DECEMBER
1949

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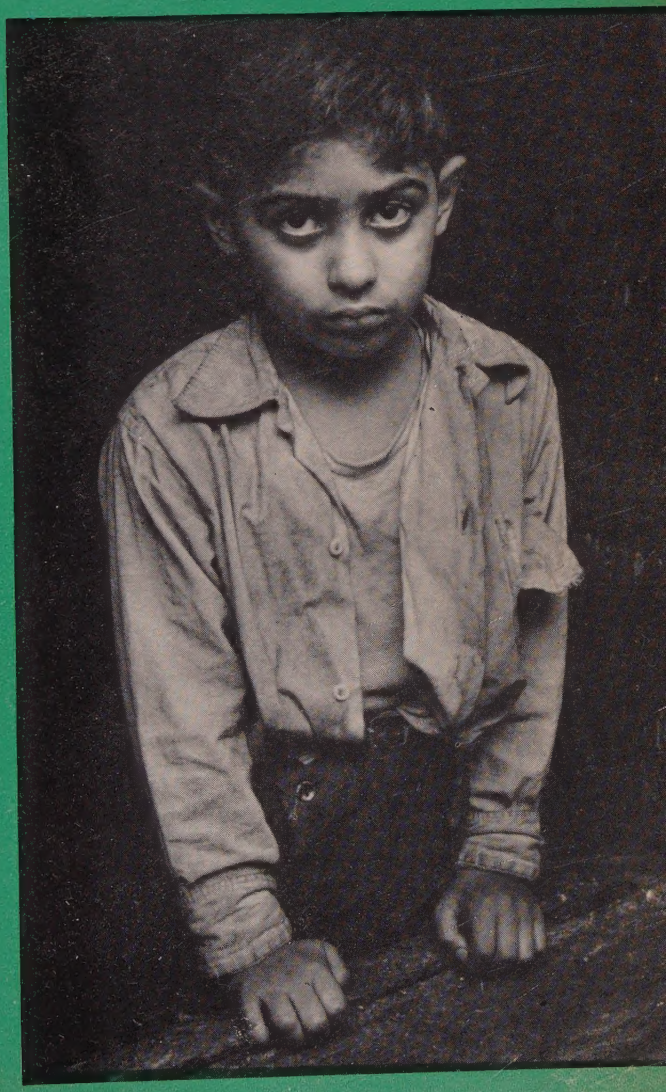

Idea and Form in Literature — GEORGE LUKACS

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 12

masses & MAINSTREAM

December, 1949

Drawings by Amen, Becker, Frasconi, Shahn, Skolnick

MASSES & MAINSTREAM *is published monthly by Masses & Mainstream, Inc., 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y. Subscription rate $4.00 a year; foreign and Canada: $4.50 a year. Single copies 35 cents; outside the U.S.A., 50 cents. All payments from foreign countries must be made either by U.S. money order or by checks payable in U.S. currency. Re-entered as second class matter February 25, 1948, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.* MASSES & MAINSTREAM *is distributed nationally by New Century Publishers, 832 Broadway, N. Y. C.*

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COVER: Puerto Rican boy in Harlem. Photo by Jonathan Evans.

All manuscripts should be addressed to The Editors of MASSES & MAINSTREAM, *832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., and be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope for return. Payment is made on publication.*

Memo FOR Medina

by GEORGE MARION

THERE is more than one villain to this piece, but I'll settle for Irving H. Saypol. He is the new United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, not to be confused with Irving S. Shapiro, Assistant United States Attorney who made the following argument before the Federal Circuit Court on November 1, 1949:

> "Society has a right to ask of these defendants [the eleven Communist leaders] if they are going to be released on bail, that the least that they would do is live within the law . . . until their appeals are disposed of. We think that is not much of a burden to put on them in view of the fact that you do have involved here a very serious crime, a crime which, in many respects, has likenesses of treason."

In releasing the defendants on bail, the Circuit Court dismissed Shapiro's argument and reversed Judge Medina who had denied bail following their conviction on October 14. Medina denied bail on the ground that he had no doubt whatsoever that the Smith Act, on which the indictment rests, is constitutional. The Circuit Court, however, found there was a substantial constitutional question to be argued before the higher courts.

Shapiro's contention, and the Circuit Court's subsequent ruling on it, may have presented brand new questions to the average American citizen who is at the mercy of the newspapers for his knowledge of the Communist case. But the record shows that sixteen months, 21,000 pages and five million words ago, the same issue was fought out in the same way—with much the same result. So if we are to get the real significance of the arguments and events of November 1, 1949, we had better go back to July 20, 1948, when the case began.

On that date several of the defendants were arraigned in Federal Court in New York City before District Judge Vincent L. Leibell; the indictment against them was unsealed and made known to them and to the world for the first time. The defendants arraigned on that day and the next, residents of New York, were admitted to bail without any undertaking to refrain from continuing their teaching and activity as Communists.

On August 3, 1948, however, when defendant Carl Winter was arraigned in the same court before District Judge Sylvester J. Ryan, the prosecution hinted at a new tactic. Winter's home being in Detroit, defense counsel asked the court to let him leave the district. In this connection, Saypol, then Assistant United States Attorney, showed a disposition to demand that Winter desist from performing his duties as a leader of the Communist Party.

SAYPOL: ". . . It is not the actual collateral I am concerned with. It is the form of the undertaking."

RYAN: "I see no harm in letting him go back to Detroit."

SAYPOL: "The requirements in this district with respect to bail is that the defendant shall remain within the jurisdiction—"

RYAN: "If he lives in Detroit, I am not going to compel him—"

SAYPOL: "—and it requires formal application addressed to the discretion of the court. There should be the obviation of a blanket check, or roving uncontrolled, in other words, to any place—"

RYAN: "He may return to his home, the state in which he lives. If he leaves the country, that is different. I think since he lives in Detroit and has come here and surrendered himself in New York, he should not be compelled to stay here."

But to return to Detroit is not the issue. To perform the duties of a leader of a political party, a man normally has to travel all over the United States. Saypol was proposing to forbid this and Judge Ryan was pointedly declining to go along with the office of the United States Attorney. On August 5 and 6, in connection with the arraignment of another out-of-town defendant, Gilbert Green of Chicago, the record shows a clear ruling:

RYAN: "It is a matter for the Court's judgment. I have no problem. Under all of the circumstances in the case, the defendant has posted bond and he should travel. The bond is in the sum of $5,000. There

is no reason why he should not be permitted to travel within the territorial limits of the United States. . . ."

THIS covered only Green and Winter. The question was constantly renewed—and for good reason. This was no mere matter of travel rights. The prosecution was, in effect, attempting to obtain a pre-trial ban on Communist activity! If the courts were to rule that the defendants could not pursue their normal activities, or could not travel in pursuit of their normal activities pending trial, that would be a long step toward outlawing the Communist Party without benefit of previous conviction! This meaning was spelled out by Prosecutor McGohey himself, on August 11, when the issue of bail bond for Gus Hall, defendant from Cleveland, was raised before District Judge Samuel H. Kaufman (of later Hiss-trial fame).

The defense had submitted to McGohey—and later withdrawn—a proposed agreement (and supporting affidavit) to let all the defendants travel anywhere in the United States.

MCGOHEY: "Now as your Honor has seen from the affidavit, the third paragraph thereof states that one of the reasons why the extension of bail limits is sought for these defendants, is that their normal duties as members of the National Board of the Communist Party require them to travel throughout the United States for the purpose of carrying on the activities of the Communist Party . . . I pointed out to Mr. Unger [pre-trial defense counsel] that under no circumstances, in view of the nature of the indictment in this case and the charges therein, could I nor would I at any time consent to the carrying on of their activities as members of the Communist Party because the indictment itself charges that the carrying on of those activities of the Communist Party constitutes the crime here charged."

Kaufman eagerly went along with the prosecution. When Unger asked him to sign an order permitting Hall exactly that freedom of travel Judge Ryan had already specified for Green and Winter, this colloquy ensued:

KAUFMAN: "You are, in effect, asking the Court to license the activities of this defendant."

UNGER: "Is that so, your Honor?"

KAUFMAN: "You are asking the Court to license the activities of

the defendant so that he may engage in the activities that the government complained about in its indictment."

UNGER: "That is not the case."

KAUFMAN: ". . . The fact is that you are asking the Court to grant a license to permit this man to travel wherever he pleases within the continental limits of the United States."

UNGER: ". . . Your Honor cannot give him a license to do an illegal act, can you? Your Honor cannot withhold a license from him to do a legal act, can you? . . . All that your Honor is being asked to do is the following: that he be allowed to go outside the border of the Southern District. . . . Whatever things he may do in the Southern District, those things but no others he can do outside the Southern District. . . . Within the Southern District your Honor is not licensing him to be a Communist. He was a Communist before and your Honor cannot now issue an order and say, 'You may not be a Communist.' Therefore, your Honor is not licensing him to be one and your Honor cannot de-license him from being one. He will continue to be one tomorrow just as he was yesterday. . . . It would be spurious on my part to come before the Court and say to the Court, 'Well, I will tell you what. Let this man out and he will promise to say that he won't function as a leader of the Communist Party'."

This wrested from Kaufman the concession that "the word 'license' may be an unfortunate expression," but while permitting Hall to go back to Ohio, he would not "at this time, on this showing, consent that he shall have the right to unlimited travelling in the United States."

THE defendants ultimately obtained travel rights pending trial, but without a clear resolution of the underlying issue. For that issue was the issue of the trial itself, the issue of whether or not the cold war should become a pretext for denying to Communists—and ultimately, on "security" grounds, to all the American people—the protection of the Bill of Rights. My authority for this definition of the issue is, again, McGohey. At the end of the trial, he said it was unsafe to permit the defendants at large, and he added that they should in no case have bail without first renouncing their right to teach Marxism-Leninism and to be Communists. But let him speak for himself as in these three excerpts:

MCGOHEY: "Today in the atmosphere of the cold war, the poten-

tial danger of these men as the leaders of a subversive group is probably incalculable. . . .

"I recommend to your Honor a sentence of ten years for each and every one of these defendants and I do so especially in view of the threat which the defendant Dennis, with the concurrence of each of his co-defendants, made this morning when he said that no matter what the sentence is, they will continue to advocate the principles of Marxism-Leninism which a jury in this court has found to be the overthrow and destruction of the Government of the United States by force and violence. . . .

"Now it is urged that these men ought to be allowed out on bail to carry on. Carry on what? I ask your Honor to remember again what Mr. Dennis said: that they are going to carry on doing all the things that were proved here from the witness stand and which the jury under your Honor's charge has found were done with intent to bring about at the earliest date the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force and violence."

What Dennis actually said, as the record shows, was this:

DENNIS: ". . . We eleven Communists have been falsely adjudged guilty of a crime. We are not guilty of any crime, and least of all of the allegation that we conspired to advocate and teach the overthrow of the United States Government by force and violence. Whatever sentence the Court may render, we defendants will resolutely continue to champion our beliefs, our ideals, the principles of Marxism-Leninism, of scientific Socialism. Come what may, we and our party will exercise our inalienable democratic rights. We will defend our legality. We will function and grow as the vanguard party."

The democratic rights of the Communists—*first*, the Communists—that is exactly what the prosecution is attacking. That is why the new Attorney General also has to stand by McGohey's shaky argument. Before the Circuit Court, arguing on bail, Shapiro said:

"The basic question in the mind of the Attorney General concerning the granting of bail is this: These defendants were convicted for a continuing conspiracy. They have indicated by open declarations in the trial court that they are going to continue to do exactly what they were convicted of. We think that it is unconscionable for a

court to release defendants on bail for the purpose of going out to commit the very crime for which they have just been convicted."

Now most news reports conveyed the information that Shapiro made the analogy with a convicted robber who said he was going to commit another robbery as soon as he got out, and that Judge Learned Hand replied that even in that case, if the conviction were doubtful, the Court could not deny bail. But the newspapers did not emphasize the more important part of the Court's answer. The stenographic record (made at the request of the defense—there is not customarily a record of hearings in the Circuit Court in this rather preliminary appeal) contains, on this fundamental point, an interesting passage. It begins thus:

SHAPIRO: "The Attorney General is extremely cognizant of the importance of any claim that is made under the First Amendment. . . . We are cognizant of the fact that this case must ultimately go to the Supreme Court. . . . In those circumstances we go so far as to say that the defendants have an arguable point at least for consideration by an appellate court. We think they are wrong, we hope they are wrong in our view of the law, but the point is there and it will have to be argued before this court and ultimately before the Supreme Court."

Having said this much, and gone on under pressure of Hand's questioning to admit that the question was a "subtantial" one, Shapiro drew fire from Judge Jerome Frank as well as from Hand when he argued for no bail, high bail, or conditional bail. Judge Hand made the sharpest observations:

HAND: "But you see, you start by conceding that the crime of which they have been charged is, in your judgment, one which presents a substantial question. Now then, if they continue to do what they have done, isn't there still presented a very substantial question?"

SHAPIRO: "We think it no more than reasonable that the court should ask of them as a condition of bail that they live in conformity with the law while the appeal is pending. Otherwise we have no protection against the continuation of the very thing for which they have just been prosecuted. . . ."

HAND: "The difficulty I find about that position is . . . [that] there

is a doubt as to whether the agitation was itself criminal, and is it? I say it is a question . . . whether the agitation which is charged is within the statute, that is, whether it is criminal. Now if your suggestion, as I understand it, is that a condition of bail be made that they shall cease from continuing to do what they have been doing, it would presuppose that the agitation was itself criminal."

THUS a high court ruled at last, to all appearances, on an issue raised by the government throughout the trial. And it ruled against the prosecution (which includes Judge Medina). Even Russell Porter of the New York *Times,* a virtual mouthpiece of the prosecution throughout the trial, wrote on November 5: "The Circuit Court Thursday denied a Government request to make it a condition of bail that all eleven defendants be required while out on bail to cease the activities for which they were convicted."

And yet, no sooner had the Court admitted the defendants to bail, than Saypol turned back to the tactics of August, 1948, to maintain the prosecutor's position. In connection with those defendants who lived out of town (and in parts of New York City not included in the Southern District of New York) he insisted on inserting the word "personal" before the word "affairs" in the order permitting them to leave the jurisdiction. The point was to deny them the right to tend to their political affairs as distinguished from their personal affairs.

"Since these men have been convicted of crime," he said, "the presumption of innocence is gone. Under the circumstances I could not countenance any activities by the defendants comparable to those for which they were convicted."

This patent disregard of the decision of the Circuit Court is entirely in the spirit of the whole trial. It has been a continuous history of a determined attempt by a little band of arrogant men to rewrite the Constitution on the plea of national "security"—a word mentioned many times by Shapiro. And Medina's now "celebrated" charge to the trial jury is nothing but a complicated piece of legal machinery for carrying out the proposed rewriting.

Yet, the decision of the Circuit Court suggests that the Saypols, Medinas, Tom Clarks and Harry Trumans have had their day; their sun is setting; the tide of public opinion is turning. With a tightly controlled press against them, the people may find it hard to detect evi-

dences of that change, but a persuasive piece of [illegible] is the argument made by the prosecution in this very he[illegible] said, in effect, that he was acknowledging the existence [illegible] constitutional question against his will, against Mc[illegible]he instance of the Attorney General. But he further intimated that the Attorney General was also making the acknowledgment unwillingly. The Attorney General adopted his position, Shapiro said, only after he had "personally heard from counsel for the defendants, and from a delegation who spoke for them."

To my mind, that is the most significant thing about the appellate court proceedings to date. It confirms something we know but constantly need to re-learn: Reach public opinion, tell the American people the true story of this trial, and the people will write the last word in the case.

