Civil War. Douglass might well have despaired and quit—others did. What hope was there for a republican form of government? What hope was there for "government by the people," when racism had so corroded it that it preferred suicide to purification?

But Douglass fought on, within that country and within its institutional limits because he knew that the basic source of the poison was in the system of slavery, and he knew that the fundamental enemy of his people and of democratic advance, at that time, was in the Confederacy. He knew the difference between fundamental and peripheral contradiction; he threw his great genius against the main foe, while striving to purify that foe's opponent, the better to win the battle.

Howard Fast cited Thomas Jefferson as one of his teachers. Let Mr. Fast recall that Jefferson had the profound patience needed by all true revolutionaries; he had the maturity needed by all who seek to get at the roots of social change. Jefferson was in France during the great Revolution there. He wrote of its "difficulties and dangers," but he said one need "not expect to be transported from despotism to liberty in a feather bed." He knew that in France "many guilty persons fell without the forms of trial, and with them, some innocent," and surely to none were the forms of trial more precious, nor the rights of the innocent more sacred, than to Thomas Jefferson. But did he, like many others—like Wordsworth, like Coleridge—abandon the struggle and denounce the Revolution? He did not. On the contrary, seven years after the Revolution had started,

he wrote: "It is unfortunate that the efforts of mankind to recover the freedom of which they have been so long deprived will be accompanied by violence, with errors, and even with crimes. But while we weep over the means, we pray for the end."

Howard Fast did not cite Lenin as one of his teachers. Yet he will grant, surely, that Lenin knew something about workers and about revolution. In August, 1918, when the commercial press of the world was denouncing him, his Party, and the Revolution he was leading, Lenin wrote a *Letter to American Workers.* In it he said:

"Let the kept bourgeois press howl about each mistake made by our revolution. We are not afraid of our mistakes. Men have not become saints because the revolution has begun. The toiling classes, oppressed and downtrodden for centuries and forced into the clutches of poverty, savagery and ignorance, cannot be expected to bring about a revolution flawlessly. And the cadaver of bourgeois society . . . cannot be nailed in a casket and buried. . . .

"For every hundred mistakes of ours . . . there are 10,000 great and heroic deeds, the greater and the more heroic for their simplicity. . . . But even if the contrary were true—although I know this supposition to be incorrect —even if there were 10,000 mistakes for every 100 correct actions of ours, even in that case our revolution would be great and invincible, and *so it will be in the eyes of history,* because for the *first time,* not the minority, not only the rich, not only the educated, but the real masses the vast majority of toilers are *themselves* building a new life, are deciding *by their own experience* the most difficult problems of Socialist organization."

We have now a better and sobering appreciation of the meaning of those words, "the most difficult problems of socialist organization." But they are soluble and we will master them. Mankind faces them now for the first time; but this is a case for elation, not despair. It is a cause for more intense devotion and fuller participation in the supreme end of human endeavor, the creation of a just, equal, abundant, creative, and peaceful world. In that effort, the Communists hitherto have been in the forefront, in the United States as everywhere else. We Communists will continue to stand in the front ranks of such fighters, for this is what it means to be a Communist. Nothing, neither imperialism's fury nor our own severe limitations, will prevent us from holding to this fundamental commitment.

Despite Howard Fast's disillusionment, the Soviet Union stands today, as she did when she saved the world from Hitlerism (Howard made no mention of this little fact, in recounting his decision) as the leading force in the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, racism, and war. It seems to me that it is the prime duty of an American citizen to help bring about a condition in his own country where it may be possible to say that in forwarding these supreme goals, the United States stands on a par with any other country in the world.

Phillip Bonosky

I read the galleys of Howard Fast's testimony that his god had failed under circumstances, let me confess it immediately, that were extremely unfavorable to it.

The first circumstance was that I was completing a long book in which Communists—*American Communists*—play an important role. To write this book I had to ponder a great deal over what American Communists have meant and do mean to this country of ours. In the three years or more that it took me to write the book, the world didn't stand still. In those years my thesis was subjected to a severe test, and I was forced to confront the question, in the middle of my book (since events like Hungary and the Khrushchev revelations very rudely interjected themselves) from an even more fundamental point of view than I had anticipated when I began. My conclusion had to pass, first of all, an *artistic* test. Do the Communists I have known, and the events I have experienced, lend themselves to artistic truth?

It's not for me to say whether I've been successful or not. All I can say is that I have not needed to overcome any subjective hurdles; I have not needed to lie to myself: my problem as an artist was to probe more deeply; and, frankly, in this sense, I am even grateful to the severe test that events have forced me to make.

What, then, is my conclusion after thinking as profoundly as I can, in the way an artist must, about Communists in America and their future?

My conclusion is that the Communists have written a proud and unique page in American history; and after they have digested and refashioned their own vision, under the blows both of persecution and historic events, they will find their way to the American people, and first of all to the most deeply oppressed, the workers and their allies.

This is and remains an epic theme which no artist can reject or fail to gauge correctly except at his own peril.

What is the second circumstance that made me even more unsympathetic to Howard Fast's account of his nine month's gethsemane which produced yet another document to be added to that fairly long list of arid and unhopeful testimonies of despair, so much like the cry of the child who learns a human truth about a fearfully elevated and glorified mother or father?