The Kingdom of Foley Square

by Eve Merriam

"Now God created heaven and earth,
"But I shall cremate the sea.

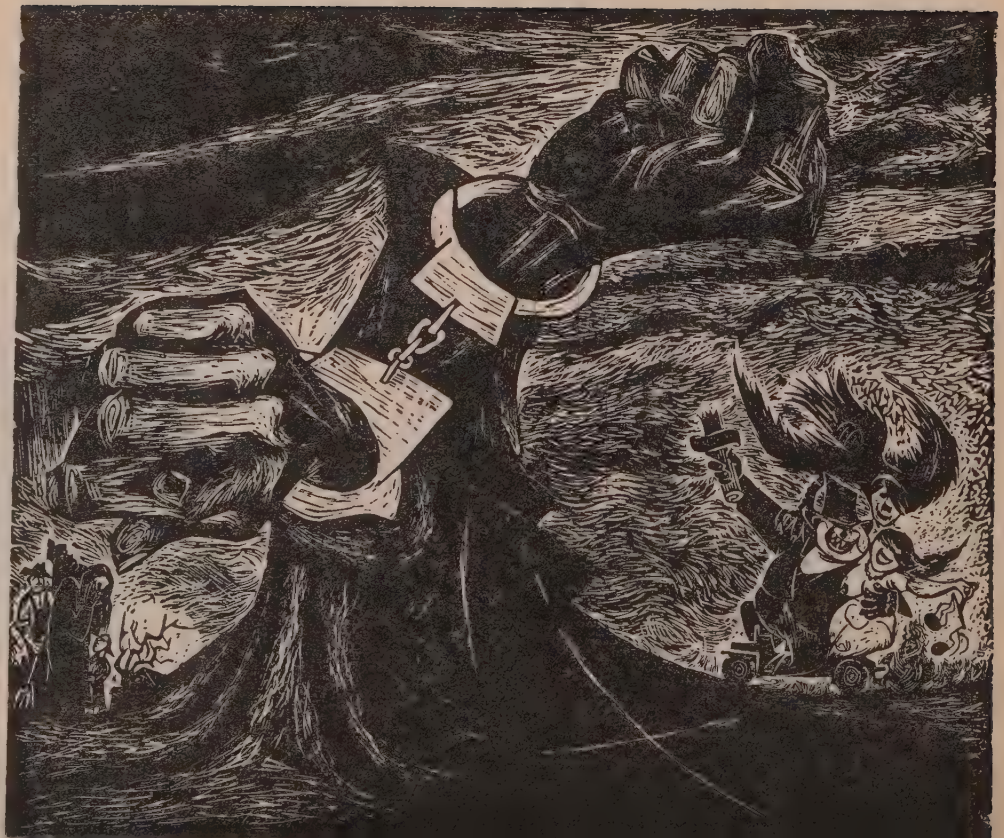
"For all things watery I abhor:
"Fishes, and the slippery minds of men
"That will not be contained."

So stood there on the island's sandy shore,
The dry king, commanding.
His crown glittering to rainful clouds,
His robe showered with dew;
Stretched high and law
Commanding still
The ocean's flowing on.
"Overruled! Your motion is denied!"

Immersed to his knees,
Continued to command
The coming uncowering tide.
Robe dragging the bubbling beach,
Warned "You are contemptuous!"
Pounded his desiccated fist.
The tide could not (or would not?) hear.

Inundate his navel,
Oyster-deep his neck,
Gurgling dehydrate indignation
Highmost crown melts under.

Spumes among coral, sponge.



FOLEY SQUARE

by

Antonio Frasconi

The Philosophy of Freud

by J. B. FURST

MANY people insist that the only way to judge Freudianism is by analysis of its clinical or psychiatric results. They object to a philosophical analysis as too abstract. Freud himself regarded philosophy as beyond the boundaries of psychoanalysis and he denied that he was elaborating any kind of world view. He was simply a scientist, he stated, endeavoring to study the workings of the mind.

The fact is that any science worthy of the name must have a definite methodology of thought in addition to certain premises about the nature and organization of reality. An examination of Freudianism reveals a definite mode of thought and many assumptions about the nature of man, the nature and movement of society and the relationship of man to society.

In this paper we propose to examine this philosophy and the social-historical forces which shaped it and to investigate the extent to which the present Freudian psychoanalytic movement in the United States follows the original teachings of Freud.

Freud was a physician and a neurologist. He began publishing psychiatric papers in the early 1890's, but his formative scientific training occurred from ten to fifteen years earlier, around 1870 to 1875. These dates clearly place Freud in the great efflorescence of bourgeois science which occurred in the nineteenth century.

Starting with the discovery of the cell by Schleiden and Schwann in the 1830's, biology had made extremely rapid advances. Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published in 1859. Scientific history, economics, political economy, anthropology, sociology, etc., were being elaborated for the first time in human experience. The publication of Morgan's great work, *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* in 1869 marked the beginning of scientific anthropology. Wundt initiated the science of experimental psychology in the 1870's.

By Freud's day the bourgeois world had already clearly failed to make good the glittering promises of equality, justice and freedom which had been advanced at the time of the great democratic revolutions. There was already a definite tinge of pessimism, retrenchment and growing cynicism. Furthermore, the capitalist world was rent regularly by recurring depressions which the bourgeoisie did not understand, could not predict or control, and which seemed to drop like bolts from the blue. The labor movement was gaining in force, organization and consciousness. Already Marxism was making its impact; the ominous specter of socialism had raised its head and the bourgeoisie had drowned the Paris Commune in blood. Laissez-faire capitalism was becoming monopoly imperialism. Struggles between the capitalists were sharper, and the race was on for re-division of the colonial areas. Already by the middle eighties a titanic world war was in the air and was clearly foreseen by Engels.

These developing social conditions and contradictions had their ideological reflections in many different fields of creative activity. A new rash of transcendental, mystical and idealist philosophies arose in defense of capitalism. Schopenhauer exuded gloom, pessimism and a violent form of cynicism and male supremacy. Nietzsche emphasized irrationality, force and power, the superman and the lowliness of women. Wagner wrote operas whose themes emphasized violence and irrational scheming ending in overwhelming disaster—the Twilight of the Gods.

THESE world conditions were reflected in and helped to shape Freudian theory. The general irrationality of bourgeois life and the bourgeois inability to understand the forces of their own society undoubtedly influenced Freud in his decisions that the unconscious-irrational part of personality holds a preponderance over rational consciousness. In Freud's diagram of personality, the unconscious and its asocial forces occupy two-thirds or more of the mind. Freud regarded the instinctual forces as hidden, irrational and extremely powerful; he said so, on many occasions. He also postulated a death instinct, ceaselessly leading people to violent acts, to aggression, sadism, murder, suicide, wars, hatred, etc.

Freud undoubtedly did see some of these characteristics in his patients and in himself, but where else could these things have come

from but from the main currents of the times? Freud was actually describing personality reflections of the same violent, bloody and apparently irrational social forces which were finding other expressions in Wagner's music and Nietzsche's philosophy. In order to escape the conclusion that a change in society was possible and necessary, a well-defined current emphasizing irrationality took root in the nineteenth century, long before this was carried to its logical conclusion by the Nazis. Freud was no Nazi and lived eventually to be persecuted by them, but his theories of the preponderance of unconscious forces represented the developing currents of anti-intellectualism. He even invented an unconscious racial memory.* He did not elaborate on this, but the idea was taken up and expanded by his pupil, the pro-Nazi, Carl Jung.

When thus placed in its historical context, Freudianism can be understood not simply as the contribution of one man, but as the specific form in which the developing science of the bourgeoisie took shape when applied to the psychology of personality. This bourgeois origin is further emphasized by Freud's middle-class position and the fact that his patients were mostly from the wealthy classes.

An extremely useful key to certain sides of Freud's work lies in the fact that he gave a scientific-seeming expression to all the common hopes, beliefs and lies of the bourgeoisie about society and human nature.** For example, women in the capitalist world occupy an inferior position to men legally, morally, politically, in family life and in industry. They are also correspondingly regarded in common bourgeois ideology as mentally and spiritually inferior; masculine supremacist attitudes dominate every aspect of capitalist life and propaganda. We can find a close parallel to this estimate of women in Freud, although it is couched in psychoanalytic terms instead of vulgar language. He regards them as biologically inferior to men because they do not possess a penis, and therefore are doomed all their lives to envy men. Because of this lack, women do not develop beyond the

* Freud: "Fresh Material from the Primal Period," *Collected Papers,* III, p. 568.

** "Never before in any of my previous writings have I had the feeling so strongly as I have now that what I am describing is common knowledge, that I am requisitioning paper and ink, and in due course the labor of compositors and printers, in order to expound things that in themselves are obvious." Freud: *Civilization and its Discontents,* p. 94. In this chapter, Freud is discussing the origin and history of his theories that instincts govern personality.

Oedipus Complex as completely as men, and therefore, according to Freud, women remain self-centered, narcissistic (self-loving) and unable to love as strongly as men. They also do not develop creative powers save those already located in the womb, nor do they develop the superior spiritual and moral powers which men attain by virtue of their possession of the male organ. By a complex system of argumentation involving sex, castration, instincts, and the presence or absence of a penis, Freud finally reaches the common bourgeois conclusion that women are inferior beings.

Helene Deutsch, in *The Psychology of Women,* has pushed these arguments to their logical conclusion. According to her, women are passive, masochistic and narcissistic in their essential nature. Thus we see that Freudian psychoanalysis repeats with a vengeance the most reactionary bourgeois formulations on women; furthermore, it adds ideological justification for their exploited and oppressed condition in capitalist society.

Bourgeois ideology in defense against a changing world maintains that the capitalist system is natural, eternal and changeless. Freud reached identical conclusions. Through his theories of the instincts he regarded human beings in all ages and under all forms of social organization as essentially the same.* For example, he maintained that the essential psychological conditions of the Oedipus Complex pertain in all different kinds of society throughout all ages. He theorized that human beings, their activity and their psychology, are the products of inherited, instinctual drives and feelings. These instincts, the Sex or Life instinct and the Death instinct, change very slowly over periods of hundreds of thousands of years; they are rooted in biology and do not change faster than man's biological organization. Thus, for all practical purposes, human nature is not essentially changeable. Nor is human society changeable, for Freud postulated that the form and conditions of bourgeois society are also determined by these Life and Death instincts.

FREUD'S instinct theories are the heart of his system of thought; they determine the forms of individual development, the forms of family organization, of social relationships, etc. Yet all instinct theories of human motivation, human feelings and human behavior

* Freud: "Instincts and their Vicissitudes," *Collected Papers,* IV, p. 60.

have been thoroughly criticized and rejected by many authors.* Scientific, experimental, historical and anthropological evidence fails to justify any belief that instincts rule human nature. On the contrary, there is much evidence to show that human psychology is extremely plastic and takes many forms, depending on the class and productive relationships of the particular society which produces a particular person. Such conclusions also bear out certain main tenets of dialectical materialism, namely: that all processes are moving and changing continually; that a static view of life is false and that thought-forms and ideology are secondary to and derived from the material facts of existence.

Human beings undoubtedly have inherited biological needs for food, water, shelter, sleep, sexual activity. But whether these inherited needs are fulfilled or not, the manner in which they are fulfilled, and what people think and feel about them is not determined by biology itself but by the surrounding social organization. For example, sex is a biological need, but whether it is regarded with common-sense attitudes or with secrecy and mystery, whether it is practiced not at all, or with pleasure or with loathing, whether it is utilized to express affection, exploitation, anxiety or other needs is all determined by the relationships pertaining in a particular society and not by inherited instincts or sex itself. There is no valid scientific evidence which shows that biological sexual differentiation of itself creates any temperamental or personality differences between men and women.

In defense of individualism, "free enterprise" and laissez-faire, the bourgeois world maintains that human beings are naturally and inherently selfish and self-centered. Freud reached these very conclusions by several different routes, some examples of which follow.

First of all, he elaborated the pleasure-pain principle, a hedonistic theory which states that we act so as to gain pleasure and avoid pain. By his pleasure-pain principle, even an unselfish or altruistic act can only be done if one gets pleasure from it, and would be avoided if it were painful. The possibility is ruled out that one can see the social necessity for an act and perform it without subjective gratification or pleasure.

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* Marmor: "The Role of Instinct in Human Behavior," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 5, p. 509; Klineberg: *Social Psychology*, Chapters 4-8 inclusive.

Secondly, Freud buttressed the theory that humans are inherently selfish through his doctrine of the sublimation of instincts. According to this theory, the early psychic life of the child is dictated by the development of his sexual and death instincts. As the child matures into an adult, these instinctual urges do not disappear; they simply change their outward aim and form, that is, they take a sublimated expression. Thus, in Freudian theory a surgeon is likely to be a sublimated sadist; an astronomer who peers through telescopes is sublimating desires to look at genitalia and intercourse; a politician of whatever conviction is sublimating drives of oral sexuality, and a gynecologist or proctologist would be sublimating instinctual drives of an anal-sadistic nature. Further, a Communist can easily be explained as expressing a sublimated sadism, latent homosexuality, or infantile revolt against parental authority, etc. Last summer, for example, at the International Mental Hygiene Conference held in London, Dr. Ernest Jones, a leading British psychoanalyst, stated that the Russian people suffer from a mass guilt complex and anxiety because they murdered their little father—the Czar!

Under such a system of thought, the motivation for any human act is reduced ultimately to the sublimated expression of a biological instinct which at bottom is thoroughly un-social, primitive and selfish in nature. It is no wonder then, that an occasional person analyzed by a strict and doctrinaire Freudian loses all faith in any possibility of human decency. He comes to the conclusion that he himself is selfish and everybody else is too, so he might as well "express himself" and get what he can while the getting is good.

Let us turn from the common bourgeois ideology which we find expressed and rationalized in Freudian theory to a brief consideration of his scientific method. First of all, it is important to emphasize that it *was* a scientific method, that is, Freud made observations of case material and attempted to interpret them in a rational manner. This method enabled Freud to postulate that psychological phenomena are not spiritual or other-worldly, but that they are natural phenomena and therefore occur according to strict and discoverable laws.

This is the basic principle of Psychological Determination and it constituted a major advance which underlies any progress whatsoever

in the understanding of human personality. It is obvious that personality cannot be comprehended if it obeys no laws and is determined by caprice or chance, as had been assumed before Freud's day. This deterministic principle is perhaps Freud's greatest contribution to psychological science.

Freud's scientific approach, characteristic of his day, was marked by a mechanical materialism, not a dialectical materialism. Mechanical materialism fails to allow for or comprehend the fact that real changes occur in the processes of reality. In Freudian theory, the adult is regarded not as *qualitatively different* from a child, but as being simply an enlarged child, a being who repeats in adult life the stages to which he had developed by the age of six or so in his Oedipus and Castration complexes. Therefore, in describing adult neurotic behavior, Freudians repeatedly refer to it as "infantile." The child or infant is a product of his instincts, and these do not change except over periods of hundreds of thousands of years. So for all practical purposes, nothing changes; neither instincts, children, adults, nor society itself, for we must remember that Freud postulated over and over that society also is built and determined by man's instincts. Here, then, is the essence of that static viewpoint which lay inherent in vulgar materialism.

Some have made the claim that Freud is a dialectician because he advanced the idea that conflicts are the source of neurosis. But Freud's conflicts are not interpenetrating and dialectical; they are static conflicts. The demands of the unchanging instincts are opposed by the needs of an unchanging society. This is a conflict which has no movement nor development, and is furthermore a mechanical confrontation of two opposing forces, rather than a dialectical unity and interpenetration of contradictions.

A direct result of the mechanical mode of thought is that explanations are given which are too simplified, which do not fit the marvelous complexity of psychological processes. One of the major criticisms of Freudian theory is that it is too simple. All peoples under all governments in all ages are assumed to be the same. This in itself is a vast over-simplification. In addition, the psychology of people is determined by only two instincts, and one finds that every person undergoes the same simple progression of pre-genital sexuality and then becomes enmeshed in the Oedipus and Castration complexes.

One knows in advance what one must look for in every neurotic of every type, i.e., a sexual fixation.

Freud gave further instance of his mechanical approach when he drew his famous map of the mind and divided up the personality into the Ego, the Super-Ego, and the Id. In actual practice, this amounts to a mechanical separation of the mind into three separate little personalities. These personalities punish one another, ally with one another against the third, spy on one another, restrain each other, play tricks, seduce and deceive one another much in the same manner as the normal diplomatic relations which exist between capitalist states.

We find, then, that Freud's scientific method had qualities which have become characteristic of bourgeois science generally: It accepted the status quo; it was an individualistic philosophy; it led into idealism; it lent itself to reactionary conclusions and to an ideological defense of the existing order.

The fact that Freud had no concept of social man has already been demonstrated by Francis Bartlett and others. Freud conceived of man as isolated man, and his conception of society was that of an aggregate of isolated persons having basically an animal nature which might be covered over by a thin veneer of civilization but which remained essentially unchanged by social living and would immediately reveal its ugly, animalistic nature under stress of war, privation, or severe need. Freud's conception of social man is actually identical with that of a herd of cows or other animals which persist together in a group but basically do not influence each other very much, each essentially going his separate way.

THE present-day applications of Freudianism may be illustrated by examining the last four issues of a leading American Freudian journal, the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*.*

Nineteen of the twenty-seven articles quote Freud directly or list his writings as references. In no case does any one of these twenty-seven articles take issue with any basic Freudian principles. Discussions of or references to the instinct theories, the Oedipus complex, the theories of pregenital sexuality, the Oedipal fixations, the Castration complex and such doctrines as identification, symbolic gratification, sublimation, etc., are adduced in every article as the causes of

* V. 17, Nos. 3 and 4; V. 18, Nos. 1 and 2.

Ben Shahn

the neurotic personality or social phenomena under examination. The twenty-seven articles present case material of a sexual nature, theories of illness, and articles on society, history, art, literature, murder, mythology, Shakespeare, the origin of clothing, the nature of reality and comments on dream analysis. One notes an absence of discussion on neurotic cases which do not show pronouncedly sexual symptomatology.

In essence, these articles are confined to illustrating, polishing or further extending Freud's original concepts. One article gave further comments and discussion on a case of paranoia discussed by Freud over thirty years ago. Indeed, although these papers follow Freudian thinking, in one sense a degeneration seems to have occurred; they lack the clarity and the observation of new facts that one notes in Freud's early papers. These papers seem less concerned than Freud was with the actual details of the patient's life and more concerned with the tracing out of an already agreed-upon ideology.

Beside illustrating neatly and repetitiously the extreme Freudian emphasis on the early childhood experiences and the past or present sex life of the individual, these twenty-seven articles also largely disregard present environmental circumstances of the patient unless they involve sexual conflict, sexual jealousy or other elements of an openly sexual nature. The doctor-patient relationship (the "transference") is also expressed continually in terms of sexually-oriented, parent-child relationships, with the patient transferring to the doctor sexual fixations which he had toward his parents in childhood.

The general emphasis on sexuality may be illustrated by the following summary passage of an article on paranoia:

> "Excerpts from the analysis of a non-psychotic patient who had fantasies of persecution, confirm the observation of others that the persecutor may be unconsciously equated with the subject's feces in the rectum. Tormenting anal sensations are projected to the homosexual object in the external world, and transformed into feelings of persecution. The correlation of constipation and feelings of persecution with the analysis of the transference relationship leads to the belief that in this instance there occurred an unconscious form of anal masturbation in which the fecal mass arouses sensations in the subject's rectum [the patient's, J.B.F.] in response to masochistic feminine fantasies. The fecal mass

also represented the homosexual object's penis [the analyst's, J.B.F.], and in a fantasy of pregnancy, the unborn baby. The material offers the technical suggestion that the analyst be alert to detect references or associations to anal sensations whenever patients in analysis are preoccupied with fantasies of persecution or assault."

Another article states that when the word "reality" occurs in free associations, it refers not to the external world but to female genitalia, and the word "illusion" refers to the imaginary or illusory penis. The author further suggests that unconscious associations of this sort may have affected philosophers' ideas on the nature of reality.

One article on "The Passing of the Gentleman" denies class struggle in England, defining the upper-class code and ethics as representing the "super-ego" of the English nation, and ascribing the violence of the conflict between Left and Right in England as being due to the true meaning of the word Left, namely, to castrate! Another author discusses the origin of clothing and describes clothing as being a magic and symbolic way for an adult to obtain the type of protection he had formerly enjoyed while in his mother's uterus.

There is a paper which describes a new entity, an unknowable "Erlebnis." This is defined as a direct inner experience, and one that cannot be described or analyzed any further. After postulating this new psychoanalytic *ding-an-sich,* the author names as examples of erlebnisse: one's own ego, anxiety, freedom of the will, all kinds of creative inspiration and masculinity and femininity. Thus, these entities are effectively removed from the domain of rational inquiry and must remain forever incomprehensible to us.

Another paper states that our present social problems, including the cold war, are due to destructive, anti-human impulses which are "expressions of a disordered infantilism." Present world problems are not due to class struggles, social or economic factors, but are caused by the fact that parents give children faulty emotional upbringing. Therefore, the solution to the ills of society is found "through preventing hostility in childhood."

Finally, an article by Pederson Krag on "Detective Stories and the Primal Scene" asserts that people read detective and mystery stories because they are in reality gratifying hidden impulses to watch their own parents having intercourse.

In short, we may conclude from a study of the current journals that the teachings of Freud are very much alive and that they are the inspiration and guide of the official, Freudian psychoanalytic societies in America. It cannot be dismissed as accidental that in only four recent issues of this Freudian journal one can find illustrated every type of error, myth and absurdity previously pointed out in Freud's work by materialist scholars.

THE defenders of Freud and Freudian psychoanalysis point to his great contributions, for example, the concept of transference, *i.e.,* the neurotic aspects of the patient's relationship to his analyst. Now it is true that the concept of transference contains the germs of a very great idea, but in discussing the concrete tendencies and effects of *Freudianism in practice,* we cannot separate the basic concepts of transference from the specific forms in which Freud developed them. The Freudians certainly make no such separation. They use transference as it was developed by Freud, namely, as a sexually-oriented relationship in which the patient reacts to the doctor in the same way he reacted to his parents during his Oedipus complex. Thus, the practical, day-to-day usage of the transference concepts by the Freudians involves the instinct theories of sexuality, the Oedipus and Castration complexes, etc.

In defense of Freud it is argued that he made many great observations which confirm his theories. To this, the materialist would answer that an observation is not a simple "fact." We do not observe things passively; an observation results from the active participation of the observer; it is the product of the observer's interpretation and molding of the data presented to his sense organs. The observer's previous tendencies, beliefs and experience will of course determine his interpretation of given sensory data.

Furthermore, the observer's historically-conditioned tendencies can lead him to set up experiments or circumstances in such a way that certain data will be presented and others will be excluded. For example, spiritualists investigating human behavior will obviously conduct their experiments in such a way that many phenomena will be ruled out by their very mode of investigation. Present Freudian theory ipso facto rules out certain realities . . . *for example, the non-sexual causation of nervous illness.*

In discussing psychoanalytic observations of what specific patients said or did in analysis, it is also necessary to point out that under the influence of his particular theories, the analyst always makes a definite choice of that material which he considers most important. A doctor practicing with classical Freudian theory will see specific isolated things in his patient while a doctor who uses Jungian theory or Horneyian theory, sees other specific things again in isolation from the person's total make-up and experience. Patients soon learn the trend of the analysis and will concentrate their attention on what seems important.

This influence of the analyst on the patient extends not only to what the patient says or does in the analytic hour, but even to the dream material. I have had two patients who came to me after having had extensive Freudian and some Jungian analysis previously, and it was interesting to note in retrospect the changes which occurred in their dreams as they were in the different types of analysis. During Freudian analysis, there were many dreams which had included snakes, lizards, long objects and other things which could be interpreted as penises. During the periods of Jungian analysis, there were dreams of interlocking triangles and circles, symbols which are important in Jungian theory. During the analysis with me, the dream material again changed after many months to the symbols which characteristically appear in my work with patients!

ONE cannot be eclectic about Freudianism; one cannot reject the instinct theory while accepting wholeheartedly the Oedipus complex, transference, or any other of Freud's concepts. Nor can one defend Freudianism in its daily practice by referring to the germs of great ideas in his concepts. One cannot separate in practice the form from the basic content of these ideas. It would be like defending Kantianism by claiming that Kant was perfectly right in maintaining that things should be classified in categories. This may be so, but does that justify us or anybody else in following the Kantian categories?

Defenders of Freudian psychoanalysis point out that considerable development has occurred in Freudianism itself and that unanimity of opinion does not exist among Freudians. This is true, although one might doubt it from reading the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly.* It

must be emphasized, however, that there is an official psychoanalytic movement which follows Freudian principles definitely and rigidly.

It has been further pointed out in defense of Freud that he himself did not insist on his instinct theories, that he constantly changed them and regarded them as the Meta-psychology of psychoanalysis. This also is true, but in the daily practice and teachings of the Freudians, these instinct theories are not used in any metaphysical way. On the contrary, these theories influence Freudian teaching, Freudian therapy and Freudian speculations on the nature of man and society in very concrete and demonstrable ways. *Theoretically,* the instinct theories may be regarded by Freudians as not finally proven, but *practically,* these theories determine the daily usage of the Freudian psychoanalysis. Therefore, we are correct in carrying on a rigorous polemical battle against these "metaphysical" theories and their very substantial, very un-metaphysical results.

Freudianism, then, is best understood as the historic form of bourgeois science when applied to personality. Freud's original theories are very much alive today; they remain a formidable opponent of dialectical materialism. It is necessary that the grains of truth in Freudian theory be completely reworked from a materialist basis. What will emerge from such a process is not modified Freudianism, but a system of practice and thought which will have a completely changed character.


SEASON'S GREETINGS
HAPPY HOURS
PLENTY OF MEAT BALLS
PEACE
BEST WISHES
BROTHERHOOD
HONEY
HAPPY NEW YEAR

IFTARI

A Story by RASHID JAHAN

"GIVE a poor man a crumb to break his fast* with! May Allah bless you!"

The cry, many times repeated, penetrated to the women's apartments of the Deputy Collector Sahib's house. His wife, never too sweet-tempered, was on edge after the day's rigorous fasting, and at the sound of the wailing voice she burst out in annoyance. "These wretched beggars die somewhere during the day, and just when you want to break your fast in peace they come back to life!"

"May Allah bless you for your goodness!" the tremulous voice was more insistent.

"Nasiban! O Nasiban! Take out the sweets left over from the day-before-yesterday and give them to the beggar."

Nasiban, the servant girl, got up and went inside, pulling her trailing scarf up over her head as she went.

*Begam Sahiba*** was seated on a wooden divan on her veranda, awaiting the arrival of her husband and two sons. Before her was spread a white cloth covered with an array of tasty dishes. There was scarcely room left for those still to come from the kitchen. She glanced at her wrist-watch every few seconds, impatient for the end of the day's fast so that she could chew her betel leaf and tobacco.

Her servants always lived in dread of her temper, but during Ramzan it became proverbial and the chief victim was the semi-slave girl, Nasiban. Being an orphan, she was at the mercy of Begam Sahiba, who did not hesitate to beat her and even kept a fan handy at all seasons for this special purpose.

* For thirty days during their month of Ramzan, devout Muslims may not take a morsel of food nor a drop of water between sunrise and sunset. *Iftari* (if-thah'-ree) is the food eaten immediately after the day-long fast.

** *Begam* (bay' gum) means lady. *Sahiba,* or *sahib,* is an honorific suffix.

"O you useless girl! Have you gone and died there? Why don't you come out?"

Nasiban came out to the veranda, hastily wiping her mouth, and hurried towards the courtyard with the sweets in her hand.

"Come here and show me how many there are."

Nasiban reluctantly turned back and held out her hand.

"Only two?" screamed Begam Sahiba. "Oh, you witch! There were many more left over. Have you eaten them? Come closer and let me see."

"Oh, no, I didn't," mumbled Nasiban. But Begam Sahiba's x-ray eyes had focused on a crumb sticking to the corner of Nasiban's mouth. Enraged, she picked up the fan and began to hit the poor girl with the handle.

"Wretch! Cheat! This is how you keep the fast! Couldn't you wait another half hour? See how you'll like a taste of the stick for your greed!"

"Allah will bless you! Do send a little *iftari* to an old blind cripple!" came the voice from the street.

"Oh! Oh! Don't! Please don't! Dear Begam Sahiba, forgive me this time. I'll never do it again—I promise!"

"Never again, indeed! Just you wait, you vermin! See if I don't kill you before I've finished with you."

"Allah will bless your children!" Again the plaintive call.

When Begam Sahiba was exhausted she pushed Nasiban away, saying, "Go, you wretch, go! Go and give the beggar the sweets. The poor man has been crying at our door for a long time. Here—give him this, too," and she picked up a handful of fried lentils from one of the plates.

Nasiban went slowly to the courtyard door, sniffling and wiping her eyes with the end of her scarf.

NEW ROAD, which must have been new at some very remote period, was now full of ruts and muck. The houses bordering it on either side were dilapidated, with only an occasional one that could be called habitable. The road was broad enough to serve both as a highway and a common courtyard for the dyers, weavers, ironsmiths and other artisans who had their shops along it. On hot summer

nights it was so cluttered with string cots that no vehicle could pass without disturbing the whole sleeping population of the locality.

The neighborhood boasted three mosques, since the inhabitants were mostly Muslims, and there was constant rivalry among the *mullahs** in charge of them as to which should feed fattest on the ignorance and superstition of these poor folk. They competed in every thing—in teaching the children the Koran, in dispensing charms and incantations, in driving away evil spirits. In short, they resorted to every trick they knew to dupe the people. Their three useless, indolent families lived on the honest workers like white ants in a dense forest, which slowly eat away the healthy trees. The mullahs went about in white robes, while the people they fed on were filthy. The mullahs were gentlefolk, while the workers were low-caste menials.

Preying on the people of the locality more obviously was a colony of some twenty *Khans*** who lived in squalor over a junk shop in the upper story of a decaying house. They were all money-lenders—huge ruffians from the North-West Frontier Province, who were greatly feared by everyone. No woman ever dared pass their house unaccompanied. Almost the whole community was in debt to them and struggling to pay the exorbitant interest they demanded.

All day long their house remained locked up, while like predatory beasts they roamed the city. At evening they would return, bringing some bread and meat from the bazaar. They would boil the meat in a small cauldron which also served them as a common dish to eat from. They picked the bones clean and threw them down to the street below. Numerous stray dogs waited there to pounce on the bones, and their growls and snarls would be heard late into the night.

The Khans, after eating their fill, turned to their accounts, carefully adding up every *pice.**** Then some of them would take their *hookahs***** and lie down on the dirty blankets in the corner for a smoke, while the gayer sparks among them set off for a stroll in the city.

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* *Mullahs* (mool' lah) are self-appointed Muslim priests. Islam has no paid priesthood.