The second circumstance was the suicide of my friend, Frank Balwood. By a rather grotesque coincidence I was reading Howard Fast's statement when I was informed of Frank Balwood's suicide by phone. Frank Balwood also left behind him a statement —a very short one; one in which he said he could no longer endure this life and would take "the easy way" out—hanging himself by his belt; and his total effects consisted of an unpaid laundry bill and a key to a subway locker. In his pocket a poem he had written: *Day Dreams.*

And who was Frank Balwood? He was a talented musician and composer who could not make it in this vile and merciless jungle that passes for civilization. He could not even wait until his book of compositions was published and for the banquet at which I was to speak a few words about him to take place. The day he hanged himself he spent most of the afternoon trying to muster up enough courage—or enough of it to kill his pride—to ask for a loan. He spent hours in his own private hell that day, and in the end he did not, *could* not, swallow his last remnant of pride to ask once more, yet again, to beg for that last loan which

would have extinguished the final fragile wisp of his pride. Rather than give that up he preferred "taking the easy way out": hanging himself.

Frank Balwood was one of the millions of Americans who lead lives of "quiet desperation" here in America; sometimes they kill themselves and sometimes they simply dwindle away into human mummies of hopelessness and despair, fearing being young, desperately living through middle age, dreading the sentence of old age.

Nobody is going to save these people, except—I say this quite consciously—the Communists—that is, the working class which the Communists express, and the profound and selfless leadership which they can give, and alone can give, for that vision is theirs to give and is the most precious thing they can offer to suffering humanity. For theirs is the transcendent knowledge that this system of daily human murder, not only of bodies but of souls, which is capitalism, can be and will be replaced by a truly human system: socialism. And they also know that in the process they must go down into the depths, mix with filth, break bread with monsters, breathe in decay: and no guarantee in the world exists that they can wholly extricate themselves from pitch and decay without soiling themselves. Those who fall because they could not resist corruption are also fallen heroes, and must not be wholly scorned and despised. Knowing real life, and knowing that the essence of capitalism is barbarism and the defenders of barbarism are barbarians, no matter how they deck themselves out, the real fighters for socialism therefore know that the struggle will never be easy, pretty nor guaranteed by words, noble sentiments, books, the qualified allegiance of self-appointed moralists, nor by anything else but their own struggle and sacrifice. They also know that "great men" alone, even if they truly were all that a Joseph Stalin seemed to be, will not guarantee anything for them that they themselves are unwilling to or cannot.

It should have been Howard Fast's private business that he became a Communist and that he chose no longer to be one. But neither the public nor Howard Fast himself considered that to be so. Howard Fast signaled his defection under two conditions, both of them very strange and very disturbing. The first was that he resigned *before* the convention of the Party that he belonged to, and whose rules he subscribed to, and whose policies he had every right to attempt to influence and change. He chose not to try to, and it becomes I think a legitimate thing to ask whether he resigned because he feared the convention would make no changes, or—and this is very important—because he feared it *would?*

The second was that news of his defection appeared first of all in the *New York Times,* which has steadily boycotted his books, and under the name of Harry Schwartz, a long-time anti-Communist, whose talent for making black look white and white black, whenever the facts related to the progressive movement both here and abroad, is notorious, and who, of course, correctly saw Howard Fast's action as another blow in the cold war, no matter what Howard Fast's subjective intentions might have been.

Under such circumstances I think all who have ever been in the workers' fight can do nothing other than to characterize this as desertion under fire. I am not impugning his personal courage

in the sense that I had any doubts that he would deal with the Un-American committee as any decent person would. But in that most important struggle of all—in Blake's "mental fight,"—he left the field at a most crucial moment.

I am not going to try to answer Mr. Fast's attacks on the Soviet Union. Nobody has qualified me to; in any case I hope spokesmen for the Soviet Union take this opportunity of answering Howard Fast; and I am sure *Mainstream* will be glad to publish any statement.

On the Soviet Union, my opinion remains the opinion of the person who first said that that country had reached such an epic stage in its historic development that to comment on it might reveal very little about the country, but would most certainly reveal a great deal about the commentator!

Howard Fast declares that, though he was no dupe, nevertheless he was the "victim of the most incredible swindle of modern times!"

In what way was he, and therefore myself, and a whole generation, "swindled"? Were we being swindled when the Soviet Union demanded of the League of Nations that sanctions be placed against Mussolini when he invaded Ethiopa in 1935? Were we, and the Spanish people, being swindled when the Soviet Union sent aid to Spain in its heroic fight for democracy, while the "democracies," and the "socialists," like the government of Leon Blum in France, stabbed that martyred nation in the back? Were we being swindled, when we were starving during the Depression, and the Soviet Union declared that unemployment was an unnecessary and historically outmoded element of society, and proved it by its own example? Were we being swindled when the Red Army destroyed Hitlerism single-handed, "helped" only in the end when the "allies" finally crossed the Channel not to destroy Hitler but to keep the Red Army from taking over all of Western Europe? Were the Jewish people being swindled when thousand upon thousands of them were snatched from the Hitlerite ovens, placed on trains commandeered for them, and sent east while Ukrainians and Russians died in their place? And when the Red Army moved into German and Polish territory and released the prisoners of the death-camps, who was being swindled? How many Jews owe their lives to that? How can one forget so quickly, so easily, so petulantly what was only yesterday a heroism of historic proportions? And are the Jewish people being swindled in a country where 260,000 of them are in the state apparatus, the party, industry, science, literature and art, in fact from top to bottom of that country, far out of proportion, on a percentage basis, to their actual population? And in a country where anti-Semitism is a *crime*—and despite the cynicism and polemics around the question of its national role—*remains* a crime, *is* a crime, and which thereby advances the moral and ethical level of this question farther than it ever had been before?