** *Khan* literally means chieftain. It is also a name given to wandering Muslim money-lenders from Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier. Their rates of interest range from 70 to 500 per cent.

*** A copper coin worth about half a cent.

**** A *hookah* (hook' kah) is a pipe with a long stem and a bowl of water through which the smoke is drawn up.

Although they lived by taking interest on loans—a practice forbidden by Muslim religious law—and used cruel methods of extortion, they were scrupulously conscientious about fasting and prayers, as if offering bribes to the Almighty Himself. So, this being the holy month of Ramzan, they would return home early every evening, distracted from their business by hunger and thirst. The hour just before sunset seemed especially long. Some of them busied themselves with the cooking and the rest loitered on the balcony, craning their necks to peep at the secluded women of the neighborhood, or amusing themselves by shouting ribald remarks at the passersby in the street below. But all the time each one was straining his ears to catch the *azan* from the nearest mosque—the sunset call to prayer, which proclaimed the end of the day's fasting.

The house opposite the Khans' flat was usually left unoccupied because of their rowdiness. But Asghar Ali, new to this locality, had thought it a find—such a large house rented at only twenty rupees a month, and so conveniently near the bazaar, too. Without stopping to make any inquiries, he had moved in at once with his mother, wife and little son.

Nasima, his wife, had been equally pleased with the house and had begun straight away to put it in order. That first evening, resting for a few moments, she had stood at an upstairs window watching the street urchins at their games. Her mother-in-law joined her but suddenly drew back with a gasp.

"Ooi! Look at those enormous revolting Khans—may their eyeballs burst! See how they're staring at us and laughing."

Nasima had looked across and seen the balcony crowded with Khans ogling and leering at her. When they saw that she had noticed them they talked still louder and shouted with laughter.

"Shut the window, daughter, and come away. What an exposed house Asghar has taken. I can't live here even for two days."

Nasima said nothing as she stared indifferently back at the Khans.

"What shall one say to men when women themselves have no shame?" grumbled her mother-in-law.

FOR some years now an estrangement had been imperceptibly growing up between Asghar and Nasima. They were cousins and their betrothal had taken place at a very early age, but, according to custom,

they had not been allowed to associate with each other. They had managed, however, to play a sort of hide-and-seek, dodging the older folk in order to meet—a trick common enough in homes where the women are kept in seclusion. Gradually they had fallen in love and exchanged letters in secret. Then Asghar had insisted that Nasima be sent to school.

During his first years at college Asghar, brimming over with youthful vitality and enthusiasm, had been one of those patriotic students who could think of nothing but the freedom of their country. He was well known, too, for his fiery speeches on the miserable poverty of the peasants and their oppression by the landowners, the wretchedness of the day-laborers and the callous greed of the capitalists. He was a good speaker and well read, so he had been looked up to by the student community as a promising political leader.

To Nasima he had been nothing less than a hero. He had always given her colorful accounts of his activities, and when she had read his name in the local newspapers her heart had filled with pride. For none of her friends or classmates had had anyone in their families so full of patriotic zeal as Asghar. And so Nasima had eagerly prepared herself for this new kind of life with him. An intelligent, sensitive girl, she had needed only a hint to set her thinking in this direction. She had soon begun to understand the problems of India and to busy her mind with possible solutions. The goal of India's freedom was constantly in her thoughts and she was even ready to die for her country.

After Asghar's B.A. examinations they had been married, and then he had begun his law course. Nasima had been a little surprised to find that at close quarters his political activities had boiled down to introducing her to a few of his friends, holding an occasional hot discussion, and sometimes making a speech. But she had put it down to his being fully occupied with his new studies, and had set her hopes forward to the day when he would be free to plunge into political life in earnest.

Actually while Nasima's political enthusiasm had been daily growing warmer Asghar's had been gradually cooling. He had put her eager questions off with excuses. At one time he would say, "But we are soon to have a child." Later it would be, "The baby is still too small to be left alone." When the child was a year old and Nasima was ready for political work he had said he must put all his time into get-

ting through his law examinations. And finally he had been preoccupied with getting a job.

After all, how long could the true state of affairs remain hidden from a wife? Outside, when Asghar met his old friends, he made his family the excuse for his non-political life, and they concluded that the poor fellow was hampered by his wife. But what excuse could he make at home? At last Nasima had understood that Asghar would never really do anything—he was all big talk and nothing more.

Gradually his circle of friends had become restricted to petty lawyers and slipshod Government servants bent on making as much money as they could. He was ill at ease with Nasima, for he felt she had found him out and despised him. Her cold silence irritated him so much that at times he wanted to slap her beautiful face. Had she quarrelled with him or even taunted him it would not have been as disturbing.

THE time for iftari was near. All the Khans had gathered. Some were standing in the balcony, others were making tea.

Nasima stood at her window looking down at the street. It was now two months since she and Asghar had moved into this house. The Khans had grown used to seeing her face, and because of her indifference they paid no more heed to her. Just now their whole attention was fixed on the neighboring mosque, whence they expected the azan at any moment.

An old beggar emerged from a side alley into the street, groping his way along. His body shook with palsy so that he could hardly steady the stick on which he leaned. In his free hand he was clutching something. He stopped across the street opposite Nasima's house and stood leaning wearily against a wall.

"Look, Mother. What has that beggar got in his hand?" Nasima's little son had come to look out of the window with her.

"I don't know, dear. Perhaps something to eat."

"Then why doesn't he eat it, Mother?"

"He may be fasting, and so he must wait for the azan."

"Mother, why don't you fast?"

Nasima smiled down at her son and shook her head.

"Why did Father tell the Inspector Sahib he was fasting? Did Father tell a lie?"

Nasima thought for a moment before answering. "You'd better ask him yourself," she said.

"But, Mother, why don't you fast?"

"Because you don't either," teased Nasima lovingly.

"I'm too little. Grandma said if we don't fast when we're grown-up, we'll go to Hell. Mother, what does Hell look like?"

"Hell? There it is—down there in front of us!" said Nasima in a voice full of indignation.

"Where?" Aslam looked all around eagerly.

"Down there where the blind beggar is standing. Where those weavers and those painters and those blacksmiths live."

"Grandma said there's fire in Hell."

"Yes, of course there is, but not the kind we have in the kitchen. The fire of Hell is the fire of hunger. There is only bad food to eat and sometimes none at all. People have to work very, very hard and their clothes are torn and dirty. Their houses are small and dark and smelly, and crawling with lice and bed-bugs. And, Aslam, the children who live in Hell don't have any nice toys to play with."

"Kalloo has no toys, Mother. Is it because he lives in Hell?"

"Yes, dear."

"And what about Heaven, Mother?"

"Heaven is here, where you and I and Grandma live. Where the houses are big and clean and there are plenty of good things to eat—butter and milk and fruit and eggs and meat. And the children have nice clothes and toys, and ice-cream, too."

"Then, Mother, why don't they all stay in Heaven?"

"Because the people in Heaven won't let the others come in. They make them work hard and push them back into Hell."

"And they become blind, too?"

"Yes, my son, Hell is full of blind people."

"Then how do they eat?"

AT THIS moment the azan was heard and with it the rocket that was fired to announce the end of the day's fast.

The Khans made a dash for their tea.

The frail old beggar eagerly tried to lift the sweets to his mouth, but excitement increased his tremors and a sudden twitch jerked the

sweets out of his hand. He sank to his knees and groped tremblingly for them. Just as his fingers found the sweets a dog snapped them up. Other dogs came, jostling one another, and when he shouted weakly at them they growled menacingly. Sick with disappointment and hunger, the old man collapsed on the ground, sobbing aloud like a little child.

Two of the Khans, looking down at the commotion, were mightily amused and roared with laughter.

"Mother!" implored Aslam in a frightened whisper, hiding his face against her. This was the first time his child mind had comprehended the real meaning of Hell.

"Wretches!" exclaimed Nasima, glaring across at the Khans.

"Mother!" said Aslam again in a choked voice.

Nasima picked him up in her arms and looking into his eyes said in a strained tone, "My darling, when you grow up it will be your work to see that there is no Hell for anybody to live in."

"And you, Mother? Will you do it, too?"

"I? What can I do? I'll grow old in this prison."

"You're not old, Mother! Not like Grandma. If you don't come with me I'll be all alone."

"All right, my precious, I'll surely come with you."

(Translated from the Urdu by K. C. Nasreen.)

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: "A Man's Right to Speak . . ."

On December 3, 1860, a meeting was scheduled to be held in Boston to commemorate the anniversary of John Brown's execution. For several days before that date, Boston newspapers fanned the flames of hysteria by calling for violent demonstrations at the meeting.

Refusing to be intimidated, the Abolitionists went ahead with plans to hold the meeting. The Negro community of Boston attended in full force, and hailed Wendell Phillips, Frederick Douglass and others on the platform. But before the meeting began, hoodlums, hired by merchants engaged in the Southern trade, invaded the hall and singled out Douglass for attack. Fighting "like a trained pugilist," Douglass was thrown "down the staircase to the floor of the hall."

The meeting was adjourned to a church, and as the audience poured into the street, Negroes were assaulted and several seriously injured. "The mob was howling with rage," Douglass recalled years later. "Boston wanted a victim to appease the wrath of the South already bent upon the destruction of the Union."

To vindicate freedom of speech in Boston, the progressive-minded people of the community held another meeting a week later in Boston's Music Hall. Here Douglass delivered one of the most stirring pleas for free speech in American history. The parallel with Peekskill and Paul Robeson is striking.

—PHILIP S. FONER

BOSTON is a great city and Music Hall has a fame almost as extensive as Boston. Nowhere more than here have the principles of human freedom been expounded. But for the circumstances already mentioned, it would seem almost presumptuous for me to say anything here about these principles. And yet, even here, in Boston, the moral atmosphere is dark and heavy. The principles of human liberty, even

if correctly apprehended, find but limited support in this hour of trial. The world moves slowly and Boston is much like the world. We thought the principle of free speech was an accomplished fact. Here, if nowhere else, we thought the right of the people to assemble and to express their opinion was secure. Dr. Channing had defended the right. Mr. Garrison had practically asserted the right, and Theodore Parker had maintained it with steadiness and fidelity to the last.

But here we are today contending for what we thought was gained years ago. The mortifying and disgraceful fact stares us in the face, that though Feneuil Hall and Bunker Hill monument stand, freedom of speech is struck down. No lengthy detail of facts is needed. They are already notorious; far more so than will be wished ten years hence.

The world knows that last Monday a meeting assembled to discuss the question: "How Shall Slavery Be Abolished?" The world also knows that that meeting was invaded, insulted, captured by a mob of gentlemen, and thereafter broken up and dispersed by the order of the mayor, who refused to protect it, though called up to do so. If this had been a mere outbreak of passion and prejudice among the baser sort, maddened by rum and hounded on by some wily politician to serve some immediate purpose—a mere exceptional affair—it might be allowed to rest with what has already been said. But the leaders of the mob were gentlemen. They were men who pride themselves upon their respect for law and order.

These gentlemen brought their respect for the law with them and proclaimed it loudly while in the very act of breaking the law. Theirs was the law of slavery. The law of free speech and the law for the protection of public meetings they trampled under foot, while they greatly magnified the law of slavery.

The scene was an instructive one. Men seldom see such a blending of the gentlemen with the rowdy, as was shown on that occasion. It proved that human nature is very much the same, whether in tarpaulin or broadcloth. Nevertheless, when gentlemen approach us in the character of lawless and abandoned loafers—assuming for the moment their manners and tempers—they have themselves to blame if they are estimated below their quality. No right was deemed by the fathers of the Government more sacred than the right of speech. It was in their eyes, as in the eyes of all thoughtful men, the great moral renovator of society and government. Daniel Webster called it a homebred right, a fire-

side privilege. Liberty is meaningless where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist. That, of all rights, is the dread of tyrants. It is the right which they first of all strike down. They know its power. Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, founded in injustice and wrong, are sure to tremble, if men are allowed to reason of righteousness, temperance, and of a judgment to come in their presence. Slavery cannot tolerate free speech. Five years of its exercise would banish the auction block and break every chain in the South. They will have none of it there, for they have the power. But shall it be so here?

EVEN here in Boston, and among the friends of freedom, we hear two voices: one denouncing the mob that broke up our meeting on Monday as a base and cowardly outrage; and another deprecating and regretting the holding of such a meeting, by such men, at such a time. We are told that the meeting was ill-timed, and the parties to it unwise.

Why, what is the matter with us? Are we going to palliate and excuse a palpable and flagrant outrage on the right of free speech, by implying that only a particular description of persons should exercise that right? Are we, at such a time, when a great principle has been struck down, to quench the moral indignation which the deed excites, by casting reflections upon those on whose persons the outrage has been committed? After all the arguments for liberty to which Boston has listened for more than a quarter of a century, has she yet to learn that the time to assert a right is the time when the right itself is called in question, and that the men of all others to assert it are the men to whom the right has been denied?

It would be no indication of the right of speech to prove that certain gentlemen of great distinction, eminent for their learning and ability, are allowed to freely express their opinions on all subjects—including the subject of slavery. Such a vindication would need, itself, to be vindicated. It would add insult to injury. Not even an old-fashioned abolition meeting could vindicate that right in Boston just now. There can be no right of speech where any man, however lifted up, or however humble, however young, or however old, is overawed by force and compelled to suppress his honest sentiments.

Equally clear is the right to hear. To suppress free speech is a double

wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker. It is just as criminal to rob a man of his right to speak and hear as it would be to rob him of his money. I have no doubt that Boston will vindicate this right. But in order to do so, there must be no concessions to the enemy. When a man is allowed to speak because he is rich and powerful, it aggravates the crime of denying the right to the poor and humble.

The principle must rest upon its own proper basis. And until the right is accorded to the humblest as freely as to the most exalted citizen, the government of Boston is but an empty name, and its freedom a mockery. A man's right to speak does not depend upon where he was born or upon his color. The simple quality of manhood is the solid basis of the right—and there let it rest forever.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

(This document will appear in the two-volume edition of the complete writings of Frederick Douglass edited and with a biography by Philip S. Foner to be published soon by International Publishers.)

Idea and Form in Literature

by GEORGE LUKACS

WE SHALL begin without introduction. There are descriptions of horse races in two famous novels, Zola's *Nana* and Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina.* How do the two writers approach their task?

Zola's description of a horse race is a splendid example of his literary skill. Everything that may be seen at horse races is described precisely, picturesquely, vividly. It is really a small treatise on the contemporary turf. All phases of horse racing, from the saddling of the horses to the "finish," are described with equal elaboration. The spectators' stands appear in the gorgeous colors of a Paris fashion show during the Second Empire. The world behind the scenes is just as elaborately described. The outcome of the race is entirely unexpected, and Zola not only describes that, but discloses the swindle behind it. But this skillful description remains merely an inset in the novel itself. The racing incident is very loosely joined up with the development of the plot, and could easily be removed. The only connecting link is the fact that one of Nana's many passing admirers is ruined through the exposure of the swindle.

On the other hand, the horse race in *Anna Karenina* is an essential part of the plot. Vronsky's fall is a critical event in Anna's life. Just before the races she had realized that she was pregnant, and, after some painful hesitation, had told Vronsky. The shock caused by Vronsky's fall gave her the impulse for the conclusive talk with her husband. Thus the interrelationships of the principal characters of the novel enter into an entirely new phase as a result of the race. Here it is not merely a part of the scenery, but a series of highly dramatic scenes, and a turning point in the development of the plot.

The entirely different functions of these scenes in the two novels are reflected in the very manner of their presentation. Zola's de-

scription is from the point of view of an *observer.* Tolstoy writes from the point of view of a *participant.*

Some readers and writers of the "modern school" may possibly say: Granting that we have before us two different methods of portrayal, does not Tolstoy's linking up of the race with the destinies of the central figures of his novel turn the entire episode into a mere contingency brought into the novel for the purpose of developing the drama; whereas Zola's description of the episode, complete in itself, gives us a picture of important social phenomena?

The question now arises: What is essential and what is contingent in an artistic portrayal? Without the elements of contingency everything is dead and abstract. No writer can create a vivid, life-like portrayal of anything if he completely rejects all elements of contingency. On the other hand, he must rise above the use of gross, bare accidentals and raise contingencies to the level of artistic essentiality.

Another question: What renders an episode essential from the artistic point of view? The completeness of its description, or the essentiality of the relations of the characters towards the events in which they participate, by which their destinies are determined, and by means of which they perform their acts?

The combination of Vronsky's ambition and his participation in the horse races produces an essentiality of an entirely different character from the precision of Zola's description of horse races. Going to see horse races or participation in them from an objective point of view may be regarded only as an episode in the life of an individual. Tolstoy connected this episode very closely with the important life-drama of the central figures of his novel. It is true that the horse races are only an occasion for the outburst of a conflict; but this occasion, through its concurrence with Vronsky's social ambitions—an important factor in the further development of the tragedy—is by no means a chance occurrence, a contingency.

But we can find even more striking instances in literature in which the contrast between these two methods is expressed with still greater clarity precisely in the matter of presenting phenomena in their contingency or essentiality.

Take the description of the theatre in Zola's novel and compare it with the description of the theatre in Balzac's *Lost Illusions.* On

the surface there are many points of similarity. The premiere with which Zola's novel opens, decides Nana's career. The premiere in Balzac's novel marks a turning point in the career of Lucian de Rubempres, his transformation from an unrecognized poet into a successful and unscrupulous journalist.

Zola describes the theatre with his usual painstaking completeness. First from the viewpoint of the audience: everything that takes place in the auditorium, in the lobby, in the boxes, etc. The stage is described with extraordinary literary skill. He devotes another chapter of the novel to an equally elaborate description of the theatre behind the scenes, and a brilliant description of a rehearsal is given in a third chapter.

Balzac lacks this detailed, documentary completeness in his description. To him the theatre and the performance are only the arena for internal human dramas: Lucien's rise, Coralie's artistic career, the beginning of a passionate love between Lucien and Coralie, Lucien's future conflicts with his former friends from the d'Arthez circle and with his present patron Lousteau, the beginning of his campaign of revenge against Madame de Bargeton, etc.

But what is portrayed in all these struggles and conflicts directly or indirectly connected with the theatre? The destiny of the theatre under capitalism: the intricate and manifold subordination of the theatre to capitalism and to journalism, which in its turn is subordinated to capitalism; the interrelation of the theatre and literature, of journalism and literature; the capitalistic nature of the association of the life of actresses with open and secret prostitution.

THESE social problems appear in Zola's novel also. But here they are described only as social facts, without exposing their origin. The theatre director repeats incessantly: "Don't say 'theatre'; say 'brothel'." Balzac *shows how* the theatre is prostituted under capitalism. The drama of the central figures merges here with the drama of the establishment in which they are working, the things with which they live, the arena where they fight their battles, the surroundings among which their relationships find expression, through which they are materialized.

In Balzac's and Tolstoy's novels we learn of events, significant in themselves, through the destinies of the persons participating in them,

through the role of these persons in public life in the course of the broad expansion of their individual lives. We are the spectators of events in which the central figures of the novels participate actively. We live through their experiences.

In Zola's novels, as in those of Flaubert, the central figures themselves are only more or less interested spectators of occurrences. These occurrences are therefore nothing more than a picture for the reader, or rather a series of pictures. We observe these pictures.

This contradistinction of living through experiences as against observing them is not accidental. It is rooted in different basic attitudes towards *life,* towards important social problems, and not merely towards methods of artistic mastery of the plot or definite parts of the plot.

In literature, as well as in other branches of life, there are no "pure phenomena." Engels once remarked ironically that a "pure" state of feudalism existed only in the constitution of the short-lived Kingdom of Jerusalem. Nevertheless feudalism is self-evidently a historic reality and can reasonably be considered an object for study and investigation. There is surely no writer in existence who does not use the descriptive method at all. Nor is there any foundation for saying that the great representatives of the realistic school of the post-1848 period, Flaubert and Zola, never at all made use of the narrative method. We are speaking of the *basic principles* and not of the phantom of "pure phenomena," of "pure" narration or "pure" description. The question is: Why and how did the descriptive method, originally one of many means of epic portrayal and undoubtedly a subordinate means, a mere accessory, become the principal method of composition?

Balzac in his review of Stendhal's *The Charterhouse of Parma* had already stressed the importance of description as an essentially modern method of presentation. The novel of the eighteenth century (Le Sage, Voltaire, etc.) contained almost no description. Only with the advent of romanticism did the situation change. Balzac emphasized that the literary school which he represented, and of which he regards Walter Scott as the founder, attached greater importance to the descriptive method.

But while emphasizing his opposition to the "dryness" of the novel of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and declaring for the modern method, Balzac puts forward a series of new essential ele-

ments of style characteristic of the new method. Description, according to Balzac's conception, is only *one of many* elements. Along with it he stresses especially the new significance of the dramatic element.

This new style came into existence because of the necessity for adequate presentation of the new phenomena of social life. The relations between individuals and classes became more complicated than they had been in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Le Sage, for instance, could outline the environment, general appearance, habits, etc., of his heroes and still produce a clear and all-encompassing social characterization. Individualization was achieved almost exclusively through a narrative of action, through the manner in which the personages reacted to events.

BALZAC saw clearly that this method was no longer sufficient. Rastignac is an adventurer of an entirely different type from Gil Blas. A detailed description of the Vaugner boarding house, with its dirt and smells, with its meals and its service, etc., is absolutely necessary to convey a real and complete understanding of the specific quality of Rastignac's adventurousness. Grandet's house, Gobseck's apartment, etc., must likewise be described in minute detail in order to present the types of usurers in all their individual and social variety.

But aside from the fact that Balzac's portrayal of the environment never stopped at bare description, but almost always turned into action (consider old man Grandet repairing his rotten stairs himself), description with Balzac was nothing more than a broad base for an important new element: for the introduction of the dramatic element into the composition. Balzac's extraordinarily multifarious and complicated characters could not possibly be developed with such striking dramatic effect were not their environment shown in such detail.

With Flaubert and Zola the role of the descriptive method is entirely different.

Balzac, Stendhal, Dickens, Tolstoy and others portray bourgeois society during different crises in the process of its establishment. They portray the complex regularity of its formation, the diverse and tortuous transition leading from the decaying old society to the

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rising new society. They personally and actively went through the critical transitions of this formative process. They are in this respect, and also in their mode of life, the successors of the old writers, artists and scientists of the Renaissance and Enlightenment: people who actively and extensively participated in the great social struggles of their time and who became writers because of their thorough and varied knowledge of life. They are no "specialists" as yet in the sense of capitalistic division of labor.

Flaubert and Zola began their work after the Revolution of 1848 in fully constituted, achieved capitalist society. They did not participate actively in the life of this society; they did not want to participate in it. This refusal to participate expresses the tragedy of a notable generation of artists of the transitional period. This refusal is motivated above all by opposition. It expresses hatred, abhorrence, scorn for the political and social regime of their time. Those who took part in the social development of this period became soulless, mendacious apologists of capitalism. Flaubert and Zola were too great and too honest for this. There remained for them only one way out of this tragic contradiction of their position—isolation. They became critical observers of capitalist society.

Through this they became professional writers, writers in the sense of capitalistic division of labor. The book was now completely transformed into a commodity and the writer into the seller of this commodity (if he did not happen to be born wealthy). In the case of Balzac we still see the gloomy grandeur of the primary accumulation period in the cultural field. Goethe and Tolstoy were still in a seigneurial position, not depending exclusively on the pen for their living. Flaubert was a voluntary ascetic. Zola, forced by material want, became a professional writer, in the sense of capitalistic division of labor.

New styles, new methods of presenting reality never come into existence because of inherent dialectics of artistic forms, although they are always connected with previous forms. Every new style comes into existence out of life, and is the inevitable product of social development.

But the recognition of this inevitability of the formation of styles does not make these styles equal in value or rank. The inevitable style may prove to be artistically false, distorted and bad.

Participation and observation are socially inevitable lines of conduct of two different periods of capitalism.

Narration and description are the basic methods of presentation of these periods.

THERE is an extraordinarily interesting, self-critical review by Flaubert in his novel *L'Education Sentimentale.* He says:

> "The novel is too truthful and it lacks, esthetically speaking, falsity of perspective. The plan was thoroughly thought over and therefore it disappeared. Every work of art must have a culminating point, a peak, must form a pyramid, or the light must be concentrated on one point of the sphere. But there is nothing of that sort in life. Art, however, is not nature. But I believe that no one has gone further in honesty of reproduction."

This confession, like all of Flaubert's utterances, manifests a relentless truthfulness. Flaubert characterized the composition of his novel correctly. He is right also in stressing the necessity of a culminating point. But is he right in his statement that "there is too much truth" in his novel? Do "culminating points" really exist in art only?

Of course not. This extraordinarily honest confession of Flaubert's is important for us not only as a self-criticism of his significant novel, but mainly because he reveals in it his historically incorrect conception of reality, of the objective existence of society, of the relation between nature and art. His conception that "culminating points" exist only in art, and that they are, consequently, created by the artist, and that it depends on the artist whether or not he will create such "culminating points" is a purely subjective prejudice—a prejudice arising from an external and superficial observation of the symptoms of bourgeois life, of the manifestations of life in bourgeois society—abstracted from the driving forces of social development, and their unceasing action upon the surface of life. This uniformity, it is true, is broken from time to time by "sudden" awful catastrophes.

In reality, however—naturally in capitalist reality—these "sudden" catastrophes have been in the process of preparation for a long time. They do not stand in complete contrast to the calm development on

the surface. A complicated, disproportionate development leads to them and this development dissects objectively the seemingly smooth surface of Flaubert's globe. The artist must, it is true, illuminate the important points of these sections; but it is Flaubert's prejudice to believe that this dissection of the surface does not exist in reality.

This dissection is effected through the operation of the laws regulating the development of society, through the driving forces of social development. In objective reality the false, subjective, abstract contradiction between the "normal" and the "abnormal" disappears. Marx sees in the economic crises "normal" and regular phenomena of capitalist economy:

> "The independence assumed by elements appertaining to and completing one another is violently annihilated. The crisis manifests the unity of elements which had been believed to be independent of one another."

The apologist bourgeois science of the second half of the nineteenth century sees reality in an entirely different light. The crisis appears as a "catastrophe" suddenly interrupting the "normal" course of economy. Likewise every revolution appears as something catastrophic and abnormal.

FLAUBERT and Zola are not, in their subjective opinions and intentions, apologists of capitalism. But they are children of their time and as such they are profoundly influenced in their world outlook by the opinions of their time, especially Zola, on the conceptions of whose works the flat prejudices of bourgeois sociology had a deciding influence. This is why life in Zola's works develops almost without any dissection, amorphously, as long as it remains, according to his views, normal in a social sense. Then all manifestations of the life of people are normal products of the social environment. But there are also entirely different, heterogeneous forces at work: heredity, for instance, which affects the thoughts and sensations of men with fatal regularity and brings on the catastrophes which interrupt the normal course of life. Let us recall the hereditary alcoholism of Etienne Lautier in *Germinal,* which causes a variety of sudden outbursts and catastrophes, having no organic connection with his general

character. Zola does not even make an attempt to present such a connection. Likewise the catastrophe brought on by Saccard's son in *Money*, etc. Everywhere the normal regularity of the environment is opposed by the catastrophes, unconnected with it and annihilating it, which are brought on by heredity.

It is clear that we are dealing here not with a profound and correct reproduction of objective reality, but with a simplification and distortion of its regularity, a distortion based on the influence of apologist prejudices—upon the world outlook of the writers of this period. A true knowledge of the driving forces of social development, an unbiased, correct, profound and complete poetic portrayal of their action upon human life must be given in the form of motion—such motion as would manifest the regular unity of the normal and the exceptional.

This truth of social development is just as true of the destinies of the individual. But when and how does this truth reveal itself? It is clear not only for science, not only for politics based upon science, but also for the practical knowledge of humanity in everyday life, that this truth of life may be revealed in the usages of people, in their deeds and actions. The world of people, their subjective sensations and thoughts show their truthfulness or falsity, their sincerity or mendacity, their greatness or narrowness of mind, after they have been converted into deeds—when their truthfulness is proven by deeds and acts or when their deeds and acts prove the falsity of their words. Only human practice can show concretely the substance of people: who is brave? who is kind? and so on.

Only through deeds do people become interesting to one another. Only through deeds do they become worthy of poetic portrayal. The basic features of the human character can be revealed only through deeds and actions in human practice. Ancient poetry, be it in the form of fairy tales, ballads, or sagas, or the later spontaneous form of narrated anecdotes, always proceeded from the acknowledgement of this basic importance of deeds and actions. This poetry retains its significance just because it reflects this basic reality, the positive or negative confirmation of human intentions by deeds. It remains alive and interesting to this very day, in spite of its often fantastic, naive, now unacceptable assumptions, because it places this eternal, basic reality of human life in the center of its portrayals.

Without this revelation of important human traits, without this interrelation between the individual and the happenings of the outer world, things, natural forces, social instiutions, etc., the adventurous incidents are empty and insubstantial. But it must be remembered that even without the revelation of essential and typical human traits there is present in every action at least an abstract scheme of human practice (even though it may be distorted and faded). That is why abstract presentations of schematic adventures in which only schemes of human beings are shown may temporarily excite some general interest (novels of chivalry in the past, detective novels in our days). In the success of these novels we can discover one of the deepest causes of human interest in literature generally: interest in the abundance, variety, and multiplicity of human life. When the artistic literature of some period cannot show the correlation between the abundant inner life of the typical figures of this period and their actions, the interest of the public turns toward this abstractly-schematic substitute.

Flaubert complained repeatedly, while writing *Madame Bovary,* of the lack of element of entertainment in his book. We hear such complaints from many distinguished modern writers. These complaints confirm the fact that the great novels of the past combined the portrayal of essential human features with entertainment and fascination, while modern art is being pervaded to an ever greater extent by strain and monotony and boredom.

This paradoxical situation is by no means due to the lack of talent of the literary representatives of this epoch, which has been marked by the presence of a considerable number of extraordinarily gifted writers. The monotony and boredom are mainly due to the principles of their method of presentation, to the principles and world view of the writers.

ZOLA censures sharply as "unnatural" the featuring of the exceptional by Stendhal and Balzac. Here is what he says, for instance, about the portrayal of love in *The Red and the Black.*

> "It ignores completely the truth of everyday life, the truth with which we are thrown into contact; and we find ourselves just as much in the realm of the extraordinary with the psychologist Stendhal as with the story-teller Alexander Dumas. From the point

of view of the exact truth Julien brings me as many surprises as D'Artagnac."

Paul Bourget in his essay on the literary activities of the Goncourts defines very clearly and sharply this new principle of composition. He says: "Drama, as we know from etymology, is action, and action is never a very good expression of the mode of life. What is characteristic of an individual is not what he does at a moment of sharp, passionate crisis, but his everyday habits, which are not a crisis, but his usual condition."