Who is being swindled? The world —progressive humanity—by the historic deeds of the Soviet Union, or those who are being fed grotesqueries of "disillusionment"—a "disillusionment" which is merely an index to their own fantastic immaturity or lack of understanding of the most elementary laws of social growth and conflict?

No, let's have no more talk about having been swindled when the deeds

in which millions of people participated—that were supposed to have swindled us—are writ big in history, for all humanity to see, while the deeds that took place behind closed doors and in secret letters and by the wiles of the enemies of socialism are being repudiated as quickly as they are brought to the light. And let us not match our injured senses with the true grief of those who not only suffered for those crimes but also, in a way we can never share, suffer even more profoundly a tragedy in having dealt so bitter a blow to the cause for which they have made such historic sacrifices! The tears that were shed by the members of the Twentieth Congress who listened to the account of Stalin's crimes are tears we have no right to belittle, or if the truth be spoken, parody with our complaints.

We have not earned that right yet.

So I end as I begin. I ponder over a book about Communists and over the suicide of my friend. And I look out of the window as I write this and before me stretches one of the greatest ghettoes in the world—Harlem; patrolled day and night by police on horseback like an occupied country, exploited mercilessly by landlords and store-keepers, and insulted and injured daily by a world which manufactures hypocrisy on a world-scale and spreads over its naked horror the sacred constitution and Bill of Rights like a cynical fig-leaf.

I hope that the socialist countries which published Howard Fast while he was boycotted here, and first of all by the *New York Times*, will continue to do so. For if Howard Fast has a future, it will be among those wonder-workers of the world and not among the death-dealers. Many men have been remembered for the good they did, while the bad they did has generously been forgotten.

Joseph Starobin

Listening to Howard Fast's outcry of "mental anguish and turmoil" in the March issue of Mainstream, the normal instinct urges respectful silence. A man has been hurt in broad daylight, his guts spilling blood in the streets, and he screams in pain. "Something broke inside of me, and finished," he cries. "A lifelong structure of belief lies shattered around me." He feels himself "the victim of the most incredible swindle of modern times."

These are terrible words, and no doubt this is how he feels. It is the moment of unspeakable misery which is captured so often by the photographers, the ones who win the prizes: it is the photo of the mother, losing her grip on the child as the boat goes down, the moment when the automobile mounts the curb and crashes into peaceful bystanders. What shall we say? It is the visage of agony, of horror, "the moment of truth," as the followers of the bullfights say.

Truth about what? About whom?

Some will say that Howard Fast is talking about crimes in the Soviet Union, of Jewish writers murdered in their prime, about Hungary. Very well. But about the tragedy of himself, he tells us little, and little has been said. Yet, until we talk about this, we do not know for whom to weep and we do not understand our own share in the guilt.

The real crime took place to a talented young man who became a myth, and was compelled to live up to the obligations of a world myth beyond his own power to do so. What was done to Howard Fast by his own religious prostration before what should have been a rational, scientific cause is just as much the commentary on the Soviet leaders and on the American Communist Party as those great crimes which he now indicts with anguish.

Here was a young writer, one of the many writers and artists of talent who came to be influenced by Communist thought and activity over this quarter of a century. He came with a fine gift for story-telling, and a sense of the great themes of his country's history; with great activity he wove these into books that were remarkable for their narrative skill and emotional quality; these were the promises of an important novelist. Such a man needed the hard work and the self-restraints without which the artist cannot grow; he needed to beware glibness, and he needed the warmth of comradely criticism; he needed humility and the suffering of human experience.

Instead Howard Fast had a reckless romance with the bitch-goddess of success, that traducer against whom William James had warned Americans. In the Communist Party, Howard Fast found adulation; and if I may use the harsh word—exploitation. But he did not find or could never accept the criticism to shape him, the standards to become better as a man and writer. And he reveled in what he should have resisted.

When he tells us now that he has just discovered in the American Communist Party "a destroying rigidity and unbendingness, a narrowing of approach and purpose that made it impossible for many good people to remain within it" so many of us shake our heads. What a strange man! For even now, in this moment of truth, how little does he recognize it.

For Howard became in the Communist Party the oracle on every issue from Negro rights to socialist realism; he ran for office on tickets that weren't his own, and headed every conceivable committee, took the floor each time without saying too much, refused the pleas of his best editors to revise his first drafts, published the best novel of the year every year. A man of energy, and yes, of courage; he took his turn in prison when persecution stalked the land and cut the tongues of a generation.

But throughout it all he neither grew as a writer nor gained wisdom as a man. He exhibited such a destroying rigidity and unbendingness, such a narrowing of approach and purpose that so many good people—shall I name their names?—found it impossible to contribute of their gifts and skills in a Left which had lost all sense of proportion about Howard Fast. He was a spokesman for us, and when he spoke we were too often ashamed, but said nothing. Many leaders of the American Communist Party knew this was as destructive of him as it was of everyone else. They did nothing to stop it.

For what intervened and aggravated the matter was the world audience, and those who molded it. The Soviet leaders needed a mythological Howard Fast and they invented him even at the cost of damaging the real one. They needed a certain portrait of American life; for a whole era they had kept their own hard-working folk from understanding contemporary America, its good and its

bad, through Faulkner and Hemingway and Richard Wright, Eudora Welty and others. A no-man's land existed because the truth was not being told. It had to be filled. Whether he was *the* American intellectual in fact was a less important question to the Russians than the fact that he was on their side. It can be argued that the fault was not their own; they were borrowing an emerging image created over here. Yet I feel it was blind and reckless of them. It was something less than opportunism on their part if the mentors of Soviet culture knew no better. But Ehrenburg and Fadeyev and Simonov knew better.