Now we can fully understand Flaubert's criticism of his own composition. Flaubert confuses life with the average everyday life of the bourgeois. This prejudice has its social roots, of course. But it does not cease to be a prejudice because of the discovery of its social roots; it does not cease to distort subjectively the poetic reflection of reality or to hamper an adequate and comprehensive reflection. Flaubert conducted a life-long struggle to get out of this enchanted circle of prejudices caused by social conditions. But inasmuch as he did not conduct a struggle against the prejudices themselves, considering them firm, objective realities, his struggle was tragically unsuccessful. He berated incessantly and most passionately the tediousness and hideousness of the bourgeois themes which forced themselves upon him. While working on his bourgeois novels he would swear never again to lower himself to such filth, but the only way out he could find was into the realm of fantastic exotics. The road to the discovery of the inner poetry of life remained closed to him because of his prejudices.

The inner poetry of life is the poetry of struggling humanity, the interrelations of people in their struggles. Without this inner poetry there can be no epic composition capable of exciting human interest, capable of intensifying and keeping alive this interest. The art of the epic, and, naturally, the art of the novel consists of the ability to show typical and humanly significant features of the social life of a given period. One desires to find in epic poetry a clear, enlarged reflection of himself, of his social activity. The art of epic consists in correctly apportioning significance, in correctly setting off the essential. An epic work produces an effect the more enchanting and general the more it succeeds in making the individual and his social activity appear not

as a contrived scheme, as the product of the author's virtuosity, but as something naturally grown; not as something invented, but as something just discovered.

The descriptive method, in the sense already indicated, becomes the dominating method of epic portrayal during periods when, due to social causes, the purport of this essential moment is lost. The descriptive method is a literary substitute for the lost epic significance.

But here, as everywhere in the history of development of new ideological forms, there is reciprocal action. The dominating literary method of description is not only a consequence; it is at the same time also a cause—the cause of a still further withdrawal of literature from the epic style. The domination of capitalistic prose over the inner poetry of human life, the fact that social life is becoming ever less human, the lowering of the level of humanity—all these are objective facts of the development of capitalism. Out of them inevitably arises the method of description. But this method, once there, and handled by gifted writers, consistent in their art, reacts upon the poetic reflection of reality. The poetical level of life is lowered, but literature over-emphasizes this lowering.

THE adherents of the naturalistic method might ask: But what about the intensive life of things? And the poetry of things? How about the poetical truth of description?

To answer these questions we must turn to the basic problems of epic art. What is it that makes things poetical in epic art? Is it really true that a description, skillful and precise as it may be, of the details of phenomena of the theatre, let us say, or of the market, or the exchange, reproduces the poetry of the theatre or the exchange? We take the liberty of doubting this. Boxes and orchestras, stages and pits, backstage and dressing rooms are in themselves inanimate, uninteresting, entirely unpoetical objects. They remain unpoetical, even when filled with people if the destinies of these people do not stir us. The theatre and the exchange are junction points of human endeavors, stages or arenas for the interrelations of people, for their struggles. And only in this connection, only inasmuch as the theatre and the exchange serve as mediums for these human relations, only inasmuch as they are shown as indispensable concrete mediums for concrete human relationships, do they become poetically important.

There is no "poetry of things" in literature independent of man and his destinies.

And it is very doubtful whether the so highly praised completeness of description and fidelity of technical details is capable even of giving us a true image of the objects described. Every object, which really plays a role in an essential action of a poetically stirring character in a novel, becomes poetically significant when this action is narrated in the right manner. A recollection of the profound poetical impression made upon us by the tools picked up out of the shipwreck in *Robinson Crusoe* proves our contention.

But the naturalistic school strives for an ever greater professional "trueness" of technical terms; uses ever more of the specific jargon of the trade described by them. Thus, the studio is described as much as possible in the specific language of the painter, the workshop in the language of the metal worker, etc. A new literature is created, a literature for the connoisseur, for the literati, who know how to value the difficulties of literary rendition of this special, professional knowledge, and of the inclusion of the special trade jargons in the literary language.

The Goncourts expressed this tendency in the clearest and most paradoxical manner: "'Most unfortunate are those works of art whose beauty is comprehensible only to artists. . . .' This is one of the most foolish things that could ever be said. It belongs to D'Alembert. . . ." In their fight against the profound truth expressed by this great pioneer of progress, the Goncourts, who were among the founders of the naturalistic school, declare themselves unconditional adherents of the "art for art's sake" doctrine.

Things become animated poetically only through their connection with human destinies. The epic poet, therefore, does not describe them. He establishes the role played by things in the entanglement of human destinies. Lessing fully comprehended this basic truth of poetry: "I find that Homer depicts nothing but the development of action and that he portrays bodies and all individual things only to the extent of their participation in these actions. . . ."

THE descriptive method does not present things poetically, but transforms people into inanimate things, into details of still-life. The individual traits of people simply co-exist and are described one after

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the other instead of being intertwined and thus revealing the complete living oneness of an individual in his most diverse manifestations, in his most contradictory actions. The false spaciousness of the external world is matched by the schematic narrowness of the characteristics. The individual appears as the finished "product" of social and natural component elements, which are considered as entirely heterogeneous factors. The profound social truth of the mutual intertwining of social conditions with the psychophysical nature of people is always lost.

The descriptive method of the naturalistic school is *inhuman.* The fact that it transforms people into still-lifes is only the artistic symptom of this inhumanity, which manifests itself in the ideological and artistic conceptions of the most important representatives of this school. Zola's daughter mentions in her autobiography her father's remark about *Germinal.* Zola accepts Lemaitre's definition of the novel—"A pessimistic epopee of the animalistic in the human"—on condition that the conception "animalistic" be precisely defined. "In your opinion, it is the brains that distinguish the human being," he writes to the critic; "but I find that an important role is played also by other organs."

We know that Zola's emphasis on the "beastly element" was his protest against the bestiality of capitalism, which he did not comprehend. But this unconscious protest changes in the literary presentation into a fixation of the inhuman, the beastly.

The method of observation and description came into existence with the pretense of rendering literature scientific, of transforming literature into applied natural science and sociology. But the social moments grasped by observation and fixed by description are so poor, so schematic, that they easily change into their polar antipode, into complete subjectivism. And this is the inheritance received by the various naturalistic and formalistic tendencies of the imperialist period from the founders of the naturalistic school.

EVERY poetical composition is determined in its principles of composition by the world view of the author.

The world outlooks of the great writers are exceptionally varied; and the ways in which these diverse viewpoints find their epico-compositional expression are still more varied. For the deeper, the more differentiated, the greater the store of actual life experience, the more heterogeneous may its compositional expression become.

But without a philosophy of life there can be no composition.

Flaubert felt this necessity very deeply. He quoted over and over again Buffon's profound words: "To write the proper thing means at the same time to feel properly, to think properly and to speak properly." But Flaubert stood this ratio up on its head. He wrote to George Sand: "I am trying hard to think properly in order to be able to write properly. But to write properly is my aim, I make no secret of it." Flaubert, according to this, did not achieve a *Weltanschauung* in life and then express it in his works, but strove as an honest man and substantial writer for a world outlook because he understood that without it there can be no literature of any magnitude.

This reversed way cannot result in anything. In the same letter to George Sand, Flaubert admits this failure with astonishing frankness:

> "I lack 'a well founded and all embracing concept of life.' You are right, a thousand times right. But where can I find the means for changing this? I am asking you. You do not brighten my darkness with metaphysics, neither my darkness, nor that of anybody else. The world's religion or catholicism on the one hand, progress, brotherhood, democracy on the other, do not any longer answer the requirements of the present. The new dogma of equality preached by radicalism, is tentatively refuted by physiology and history. I see no possibility today either of finding a new principle or of paying any attention to the old principles. And so I am in search of that idea upon which everything else depends, and cannot find it."

Flaubert's confession is a remarkably frank confession of the general crisis on the question of a *Weltanschauung* of the bourgeois intellectuals of the post-1848 period. Objectively, however, this crisis was felt by all of his contemporaries. With Zola it took the form of an agnostic positivism. He said that we can learn and describe only the "how" of events, but not their "why." The Goncourts developed skeptical, superficial indifference toward questions of a world outlook.

In the course of time this crisis inevitably becomes aggravated. The fact that during the imperialist period agnosticism develops ever more into mysticism is no solution of the crisis, as many contemporary writers imagine, but is, on the contrary, a further aggravation of it.

The *Weltanschauung* of a writer is only a condensation of the totality of his life experience raised to a certain height of generaliza-

tion. Its importance for the writer lies, as Flaubert correctly noted, in the opportunity it presents of bringing the contradictions of life into an ample and ordered concatenating, and in the fact that it forms a basis for proper feeling and proper thinking, upon which proper writing may be founded. The isolation of the writer from active participation in the struggles of life, in the abundant variety of life, makes all questions of a total outlook *abstract*. It does not matter whether this abstraction finds its expression in pseudo-scientific theories, mysticism or indifference toward the great problems of life. In either case it strips the problems of world concept of their artistic fertility, that fertility which they possessed in the old literature.

Without a *Weltanschauung* it is impossible to narrate properly or to achieve a composition which would reflect the differentiated and epically complete variety of life. Observation and description are just a *substitute* for the dynamic co-ordination of life in the writer's mind.

How could epic compositions be based on such premises? And what may be the merit of such compositions? The false objectivism and the false subjectivism of the modern writers, both alike, lead inevitably towards a *schematization* and *monotonization* of the epic composition. In the case of the false objectivism of Zola's type, the objective unity becomes the main principle of composition, which is made up of a detailed description of all important objective elements of such a thematic complex, a description from every angle. It results in a series of static pictures, of still-lifes, connected only by their objective unity. These pictures, according to their intrinsic logic, just stand alongside one another, in no integral sequence, and have no causal connection.

The so-called action is only a thin thread for the stringing together of these still-life pictures. This action secures only a simple sequence of separate still-life pictures, a sequence which is very superficial artistically, accidental and inefficient. The opportunities for any artistic variations in such compositions are very slight. The writers are therefore compelled to surprise the reader with the novelty of their themes and originality of description in order to make him forget the innate monotony of this sort of composition.

The opportunities for compositional variations are not much greater in novels composed in the spirit of false subjectivism. The scheme of such compositions consists of a direct reflection of the basic mood of

the bourgeois writers of the twentieth century: disillusionment. A psychological description of the vital subjective hopes and expectations is given, and then, through a description of different stages of life, the wreck of these hopes in their collision with the rudeness and cruelty of capitalistic reality is shown. Here, it is true, the theme itself warrants a certain chronological sequence. But on the one hand, this chronological sequence always remains the same, and on the other, the subject is so determinedly and irrevocably contrasted against the rest of world that there is no chance for the rise of any active interrelations between them. The highest stage of development of subjectivism in the modern novel (Proust, Joyce) transforms the entire inner life of man into a static object-like condition, which, paradoxical as it may sound, brings extreme subjectivism very close to the inanimate object-like state of false objectivism.

Thus, the descriptive method leads toward compositional monotony, while the genuinely epic story not only permits but even requires an endless variability of the composition and furthers its realization.

But is not such a development of the descriptive method unavoidable? Granted that the descriptive method upsets the old epic composition, granted that the new composition is poetically inferior to the old, still, does not just this new form of composition give an *adequate* picture of "finished" capitalism? Granted that the descriptive method is unhuman, that it changes people into mere appendages of things, into details of a still-life: still, does not capitalism do *just this* with people in real life?

This sounds very convincing, but is not correct.

To begin with, there lives within bourgeois society the proletariat. Marx emphasizes sharply the difference between the reaction of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat to the inhumanity of capitalism.

> "The propertied class and the class of the proletariat are in the same state of human self-alienation. But the first class is contented and established in this self-alienation; it sees in this alienation evidence of its *own power,* and enjoys in it a *semblance* of a human existence. The second class feels itself annihilated in this alienation, sees in it its own powerlessness and the reality of an inhuman existence."

Further Marx shows the significance of the *indignation* of the proletariat against the inhumanity of this self-alienation.

But when this indignation is poetically portrayed, the still-life of the descriptive manner is blown up into the air and the necessity of the plot, of the narrative method, arises of itself. We can refer here not only to Gorky's masterpiece, *Mother,* but also to novels like Nexö's *Pelle the Conqueror,* which show such a break with the modern descriptive manner. (It is self-understood that this method of portrayal is the result of the class contact with life of the writer connected with the class struggle of the proletariat.)

But does this indignation against the alienation of humanity, described by Marx, exist only among the workingmen? Of course not. The subjugation of all types of workers tied to the economic forms of capitalism, brain workers as well as manual workers, provokes the most varied forms of indignation among them all. Even a considerable part of the bourgeoisie yields to the capitalistic "upbringing" in the spirit of bourgeois inhumanity only gradually, after violent struggles. The new bourgeois literature here gives evidence against itself. The most typical theme of this literature—the portrayal of disappointment, the loss of illusions—proves the presence of a protest. Every novel about disillusionment is the history of such a protest.

But this protest is planned superficially and is therefore portrayed without real force.

It is self-understood that the fact that capitalism is, as a matter of course, "finished" does not at all mean that from now on everything is completed, and that development and struggle have ceased also in the life of individuals. When we speak of the capitalist system being "completed," we only mean to say that it reproduces itself on an even higher stage of "complete inhumanness." But the system reproduces itself continuously and this process of reproduction consists in reality of a chain of bitter and furious battles. The same applies to the life of every individual, who does not, naturally, come into this world as a ready appendage to the capitalistic machine, and becomes such an appendage only gradually in the course of his life through a series of struggles.

THE basic weakness, ideological as well as poetical, of writers of the naturalistic school, lies in their unconditional surrender, as writers, to capitalistic reality. They see in this reality only the result, the outcome, but not the struggle of counteracting forces. And even when they seemingly portray some kind of development—in the disillusion-

ment novels—the final victory of capitalist inhumanity is anticipated in the image of the hero. This means that the characters do not become stiffened in the spirit of "finished" capitalism in the course of the unfolding of the novel, but are portrayed from the very beginning in this state, which can only be the result of the entire process of development. This is why the illusions which are wrecked in the course of the novel produce such a slight, purely subjective impression. It is not a living person whom we learn to know and to love that is spiritually murdered by capitalism in the course of the novel, but a corpse wandering before stage scenery, with an ever-growing consciousness of his deadness. The fatalism of writers, surrendering, even though with a gnashing of teeth, to the inhumanity of capitalism, determines the absence of development in their "development novels."

It is therefore incorrect to assert that this method of portrayal adequately reflects capitalism in all its inhumanity. On the contrary! The writers involuntarily weaken the feeling of horror caused by this inhumanity of capitalism; for the sad fact of the existence of people without an active inner life, without an animated sense of humanity and human development, is much less shocking and provokes much less indignation than the fact that capitalism, in reality, transforms daily and hourly into "living corpses," thousands of live people with infinite human potentialities.

To get a clear understanding of the contrast it is sufficient to compare some of Gorky's novels portraying the life of the bourgeoisie with the works of modern realism. Modern bourgeois realism, which uses the method of observation and description, and has lost the ability to portray the actual pulsations of the process of life, reflects capitalistic reality inadequately, weakly. The deformation and degradation of the individual by capitalism is much more tragic, the bestiality of capitalism viler, more savage and cruel, than the picture which even the best novels of this school can give.

It would, of course, be a gross over-simplification to say that all modern literature has surrendered, without any struggle whatsoever, before the fetishization of things and the "dehumanization" of life brought on by "finished" capitalism. We have already pointed out that the French naturalistic school of the post-1848 period was, judged by its intentions, a movement of protest against this process. Also, in the later literary tendencies of the decaying capitalistic system, it may be

observed again and again that their notable representatives have always linked their various literary tendencies with the spirit of protest. The humanly and artistically significant representatives of the various formalistic tendencies desired to combat the senselessness of capitalist life in their works. An analysis of the symbolism of Ibsen's later works for instance, shows clearly this revolt against the monotonous senselessness of bourgeois everyday life. But these revolts are bound to be without any artistic results unless they get down to the human causes of this senselessness of human life under capitalism, unless the writer participates actively in the actual struggles of people for a sensible arrangement of their lives, unless he encompasses this struggle in his world outlook and portrays it artistically.

TWO POEMS

by THOMAS MCGRATH

ONE FOR RED CHINA

"Is it for nothing, then, that old Chinese
Sat titivating by their mountain pools
Or in the Yangtse studied out their beards?"

On a morning like any other:
When the sailors were climbing from sleep on a ladder of bells
When the laundry driver was beating his horse on the street
When the statesmen prepared to betray, the teacher to lie, and the many
To struggle for dignity, for love and for bread again.

On a morning like any other:
When the smell of catastrophe rose from the morning papers
When the first suicide was climbing the stairs to his grave
When the corpse floated up from the river, gone green at the nails
When the night shift was coming home wearing yesterday's face.

On a morning like any other:
When the raving ex-minister leaped from the hospital window
Shouting "The Reds have landed!", sane and magnanimous,
Homecoming Crusoes of a shipwrecked era,
The Red Army of China entered Shanghai

On a morning like no other:
Giving to the Negro condemned in Trenton the strength
To hope. To the striker in front of the factory gate
An invisible rifle. Giving to those who despair
The visible sign of their strength. Giving to all

A morning like no other—
A total morning whose arousing light burns
Instant on all meridians; prodigal, perfect morning
Hung like a flag over sleep-waking, amber Asia
And us; holy morning, born of the East, our own

Morning like no other.

THE SEVEN STATIONS OF MRS. D.

Waiting for the morning sickness of existence to pass
Mrs. D. put her head into the radio oven and turned on the laughing gas,
And after ten c.c.'s of merde from Mr. Perfidious
(The noted reporter and liar who makes the mornings hideous
For Lady Macbeth Soaps) she was hopped up enough to face
Her great American future and unable any longer to stay in the place

Anyway, Mrs. D. changed into her mind and went out to see
What Mr. Luce and free enterprise might have hung on her 9 o'clock Christmas tree.
But though the headlines proclaimed that she was ready for war
(And there were assurances by three cardinals and one whore)
Though the street was tree-proof and bird-proof, clean comfortable and nice
Where civilization and sanitation had killed all but men and flies—

Still something was terribly wrong. It seemed to Mrs. D.
That everything was properly accounted for. Then what could it be?
Was it love? A husband and a banking account were as good;
You had the Pope and the churches in exchange for God's body and blood;
In place of hope, insurance; of knowledge, radio quizzes;
Of culture, a genteel sexy bestseller. Nevertheless, it seemed to Mrs.

D. there had passed away a glory from the earth.
That it was involved with the packed subway and the three dollars
worth
Of sirloin steak in her shopping bag (whose meaty penumbra
She inhaled while behind her a man in experimental rhumba
Engaged herself and the century) Mrs. D. vaguely knew.
But the earth continually opened at her feet; there was nothing she
could do—

Poor Mrs. D.—who lived on the high cold watershed
Between the few who are already living and the many who are still
dead;
And it was dangerous to think, to waken out of the dreams
Of steaks and assurances into a world where the screams
Might be one's own. Mrs. D. put away the intimations of
Responsibility and went home to hear Mr. Tedious talk about Love

On the radio. But meanwhile the carnival in her head
Went on. The madman in her mind's house, manic with dread,
Turned loose his fantasies, like live snakes in the hall,
While the years of her youth like ghosts, her suppressed instincts, all
Like drunken spastics and cripples, joined in the riot upstairs.
Adrift and doomed on a vast and mapless Sargasso of despairs

Like a liner afire below decks, Mrs. D. sailed through the day
With her hatches battened. Oh ye who follow the historical way
To the freedom of necessity, who match idea and act,
Pity Mrs. D., who—in the fiction and fact
Of her incomplete consciousness, of too many things to unlearn,
Between the burning below and the riot above, knowledge and in-
stinct—finds nowhere to turn.

right face

DANGEROUS EXPERIMENT

"The planners [of Truman's Point Four program] are becoming increasingly aware of the dangers and difficulties involved. . . . For example, in 1945 the British in Guiana decided on an experiment in malaria elimination. By 1947 the malaria mosquitoes around a certain village had been exterminated by D.D.T. and the village's mortality rate was halved. Immediately there was pressure for more food and housing, and unless the British increased the food supply, and provided more houses, furniture, jobs and services, the local population faced death by starvation and abject poverty in place of death from malaria." —Payson S. Wild, Jr., in *Woman's Day.*

COLD WAR DEPT.

"Russia's greatest ally in her bid for world power is the increasing temperature of the entire earth. Elsewhere, the longer summers of depressive heat tend to make smart people stupid. Already, temperature increases threaten to decrease the size of American college students. These assertions are made in a recent report to the American Association for the Advancement of Science by Dr. Clarence A. Mills of the University of Cincinnati."—William S. Barton in the Los Angeles *Times.*

WARP AND WOOF

"For maladjusted dogs [in New York] there is a lady psychiatrist who lists among her clients the pets of men and women high up in the theatre, society and government."—*Look Magazine.*

MARSHALL PLAN BARGAIN

"FOR SALE: The world famous Villa Medici, built by Lorenzo the Magnificent. Arranged on 3 levels overlooking the City of Florence, this famous villa's walled terraces, great loggias and lavish reception rooms were used by Lorenzo of Tuscany in 1460 to entertain his friends. The ornamentation and decorative detail of the interiors are beyond description. Modern appointments have been added for gracious living. Over 12 acres of terraced gardens, 3-car garage, two gardener's cottages and another small villa included at $150,000."—A real estate advertisement in the *New Yorker.*

We invite readers' contributions to this page. Original clippings are requested.

books in review

Trial by Stoolpigeon

THE COMMUNIST TRIAL: An American Crossroads, by George Marion. *Fairplay Publishers. Cloth,* $3.00; *popular edition* $1.25.

THROUGHOUT the trial of the Communist leaders, the commercial press worked hard to create the impression that Harold R. Medina was an infinitely suffering, infinitely patient man. The defendants, their lawyers and the spectators in the courtroom have a different version of this waspish figurine of justice. They might admit that his patience was tried, adding that it was always found wanting. But what tried that infinite patience? George Marion gives us more than an idea.

It was not love of Latin poetry that made His Honor long to go back to scanning Horace. He had been given the job of nursing a case where there was none, of finding evidence where there was none, of pretending there were witnesses where there were none. When the government suddenly rested its case after the presentation of its thirteenth, somewhat simple-minded stoolpigeon, even he may have said under his breath, "Are you kidding?"

Now the case did indeed rest, not in the jury's hands but in his. If the dirty business was to go on the judge would have to be a prosecutor too, betraying the defendants whose rights he was legally committed to protect. Watching him rock back and forth on his high seat like an inverted pendulum, one felt that this man's self-control was nothing but condensed rage—hatred for those he was consigned to wrong.

They were making it difficult for him, and the prosecution had not helped matters any. Marion's book is devoted to showing how this came about and why it could not be otherwise. As we know, the defendants were charged with no acts of force or violence, but with "conspiring" to organize a political party and allegedly to "advocate and teach the duty and necessity of overthrowing and destroying the Government of the United States by force and violence." And where were this duty and necessity supposed to be given theoretical expression? In "the principles of Marxism-Leninism." Are these principles on trial? God forbid. But the accused are on trial for teaching and recommending them for study? Uhuh. Well, anyway, let's have a good look at these principles. God forbid. But, ladies

and gentlemen of the jury, if you will please look our way, we will give you instead the most amazing selection of exhibits from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's museum of professional decoys. We're sure you'll be intrigued and confused and just forget all about the issues and the facts.

And so, as Marion describes with great liveliness, the judge found himself in—and adapted his behavior to—the mores and manners of a good old-fashioned police court with its stools, fixes, frames and hookers. This meant honoring the testimony of the provocateur Nicodemus who, in 1948, had pleaded guilty to an indictment charging him with carrying an automatic Luger to be used against his mistress' husband, and who had been allowed to withdraw his plea in exchange for anti-Communist services to the F.B.I. It meant smiling upon the statements of the informer Blanc who had forged his brother-in-law's name to an application blank for membership in the Communist Party in order to collect from the F.B.I. expenses in connection with this and other noble deeds.

It meant accepting at face value the contribution of the pious liar, Budenz—the Aesopian language theory which, incidentally, he did not discover in Lenin, as he claims, but borrowed from Hitler. The honesty of this creature can be gauged from the fact that he took wages and borrowed money from the *Daily Worker* long after he had decided upon his renegacy; but when asked whether he had paid back the $899.94 he owed the newspaper, he answered, "I should be glad to do so, *if it were necessary.*"

Marion's point is that, since the government wished above all to prevent a serious examination of the principles of Marxism-Leninism, it could use only such witnesses as would "whittle down the involved and extensive body of Communist theory to the level of a Skid Row policeman's mind." Whether these informers were roped in through their psychopathic vanity, compulsion to lie, opportunism or shady past, they were as integral a part of the stool-pigeon system as a stripper is part of a burlesque show. Marion exposes the nature of this system and how it makes a mockery of justice. Readers may find this section of his book a little too detailed, and detracting from more essential matters, but it is always interesting and pertinent. Furthermore, it reveals the continuity of corruption in the trial.

We are not surprised when we see the judge allowing the interpretations of Budenz to pass for evidence and his simple assertion that Communists do not mean what they say to be accepted by the jury as a matter of fact. Nor when defense attorney Gladstein asks Robert Thompson to state what Marxism-Leninism is and the

THE MARTYR—*a courtroom sketch by Alice Neel.*

judge will not permit it. Only what the prosecution says on this subject is admissible. As to the fact that the constitution of the Communist Party expressly forbids the very force and violence its leaders are charged with advocating, that too is taken care of by Budenz. To cap it all, the judge will not allow the defendants to describe their real activities on the ground that these do not bear on the indictment.

In other words, the accused are silenced because they are not able to furnish material against themselves! Marion aptly compares this sort of thing to the trial of the Knave of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland.* Only the Judge is a shrewder article than the King.

Marion's book concentrates on

the prosecution aspect of the trial. For the presentation of the Communist position we must look to other pamphlets and documents, notably the published speeches of the defendants and William Z. Foster's deposition. But Marion's contribution is an invaluable one for an understanding of the meaning of the trial, the context of history in which it was held, and the role of the American people in the fight to reverse the verdict. It is above all important that such a book reach people whose knowledge of the case and of the aims of the Communist Party is derived only from the pages of the filthiest press on the face of the earth. Finally, I'd like to emphasize that this is a book expressly written for reader enjoyment, with not a dull line or trite formulation in its 190 pages.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

Lorca

LORCA: THE POET AND HIS PEOPLE, by Arturo Barea. *Harcourt, Brace.* $3.00.

ON AUGUST 19, 1936, two days after they began their uprising, the fascists of General Franco murdered the poet Federico García Lorca. Their initial crime against culture paralleled their unspeakable crimes in political and social life.

Dead at the age of thirty-seven, García Lorca was already a major poet of our century. The present work is a brief study of the poet and his work. Its author, Arturo Barea, is himself a Spanish Republican, living in exile in England. His purpose, in his own words, is "to bring Lorca's poetry nearer to readers, particularly non-Spanish readers, by showing how it reflects and transforms the world of the Spanish people to which it belongs." For, he adds, "Lorca's work is profoundly and revealingly Spanish and at the same time universally human."

For his biographical data Barea admittedly leans heavily on a Spanish study—published in the United States in 1941—by Professor Angel Del Río of Columbia University, who knew the poet intimately.

In his book, capably translated into English by his wife Ilsa, Barea develops two main ideas: (1) Lorca's poetry is a fusion of the "popular" and the "cultured." It fuses the two richest traditions of all Spanish poetry: the popular ballads and folk songs—the magnificent early *romances* — whose authors are anonymous and whose dates of origin are obscure; and the "cultivated" line that runs from Jorge Manrique, Lope de Vega, and Luis de Góngora down to the present. (2) Lorca is preeminently a poet of the people. A son of Granada in Andalusia, he was known and read and beloved by all the people of Spain. He identified himself with his peo-

ple, and had the power to make them "feel and see familiar things in a new, clear light."

Barea tells revealing stories of untutored soldiers in the Republican Militia reading Lorca and carrying around with them in the trenches near Madrid tattered, mud-spattered copies of his *Romancero Gitano*. The famous "Ballad of the Spanish Civil Guard" became a symbol of the people's hatred of reactionary Spain. "The tunes and texts of the simple little folk songs he had revived became war songs of the Republicans"; even as, five years later, the French poems of Aragon and Eluard became battle songs of the French resistance movement. And Lorca's verse-plays, *Mariana Pineda, Bodas de Sangre* (Blood Wedding), *Yerma* and *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* —whatever their obscurites and sexual symbolism—were intended by the poet as *realistic* portrayals of the Spanish life he knew.

Throughout the book Barea repeatedly emphasizes that "there is no explicit political meaning in Lorca's work," that he "fought no conscious social or political fight," that he kept himself "distant from party politics and from obvious 'Left' activities." But why these reiterated apologies and protests? Are they designed to make Lorca more acceptable to the American reading public? Or are they advanced in order to buttress Barea's theory, expounded in the final chapter, that Lorca was "an absolute creator," an "absolute master of his reality"?

Such a mystical and mystifying conclusion comes as a chilling contradiction, particularly since Barea insists from the very outset that Lorca was "an adversary of all forms of reaction, and through his work one of the people's party in the widest sense of the term, whether he wanted to be or not."

We prefer to see in Lorca a people's poet in the best and most profound sense. This picture emerges from Barea's study, despite its half-hearted and watered-down conclusions. It emerges above all from the poet's life and work. It is in his popular ballads; it is in his stirring poems of "The Poet in New York" (1929-30), in his vision of the Negroes of Harlem:

"There is no agony like your oppressed redness,
like your blood shuddering within your dark eclipse,"

as well as in his denunciation of Wall Street and his cry on behalf of the common people of our country:

". . . the Negroes who empty the spittoons,
the young men trembling under the pale terror of the directors,
the women drowned in mineral oil,
the multitude of the hammer, the violin or the cloud . . .

must shout with so bold a voice
that the cities tremble like little girls
and the prisons of oil and music burst
open,
because we want our daily bread.

Finally, it is in Lorca's own spoken words. He had organized a group of university students into a dramatic company to tour Spain. Known as *La Barraca,* this people's theatre played one-night stands in the cities and villages of Spain, often setting its stage in a barn or a shed.

García Lorca's *La Barraca* company brought the classic dramas of Lope de Vega and Calderón de la Barca as well as his own and other contemporary plays to thousands of simple, unlettered Spaniards who thirsted for a better life. Then, one night in 1935, at a special performance of his *Yerma* in the *Teatro Español* of Madrid, Lorca addressed the actors and workers of the theatre and told them:

"Tonight I am not speaking as the playwright, or the poet, or the simple student of the rich panorama of man's life, but as an ardent, passionate believer in the theatre of social action. . . ."

This is the Lorca we know and cherish; the Lorca who transcends national boundaries; the Lorca the fascists shot forty-eight hours after they began their uprising; *our* Lorca.