Howard Fast thus became the vehicle for a deception of which he was also the first victim. Instead of asking himself whether it was wholesome that a world audience increased while his own people found each successive book less important, he rode the gap. He won the prizes, was photographed with the happy children of beaming—and temporary—consular officials at the UN cocktail parties, and accepted the invitations to write on every conceivable subject for distant magazines whose editors cabled him as though he were a world power. Benjamin Franklin, in his beaver hat at Passy, would have found it all amusing. Howard was not amused. He was in dead earnest.

There are those who will now derive a certain satisfaction that it should be Howard Fast who now denounces the Soviet leaders and their works. The irony is obvious. I have no sympathy for the way the Soviet leaders have behaved: their society should never have been taken as the model for what we wish to build, and it is not that today. But Howard's indictment is as extravagant and oversimplified as his passion used to be. The deep sickness of contemporary Socialism, of which the Stalin era was a symptom, lies not only in what was terrible and wrong over there; it lies in what was done to Howard Fast.

American radicalism now faces a redefinition of first principles. American Socialists face new beginnings, and the reasons long antedate the Soviet 20th Congress. Despite the nostalgic hopes of *Mainstream's* editors, I doubt very much whether the things that have to be done will be done by the American Communist Party, however much its present or past members may contribute.

In the re-doing of an American radical movement, all sorts of men will be needed, men and women of a certain evangelism. However, we shall not be able to do our thinking with our hearts, but with our heads. There will have to be a sense of proportion, a sense of the tragic in life and a lot of hard work. The bright lights, the hoopla will yield us little.

Writers and artists will be joining to refashion an American Left, for the ivory-tower is no answer. But they will be themselves, and become better writers and artists, and they will leave it to history to judge which of them are world-personalities. It will do little good to edify millions of peasants of other countries in the process of becoming workers unless American workers find something meaningful and durable in such writers and artists.

All of us need each other's help. The tragedy is everyone's. We all let it happen. But how is a man to be helped who is not listening, and who is not listening because he hasn't stopped talking? For example, when Howard concludes his outcry in *Mainstream*

with a ringing testimonial to "that most splendid thing, American Democracy. . . ."I feel like shouting: "Hold it, fellers, here we go again."

Yes, a vital thing, this democratic tradition which is the fruit of so much suffering, so different from what other peoples have had to start with, so much the necessary terrain for great battles to come. But let us talk about it with a small "d." We do not need anything in capital letters any more. The capitalizers have caused us all—and themselves—too much damage. This will never lead us out of capitalism.

Bert Cochran
Editor, American Socialist

Howard Fast's break with Stalinism is the only way one should make this kind of a break, be it individual or collective—straight-from-the-shoulder, clear-cut, and public. What has been so disturbing about many of the post-Twentieth Congress reformations was their queasiness. It has been written long ago that nothing important is ever done in this world without passion. All the more is it true about this kind of a proposition. Far better that the stick be bent a bit in the opposite direction in the act of cutting loose from a school of Jesuitism than that the break be announced in a voice so quavering and uncertain as to cast its purpose into doubt, and qualified with so many reservations as to make dubious its permanency.

Also commendable in my opinion is Howard Fast's long anguished wail on discovering himself the victim "of the most incredible swindle in modern times." After all, there is more to socialism than a belief in the nationalization of the means of production and exchange. You don't make a socialist by simply demonstrating with a lot of charts and graphs that collectivization is superior from an engineering point of view. Beyond an understanding of society and history lies the passion for truth, for justice, for equality, which the modern world has now put within the grasp of mankind. That is why one may look askance at those who adopt resolutions about past "mistakes" with the same ease and unthinking repetition of ritualistic phrase with which they whitewashed any and every outrage in the past. In counter-distinction, Howard Fast's statement has the earmarks of something personal, something deeply felt and sincerely meant. That is why it deserves to be taken seriously.

Many writers and intellectuals have broken from Communism in the past fifteen years, and most of them have travelled long distances on to conformity from the points at which they stood at the moment of their break. The pressures of this society are many and powerful, and the bitter disillusionment which an experience with Stalinism invariably breeds, made them easy victims for succumbing to the wiles and competing for the rewards of official public opinion. What political outlook Howard Fast will finally work out for himself no one can say. It is a matter of satisfaction that his present statement is written from the standpoint of an independent radical who pledges to continue the good fight. If he stays true to this vow, Fast can be of considerable importance in helping to

create the climate for a new democratic socialist movement in this country. He is in a position to render great service.

Louis Harap

Managing Editor, Jewish Life

Deep and even ultimate questions are precipitated by Howard Fast's explanation for leaving the communist movement. Here I can only note a few personal thoughts on the matter.

Howard Fast gives as his first reason that this was the only "meaningful and purposeful" form that he could give to his "extreme protest" at the shocking revelations of past months. One can understand and sympathize with his shattering recoil from these events. Socialists will spend many years of searching thought and analysis to explain how such inhumanity and anti-socialist occurrences could take place in the first socialist country. And communists and friends of socialism will have to work for years to efface the legacy of these tragic events.

But was Howard Fast's the only or even the most effective mode of protest? Could he not be more effective through fraternal discussion and criticism from within the movement?

Howard Fast's indictment of Soviet ethics seems to me swayed by emotion to the point of distortion. There is far more to the question of Soviet ethics than the totally negative, oversimplified picture that he paints. This can be illustrated from his allusions to the Jewish question in the USSR.

It is apparent that the brutal, anti-socialist treatment of Soviet Yiddish culture and the execution of outstanding Jewish writers and leaders, as well as recent Soviet policy bearing on the Jews, played a large part in bringing Howard Fast to his decision. One can understand his reaction, even if one does not agree with the consequences he draws. For there can be no mitigation of the violations of socialist theory and morality with respect to the Jews, as well as other nationalities, which are by now established facts.

But for Howard Fast these constitute the whole picture, which it is not. There are equally indefeasible facts that must figure in any overall evaluation. There are few more radically democratic acts in history to compare with the Soviet policy toward formerly oppressed nations and nationalities, even if the picture is marred by the crimes of the Stalin regime. The first socialist country did institute equality for the Jews of the Soviet Union. From the classic land of oppression in old Russia, the Soviet Union became a place where Soviet Jews took their place in leading positions at every level and in every corner of Soviet life. The saving of hundreds of thousands of Soviet and Polish Jews from Hitler annihilation by evacuation to the Far East during the war was no small aspect of Soviet policy toward the Jews. One contemporary fact tells volumes: while Jews form about one and a half per cent of the total population, about ten per cent of all Soviet scientists are Jews (24,620 out of 223,893). There are about 260,000 Jews in the Communist Party apparatus, in government, in industry and the professions today.

But it would be no less a distortion of the true situation to limit oneself to such facts than to dwell wholly on the negative side of the picture, as Howard Fast does in his statement. It is true that a wave of discrimination

that inspired fear among the Jews took place in the "black years" between 1948 and 1953. What seems to me a theory of "integration" that amounted in reality to forced assimilation prevailed during those years. Unfortunately, from evidence available to us, this false application of the theory of integration is still made by many Soviet leaders today. A number of measures for the revival of Yiddish culture have been taken since 1954. But it appears that the right of Jews to Jewish cultural expression in the freest and effective sense is still a subject of debate among policy-makers, since projects, such as a Soviet Yiddish theater, are still in the discussion stage.

Any total judgment of the situation is therefore complex. But Howard Fast's view as expressed in his statement is lopsided and, it seems to me, not calculated to be helpful toward a restoration of the socialist approach to the Jewish question that prevailed until the middle thirties. Communists outside the Soviet Union have the responsibility to engage in fraternal discussion with the Soviet party to make a genuinely socialist approach to the Jewish question once more operative. Protest is not enough; efforts toward correction are the best form of protest. Can this not best be done from within the communist movement?

Howard Fast gives as his second reason for leaving the communist movement that he believes it to be "compromised" to the point of ineffectuality. I cannot share his certainty on this point. It is decidedly premature, it seems to me, to have such a definitive view. A great number of valuable advocates of socialism are organized in this movement. Many of them have shown that they grasp the need for radical reorientation to the problem of American socialist action. Who can say at this point that this new approach will not in time—not tomorrow, perhaps after a few years—bring the communists back into acceptance as a valid American force? Whether they will is not a question of theory nor is it a subject for speculation. The answer will be determined by how they actually *work*. The fact that they are the largest organized Marxist grouping in this country makes it highly important for the future of American socialism that the attempt to regain their place in American life should be made.

books in review

Hidden Poem

HOMAGE TO MISTRESS BRADSTREET, by John Berryman. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $3.75.

NOW AND AGAIN one comes across a poem which seems to have another and perhaps better poem buried inside it. John Berryman's *Homage to Mistress Bradstreet* is a work of this sort.

This is a longish poem of 57 eight-line stanzas, ostensibly a kind of "spiritual biography" of that Anne Bradstreet, America's "Tenth Muse," who was our first poet. I say ostensibly because, while most of the poem works out as a dramatic monologue, it is "disturbed" by a middle section, a dialogue between the living poet and the dead one, in which the main themes of the poem are developed.

These themes, to state them briefly if somewhat crudely at their greatest extension, involve man's alienation: the failures of human love, the lack of God. They are dramatized as Anne Bradstreet's encounter with the New World (which is not so new in its privations, its savagery, its soon-warring sects) and with the elements of her personal history. But the poem does not involve only the past. The middle section contains the living poet's declaration of love for the dead woman; and it becomes an identification in which the conflicts and agonies of Anne Bradstreet are declared to be modern problems. The actions of the rest of the poem, then, the monologues of the first and third parts, although they deal with the dead poet and her times, gain—or are expected to gain—a symbolic value and a modern relevance.

These actions include Mistress Bradstreet's arrival in the forbidding new world, her love for her husband, the birth of a child, the loss of friends and loved ones, her sickness, delirium and death. Stated in this way, the poem seems simple enough; but such a catalog does not include those conflicts with her own sensuality, nor the struggle for religious faith and peace, which are among the most moving parts of the work. Above all such a synopsis does not suggest the *immediacy* of certain sections. What we have here is not narration at all but, for the most part, a *rendering* of great intensity, as of something remembered. Here is the end of one stanza and the beginning of another dealing with childbirth:

I can *can* no longer
and it passes the wretched trap whelming and I am me

drencht & powerful, I did it with my
body!
One proud tug greens Heaven. Marvellous,
unforbidding Majesty.

If the poem turned only on Anne Bradstreet we would have had a moving portrait of the secret life (more imagined than real) of a more or less public figure, a life that was tragic in that it *had* to be secret, and in the defeat of its passion by conventions and duty. But this is only half of the poem; the other half consists of the relationship of the poet (or of his voice within the poem) to Bradstreet and her life. It is here that we would expect to find the central meaning of the poem, in contemporary terms.

This is just what we do not find. Instead we are given a number of teasing references to contemporary circumstances and to the life of the "I" of the poem; and we are given his declaration of love for Mistress Bradstreet, and a longish dialogue where she faces this temptation.

Since this is neither allegory nor necrophilia, one can only assume that Berryman finds Bradstreet's value and meaning in the kind and quality of her suffering. She had become endeared to him by her agonies and limitations. It is of no use to ask a lover what is the "meaning" of his beloved—it is her *being* that is important to him. And it is not mere analogy to suggest that the same is true here. The agony of Bradstreet has been real enough to Berryman to have made possible the tenderness and the power of this poem; but the poet has not been able to give her any location on the general map of suffering. The few modern or personal references: "delirium of grand depths," "Women serve my turn," the "reactor piles," the allusion (if I am right) to concentration camps—these are not enough to get our bearings.

Yvor Winters once said of a poem that it "was a rather good poem about nothing." He meant that the motive for the poet's feeling was completely buried or lay outside the poem he had made. I think that is true in this case. Anne Bradstreet becomes a mask; and the poem, I think, won't say what it is hiding. Berryman's feelings are manifest in the poem; but we don't know how to understand them because he has refused to give us a clue. The poem remains for us like a small and brilliant fragment from some naturalistic novel the rest of which has been lost.

A central interest of the poem (as well as an aspect of the quality of its terse texture) can be seen in stanza 35:

—I cannot steel myself God waits. He
flies
nearer a kindly world; or he is flown.
One Saturday's rescue
won't show. Man is entirely alone
may be. I am a man of griefs & fits
trying to be my friend. And the brown
smock splits
down the pale flesh a gash
broadens and Time holds up your heart
against my eyes.

This stanza is itself a fine invention. It is loosened, more than one example might suggest, by off-rhymes, repeated rhyme words, variation in the shape of lines etc. etc. It is elastic enough to be lyric or dramatic as the poet needs, and it is excellent for all, or nearly all, of Berryman's purposes.

A beautifully made poem then, and

a serious one (if perhaps a bit too dead serious), one that will bear a lot of reading and re-reading. (Some of the passages are really extraordinary and deserve much more quotation than there is space for here.) Then, with all its goodness, why do I have such strong reservations about the work? I think I can put it down to this, that the extension of the poem into its contemporary meaning is a lot more muted than it need be. It is true that the reader can, by main force, give the poem whatever extension he wants (and paraphrasers will probably go on explaining the notes to the work with tiresome industry) but I am more interested in what is *in* the poem—or what, in this case, is not. Put it this way: as the poem stands there is, I think, too much (or not enough) Bradstreet in it—or not enough (or too much) Berryman. The real "possible" poem, which might have made it a very sizeable poem of these times, is in the middle section, I believe. And this section does not really work out, is marred by that frigidity or inhibition which has foxed too many modern efforts.

So the poem is a limited mystery, but a worthy and often beautiful one.

THOMAS McGRATH

Biology and Freedom

THE BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF HUMAN FREEDOM, by Theodosius Dobzhansky. Columbia University Press. $2.95.

IN THIS slight book, based on five lectures given two years earlier at the University of Virginia, a leading geneticist seeks to explore some of the ethical implications of contemporary biology. This itself is a significant development and symptomatic of our times. Since the first A-bomb explosion scientists have been aroused to a new consciousness of the broad social and moral implications of their work.

Professor Dobzhansky, Russian born and educated, graduate of the University of Kiev, an Assistant Professor of Genetics at Leningrad in the mid-twenties, and now at Columbia University, is a life-long student of Drosophila, the fruit fly that has played an historic role in the development of our knowledge of the mechanisms of heredity. A strong opponent of the Lysenko theory of the plasticity of living forms and of the influence of environment on heredity, Dobzhansky holds to an absolute and unalterable (except for accidental and random mutations) gene-determined inheritance from protozoa to men. Within this formal framework he clearly differentiates biological from cultural evolution and stresses the importance of the latter for man and his societies.

Paradoxically, Dobzhansky's correct emphasis on the central role of culture in human development stands in the way of any very significant conclusions concerning the biological basis of freedom. The result is that after many valuable insights and analyses he affirms that "attempts to discover a biological basis of ethics suffer from mechanistic oversimplification" (p. 131). Again he asserts, three pages from the end, that "ethics as such, have no genetic basis and are not the product of biological evolution." These are sound and noteworthy conclusions on the part of a biologist. They reveal clearly that he does not suffer from that occupational disease of so many scientists for whom

their specialty is the key that unlocks all of mankind's questions. But, inasmuch as freedom is an ethical concept Dobzhansky's thesis leave him precious little ground to say anything about it. The most he has to say on the subject is that with increasing knowledge of the processes of evolution man can "contemplate speeding up his evolution, slowing it down, stopping it altogether, or changing its direction." Beyond this, the author gives us little outside of quotations from Julian Huxley and G. G. Simpson.

One problem especially seems to trouble Professor Dobzhansky. He says early that mankind's great scientific and cultural heritage was "created by relatively few individuals through their personal efforts" and that "the many owe much to the few." (p. 34) Near the end of the book he expresses the fear lest "natural selection favors the ethical codes which benefit the group at the expense of the individual," and holds that "one of the greatest problems facing mankind" is that of the individual versus the interests of the group. (126f) One can well grant all the concrete and practical problems of individual freedom as they arise in various social forms and yet seriously question whether this is a key problem of man's biological evolution. Shades of Spencerian "social-Darwinism" plague us here, even though Dobzhansky sharply castigates such views as a misuse of Darwin's theory of natural selection and forthrightly says that good biology was "perverted by others to support bad sociology."

Dobzhansky opposes all "racist" theories and makes a noteworthy critique of the misapplication of psychoanalytic theory in the explanation of cultural differences. He shows that the "diaper anthropologists," as he calls them, "erect a determinism [of cultural differences] just as rigid, and if anything, even more gratuitous." [than that of the racists].

This is a thought-provoking book and represents a commendable effort on the part of a natural scientist to examine the data and methods of his science in their bearing on the larger problems of human society and the direction of man's future development. Dobzhansky's fixed and mechanistic theory of heredity stands in sharp contrast with his dialectical approach to the inter-relations of "nature and nurture." Maybe he has drawn the best conclusions possible from his "formal genetics" theories. But this reader, for one, cannot believe that this science has as yet all the answers to the nature of heredity and the evolutionary process, and must therefore regard the general direction of such work as tentative and subject to as yet unforseeable modifications.

HOWARD SELSAM

Liberating History

TOWARD NEGRO FREEDOM, by Herbert Aptheker, New Century Publishers, $2.00, paper, $2.75, cloth.

THE LATEST compilation of Dr. Herbert Aptheker's essays again brings into focus the malevolence of racism and the critical national need of immediate, unqualified first-class citizenship for 16 to 17 million Negro Americans.

Such a volume is eminently timely. Its publication coincided with the thirty-second annual observance of Negro History Week in February. Beginning with a dedicatory estimate of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of the annual celebration who died in 1950, Aptheker presents much new material to continue the story begun in earlier works, such as *To Be Free: Studies in Negro History,* and *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States.* It is the story of epic heroism throughout three centuries of agonizing struggle. It is a story whose victorious end Aptheker heralds in the essay, "Miss Lucy, Montgomery and Moral Values": ". . . we are living in the generation that will see the destruction of Jim Crow in the United States."

American historians "have described the Negro as a beast, have worked assiduously to justify and even to glorify slavery, and have described the period since emancipation as one of woe for Negroes and of inconvenience for whites."

Dr. John Hope Franklin, Negro historian and chairman of the history department at Brooklyn College, wrote that estimate of American writers of history in an article in the February issue of the Crisis, official organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Anyone who thinks Dr. Franklin exaggerates might reflect on the mentality of the Georgia State Senate, which adopted—on the eve of Negro History Week—a resolution urging Congress to declare the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution null and void.

Negro scholars and leaders contest both these tendencies, since, as Dr. Franklin puts it, "Negroes generally have not had any illusions about the distortions of their history and they have not been unduly influenced by them." In addition, American Marxists have thrown their weight against the distortion and reversal of American history, as these essays of Herbert Aptheker, the foremost Marxist scholar in American history, will bear witness.

The last selection in this timely volume contains Aptheker's reply to both those who falsify Southern American history and those who scheme to bring back pre-Civil War days. Aptheker challenges the thesis of the late Ulrich Bonnell Phillips of Georgia, a professor of history, that the central theme of Southern history was "a common resolve indomitably maintained—that it (the South) shall be and remain a white man's country."

Aptheker presents the hypothesis that the central theme of Southern history is "the drive of the rulers to maintain themselves in power, and the struggle against this by the oppressed and the exploited." As against Phillips' concept of the dominance of so-called racial conflict, Aptheker opposes the idea of the "centrality of class struggle in Southern history."

"It is the Marxian view," the author writes, "and not the Phillipsian one, which can explain why the secessionists feared civil war at home before they could launch it against Lincoln; why more Southerners voted against the secessionist candidate, Breckinridge, in the 1860 campaign, than for him; why over 200,000 Southern whites fought in the Union Army and another 200,000 deserted the Confederate; why 35 percent of the whites in

Mississippi voted for the Radical Reconstruction government; why a million white Southerners joined the Farmers Alliance and, together with a million members of the Colored Farmers Alliance, made Populism in the South more radical than in the West; why the Knights of Labor had such outstanding success in the South; why the progressive movement of pre-World War I days was so potent in the South; why anti-war feeling in the South during the First World War was stronger than elsewhere, and reached near-insurrectionary fervor in most of the Southwest; why today there is deeper social and political ferment in the South than in any other region of our country. . . ."

Aptheker adds: "Marxism does not ignore the great force of racism in Southern life; it does not deny or minimize the power of the irrational, of the emotional, of inherited or socially-induced prejudices. Rather, that view explains racism in terms of its material origins and its ruling-class functions. In doing this, it points the way to principled struggle against racism and to a practical means for its complete elimination."

Negro history makes mish-mash of the President's rationale for leaving enforcement of the Supreme Court rulings in the hands of Senator Eastland and Governor Griffin. And Aptheker, in "The Central Theme of Southern History," writes directly to the point: *". . . in an overall, political sense, the South, as presently dominated, is reaction's greatest single bulwark, and this has now been so for generations. But it has been this not with the agreement or even the acquiescence of most of its people. Rather, it has been reduced to this by fraud and terror and chauvinism and violence, contrary to the will of the vast majority of the Southern people."*

These essays make clear a lesson of Negro history pertinent to our times: that whether "understanding and good will" shall be allowed steady growth, or shall be stifled and turned into their opposite, is decided by the state, by governmental power. Not spontaneity, but the immediate and long-range goals of the state, the character of its administration, and the dispatch with which state power is employed, are the decisive elements.

The "moderates," would prefer to have it believed that the concessions won by Negroes in the post-war period are attributable solely to the benevolent functioning of "the democratic system." They deprecate, or dismiss entirely, the significance of the continuity of Negro liberation struggles, the influence of the socialist countries and the underdeveloped areas peopled by non-white nations, the requirements of big business in a period of full employment, and such "Communist cliches" as "class struggle" and "proletarian internationalism." Yet the Communists persist in dragging up these factors, and showing their influence on the exercise of state power; they point up the responsibility for racism on those who control the state.

Marxism, writes Aptheker, "points the way to principled struggle against racism and to a practical means for its complete elimination." Certain friends of the Negro in the labor movement and organizations of the Left, who contend the evils and dangers of chauvinism are exaggerated—a variation on the moderation theme—might well

ponder the Quakers' experience. Aptheker's fine essay, "The Quakers and Negro Slavery," shows that pro-slavery sentiments of some of their members almost wrecked the Society of Friends. Only by adopting the ideas of the Quaker abolitionists were the Friends finally able to take up cudgels against slavery everywhere, and in the process to save their movement.

JOHN PITTMAN

Logical Empiricism

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENCE AND THE CONCEPTS OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS: MINNESOTA STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE Vol. 1. Edited by Herbert Feigl and Michael Scriven (University of Minnesota Press, $5.00. 346 pp.)

THIS is the first volume in a series planned by the Minnesota Center for Philosophy of Science. This Center, founded at the University of Minnesota in 1953 and directed by Professor Herbert Feigl, has concerned itself chiefly with the philosophical, logical and methodological problems of psychology. It plans further publications in this field, as well as in physics and other sciences. Its guiding motive is "the belief that intensive investigations in the logical foundations of the sciences would more or less directly aid in substantive scientific research."

The present volume comprises eleven papers. The first two, by Feigl and Carnap (University of California at Los Angeles), are comparatively technical and specialized discussions of major issues in the philosophy of science from the standpoint of logical empiricism (in its earlier phase called "logical positivism").

The other papers deal primarily with theoretical concepts in psychology. Skinner (Harvard) presents a *Critique of Psychoanalytic Concepts and Theories;* Michael Scriven a *Study of Radical Behaviorism.* There are contributions by Meehl (Minnesota), Flew (England), Buck (Duke) and an interesting study, *Empiricism and The Philosophy of Mind,* by Professor Sellars (Minnesota).

The philosophical trend represented in this volume goes back more than a quarter of a century to the Vienna "circle" of philosophers and scientists who in 1929 proclaimed their revolt against traditional metaphysics. Their view was that the business of philosophy was the logical analysis of the meaning of scientific concepts and that the classic problems of metaphysics were strictly speaking meaningless. This movement soon became known as "logical positivism." It developed considerable influence especially in the United States to which many of its chief spokesmen (Carnap, Feigl, Hempel and others) emigrated in the thirties.

Ten years ago the British Marxist, Maurice Cornforth, published his book *Science and Idealism.* This was a full-scale indictment of logical positivism written from a dialectical materialist viewpoint. The highpoint was a demonstration that the Vienna School movement far from aiding the development of science inevitably would harm it. To my knowledge the defendants never replied.

The special interest that attaches to the present publication and to Professor Feigl's opening essay is therefore several-fold. His discussion of recent developments and current controversies in the logical empiricist movement demonstrates the continuing influence of this school. What is more significant, he is at pains to emphasize the many changes that have taken place since the early days of logical positivism. He disclaims any dogmatic or ritualistic character for the movement. And in a number of respects he exhibits a concern to meet the charges of subjective idealism and formalism which have been levelled against this school.

This suggests that it would be in the interests of progress in philosophy and the sciences if two things were done; first, serious scholars like Professor Feigl would do well to undertake a detailed reply to Cornforth's indictment and second, Cornforth or some other Marxist should examine some of the more recent developments in logical empiricism and evaluate them in the light of dialectical materialism.

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ALBERT E. BLUMBERG

Note to Readers

Morton Sobell, unjustly sentenced to 30 *years in prison as part of the frame-up of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, will be* 40 *years old on April* 11. *The Committee for Justice in the Morton Sobell Case urges everyone to send him birthday greetings. His address: Morton Sobell,* 996, *Alcatraz, California.*

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The Ordeal of Mansart

By W. E. B. DU BOIS

Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, the dean of American letters, has completed a monumental study of what it has meant to be a Negro in the United States from 1870 to the present. This work is in the form of a novel, totaling 1,500 pages, to be issued in three volumes, one a year, beginning April, 1957, by Mainstream Publishers, of New York. The overall title of the trilogy is *The Black Flame.* The first book, entitled *The Ordeal of Mansart,* is scheduled for release on March 25, 1957.

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In recognition of his achievements and contributions, the New York Public Library has officially accepted for its permanent exhibit a bust of Dr. Du Bois by the distinguished American sculptor, William Zorach. This statue will be formally presented to the Library, in April, by Van Wyck Brooks and other notable men of letters.

Historian Herbert Aptheker says of *The Ordeal of Mansart*:

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