JOSEPH M. BERNSTEIN

Mill Girls and Magnates

THE GOLDEN THREADS: New England's Mill Girls and Magnates, by Hannah Josephson. *Duell, Sloan and Pearce.* $3.75.

IT IS interesting if not surprising to learn from Mrs. Josephson's study of the Lowell mill girls and their antagonists, the Boston tycoons who founded modern American industry, that American corporate history began with the theft of British machine designs and on money gained through piracy and treason. Both the theft and the treason were piously done. Not the least of the contributions of the early nineteenth-century Boston industrialists to modern American corporate practice was the development of cant to that high art wherein profit is made to appear as the last goal of industry and public welfare the first.

Mrs. Josephson even suggests there was a certain moral grandeur about the figure of Francis Lowell, the founder of the modern American corporation and its mass production methods as he purloined the designs of British textile machinery in 1811: "Piracy of this kind," she writes, "is so monumental that it takes on the character of a patriotic act."

This is true enough, I suppose, if our perspective is sufficiently enlarged to exclude the morals which Lowell publicly professed and to include the progressive role

of capitalism historically. But it is equally true that there is something highly characteristic in the fact that modern American capital was born in theft and received its initial financing from fortunes obtained by Boston merchants through trading with the enemy in the War of 1812.

Mrs. Josephson's material is extremely suggestive, concerning as it does the origin of the American corporation, the first attempts in a mass industry toward trade unionism, and the struggle of American women, factory girls, for something of equity and a degree of culture. She tells of the transformation of Lowell, Mass., from a seeming Utopia in 1822 to a grinding sweatshop by 1860; recites the literary triumphs of the mill girls in their paper, *The Lowell Offering;* shows their fight, led by the indomitable Sarah Bagley, against wage cuts and speed-up and for the ten-hour day.

Over and against all this she traces the involved financial machinations of the pious Bostonians who evolved standard American corporation techniques as they watered stocks and enjoyed gargantuan profits. Mrs. Josephson shows, moreover, the change of merchant capital into corporate capital and its further transformation into the high finance of banking with control of credit, shipping, railroads, insurance, real estate, and even of government itself in the hands of the favored few who were known as the Boston Associates.

The Boston tycoons soon governed Lowell and the textile industry by remote control. They admitted that they knew nothing of the textile industry but said loftily that anyone who knew how to make money could hire any brains that happened to be necessary.

A typical leader of the pious Bostonians was Nathan Appleton, master of double-talk. His right hand denied what his left hand did to such an extent that he even denied he was a manufacturer. He was just a merchant, he said, with certain investments. Piously and by means of the men he employed for such things, he cut wages, which averaged $2.50 a week, successfully resisted moves to reduce the twelve-hour day, and introduced the speed-up and the blacklist. He was a soft-hearted man, too. His children had to be careful not to tell a sad story at the dinner table for fear they migh

make Papa cry. He argued for and secured a high tariff, not for his own sake, he said, but to keep up wages. Then he cut wages, again not for his own profit, of course, but because of his patriotic wish to give American industry a sound economic base. His patriotism ultimately gained him one of the largest American fortunes, not a few of whose dollars derived from the tariff.

Turning from the unctuous Appleton to the Lawrence brothers, Amos and Abbott, founders of the Massachusetts town bearing their name, Mrs. Josephson with her own dry restraint indicates in more elegant phrases that they had the ethics of alley cats and the moral pretensions of a poll-tax Congressman.

She attempts a crisp, ironic, no-nonsense, down-to-earth approach and although this has its virtues it has the danger, too, of getting so near the earth, and the subject, that all perspective vanishes. The crux, the marrow, of the forty years she describes was the fight over slavery. There was not an institution or a human being, a policy or a politician that was not influenced by the fact of slavery. Yet the peculiar institution, upon which the textile industry was based, is scarcely discussed in this story of Lowell and then only eliptically.

The Lowell mill girls, themselves, recognized their stake in the abolition of slavery when they

declared in resolutions that they could not materially better their own condition until chattel slavery was eliminated. Mrs. Josephson comments on their declaration with considerable asperity, apparently regarding it as a soft-headed desertion from the pure and simple trade-unionism that alone would serve them.

Similarly, it seems to me, Mrs. Josephson is wrong in suggesting that Northern capitalists were first, last and all the time pro-slavery. While this was a general tendency, it is also true that Northern industry was torn between its short-term commercial interests in maintaining the Southern status quo and the long-term necessity that slavery be eliminated if Northern capital was to continue to grow.

Even the textile magnate Amos Abbott Lawrence was to express this dilemma, not on impulse as Mrs. Josephson suggests, but as a contradiction that tore at him for several years. After all he was one of the organizers of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, formed to save Kansas from slavery, and spent some $44,000 in the cause.

The Golden Threads is an excellent work. Nevertheless, I cannot help feeling that if the story of the textile industry had been more completely integrated into the torrential currents of the time, related more surely to the westward expansion and to the great duel over slavery, and integrated to a greater degree with New England's cultural rebirth, the study would have gained a good deal in depth.

RICHARD O. BOYER

Neurotic Visions

PRIZE STORIES OF 1949: THE O. HENRY AWARDS. Selected and edited by Herschel Brickell. *Doubleday.* $3.50.

HERSCHEL BRICKELL, in the introduction, agrees with one of his prize story judges that this past year has seen "the return of the yeasayers some of us missed so much in this pessimistic recent period. . . ."

This promise is never fulfilled in the twenty-three stories which yield, at a glance, to three descriptive categories. These categories overlap, but only because the degree of tragic intent may be ambiguous enough to leave a depressing margin of choice for the individual reader. The stories of compulsive and tragic ritual, some completely allegorical, are the most clearly defined, carrying as they do their philosophical garb like a cape. Of these there are five. Eight stories are concerned with narrowing and warping experiences suffered by children growing up. Nine deal with neurotic individuals or grotesques in a depressed social scene. One story, a highly personal tribute to a

North Carolina mountaineer, more assertive than demonstrative, stands outside these categories.

The depressed air of these stories and the failure of most even to touch us seldom derive from the material. The absence of intelligence and compassion, the failure to present a character as a social being rather than in the world of his sickness, is at fault. It is the tension that arises from a lucidly, objectively portrayed character and the human compassion with which a reader surrenders his attention that makes a story with the material of Flaubert's "A Simple Heart" or, say, any of Gorky's a moving experience. But the release of compassion in the reader — so seldom possible in the closed world of these stories — depends for the most part on the rational and recognizable organization of the material. The material only defines the limits of the writer's desire to teach us, never in itself makes identification impossible for the reader.

Another explanation for Brickell's crop of short story writers is that they attempt to edify with too little evidence. They seem to make of the despair of some middle-class intellectuals the condition of all humanity. Thus Hortense Calisher, whose stories have first appeared this year, concludes a story in which her heroine reviews her disturbed relationship with her mother: "The living carry, she thought, perhaps not one tangible wound but the burden of innumerable small cicatrices imposed on us by our beginnings; we carry them with us always, and from these, from this agony, we are not absolved."

In Elizabeth Enright's "The Trumpeteer Swan" the last man left on earth sees himself "as the last of those, who, deserting the instinctive ruled order of being, had, by the unnatural developmen of wish, attempted to take a hand in destiny." These projected fears and guilts of the middle class must needs create their own materials, as in perhaps the most notorious of the stories, Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery." An unspecified community is seen on the day it meets each year to select a member who is to be stoned to death.

In most stories the point of view is implicit, but if shock is avoided, it is also at the expense of the material and the relaxation of tension. The aging couple of Elizabeth Coatworth's "Bremen's" are almost visibly limited in activities and aspirations in order to show the illusory basis of human will. Phoebe Pierce peoples a West Forties boarding house with inexplicable grotesques to give the impression that society is one mad joke.

A wildly disturbed boy of Alice Carver Carmer's "The Boy Next Door" is presented fitfully as he is seen by a very ordinary young wife and is allowed to drift away

unexplained because his family moves. The young wife, in truth, may only shudder as she does when she misses him, but the reader presented with such a two-dimensioned kaleidoscope of stories can only shrug.

A few of the stories can hold one's interest because of their author's narrative skill, as those of William Faulkner and Shirley Jackson. Others contain acutely caught details of speech or action, as J. D. Salinger's story of upper-middle class adolescents and Harris Downey's story of two aging spinsters.

Even in the "simplest" of stories there is superimposed a dying fall. Faulkner's prize story, "The Courtship," would appear to be just a tale of a white man and an Indian who vie, in comradely fashion, for the love of an Indian maid only to find after their final and most dangerous exploit that she has married another. Yet in the story this "maker of myths," as Brickell calls Faulkner, has dreamt a dream of racial purity. The Indian and the white man represent the homogenous races (the Negro and white contrasted with the rootless Easterners in *Intruder In the Dust*) whose inevitable conflict has a tragic issue.

Faulkner is a more complex writer than the desperate irrationalists of the other stories. He builds up interest by narrative skill and by a kind of emotional overloading of the story. Yet the emotional cast of the allegory is as false and obscurantist for its implications as are the neurotic visions of the others. The poignancy of the relationship of the two men does not derive from their symbolic extensions; Faulkner has only told the story of an unrealized homosexual passion.

The more apocalyptic of these stories represent a certain achievement: the ability of their authors to write them and live to write another. This, however, is evidence of human resilience, not qualification for authorship or for inclusion in a collection of the year's best stories.

JOSE YGLESIAS

Africanisms in America

AFRICANISMS IN THE GULLAH DIALECT, by Lorenzo D. Turner. *University of Chicago Press.* $7.50.

THIS book is a major triumph in American scholarship. It is the fruit of fifteen years' labor by Dr. Turner, a distinguished Negro linguist, at present on the faculty of Roosevelt College in Chicago.

During this decade and a half, Dr. Turner's main occupation has been the study of the Gullah or Geechee dialect of the Negroes inhabiting the coastal region and islands reaching from Georgetown, South Carolina, to St. Marys, Florida. In a letter to the reviewer Dr. Turner stated that this in-

volved about 250,000 Negroes, that it was clear this speech had reached inland at least one hundred miles with varying influence, and that its total impact among whites as well as Negroes had been studied not at all.

The fact of the Gullah dialect being spoken by the Negroes in the region named has been a matter of comment in historical literature for a century and a subject of so-called study for almost half that period. I say "so-called study" for the previous investigators have been so blinded by white chauvinism and so thoroughly and correctly distrusted by the Negroes that their reports were obviously worse than worthless. It remained for Dr. Turner to uncover the truth.

The tone of the earlier writers may be judged by this passage from Ambrose E. Gonzales, one of the most "authoritative" among them: "Slovenly and careless of speech, these Gullahs seized upon the peasant English used by some of the early settlers and by the white servants of the wealthier colonists, wrapped their clumsy tongues about it. . . ." and so on.

This vicious claptrap was promptly and soberly adopted by the distinguished academicians of our multi-million-dollar institutions of mis-education, like professors Reed Smith of the University of South Carolina, Guy B. Johnson of the University of North Carolina, Mason Crum of Duke and George P. Krapp of Columbia. Some of these savants added to Gonzales' "peasants" and "clumsy tongues" the brilliant idea that the white masters' "baby talk," with which they allegedly addressed the slaves, was an additional source for Gullah.

Since the words Gullah and Geechee themselves are taken directly from the names of two different West African peoples, one would have thought these scholars would have investigated possible African sources for the language they were discussing. An additional incentive might have been the fact that several of them lived in Southern areas where the very geographic terms were redolent of Africa, such as the Okatee, Peedee and Wando rivers or the Coosaw, Tybee, Wahoo and Wassaw islands. But then, imagine going to the trouble of studying West African languages, when explanations like "clumsy tongues" and "baby talk" will do!

Dr. Turner mastered West African languages by years of study abroad and then spent more years earning the confidence of and studying among the Gullah Negroes. His findings are conclusive and of the utmost importance.

Dr. Turner's work shows that about 4,000 West African words appear in the Gullah dialect. He shows that the African words are used sparingly in the presence of whites and it is clear that the survival of this dialect is an expres-

sion and a result of struggle against white domination. Thus, the children bear two names—African and English—the latter the only name permitted use in official or public intercourse, as in schools, but the former kept alive within the family circle.

The work demonstrates how not only words, but grammar, verb forms, intonations and pronunciations bear striking resemblance to West African languages. Stylistic habits, too, like repetition of key words or phrases, especially in songs and stories, and the regular use of poetic imagery in speech show unmistakable African influences.

An example or two may be cited. In Gullah the verb is frequently omitted as "He big," or "It sad," or "What it?" and exactly the same occurs in several West African languages. Again, in Gullah, most nouns have the same form in the plural as in the singular; this is true in several West African languages, so that if one wishes to pluralize the word man, he would do this by a demonstrative pronoun or a numeral adjective: those man; five man.

These are the merest indications of the contents of Dr. Turner's work. I conclude this brief review by saying that *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* is one of the most significant works dealing with the American Negro people to be published in the past decade.

HERBERT APTHEKER

U.S. and Palestine

THE REALITIES OF AMERICAN-PALESTINE RELATIONS, by Frank E. Manuel. *Public Affairs Press.* $5.00.

IN THE long and seemingly endless procession of books on Palestine this study of American-Palestine relations deserves a distinctive place. It is the first of its kind to be based largely on original sources, including hitherto restricted material from the files of the State Department and the National Archives. That it fails, despite extensive documentation, to shed much new light on American policy toward Palestine is probably due to the author's uncritical acceptance of the reactionary premises of that policy as well as of Zionism's role as an instrument of London's and Washington's designs for empire.

Starting with the year 1832, when the first American consular agent in Palestine was appointed, Manuel gives us a picture of the old decaying Jewish religious settlement and its relations with our diplomatic officials. He devotes rather too much space to the untidy feuding within the Jewish community and the animadversions of various obscure consuls—details which today have chiefly an antiquarian interest. It is with the emergence of Palestine as a political factor in World War I, coinciding with the emergence of imperialist America as a world

power, that United States policy toward that country begins to take shape.

President Wilson gave prior approval to the Balfour Declaration, which the British issued, as Manuel points out, in order to rally American Jews for the imperialist war and Russian Jews against the socialist revolution. And at the Paris Peace Conference Wilson sought to play the role of arbiter of the settlement in the Middle East, including Palestine. It was here that the duality and duplicity of American policy toward Palestine first sharply manifested itself: on the one hand Wilson gave grandiloquent support to Zionist claims and, on the other, chose a commission of two anti-Zionists (the King-Crane Commission) to investigate the wishes of the predominantly Arab population of Syria and Palestine as the basis for determining Palestine's future status. Manuel tends to gloss over this double-dealing and on the whole gives the reader only a heavily-curtained view of the sordid horse-trading and back-stabbing that characterized the entire Peace Conference.

Manuel performs a real service in rescuing from obscurity the American secret agent in the Middle East, William Yale, a former Standard Oil employee. Yale was an unusually acute observer, dedicated to the Wilsonian brand of imperialist salvation. From Yale's reports, as quoted and paraphrased in this book, it becomes clear that the British desire to have the United States become the trustee for Palestine was for the purpose of countering the influence of the French, at that time Britain's chief rivals in the Middle East. The United States, however, still feeling its way as a world power, preferred to keep free of direct political responsibility, while seeking to expand its economic bridgeheads.

Thus, Manuel tells us regarding the negotiations between Washington and London that in 1924 produced the Anglo-American treaty on Palestine: "Though the concessions which the Standard Oil Company had held from the Ottoman Empire in the Negev were not mentioned by name, it is evident . . . that oil was the major consideration dictating American interest in the negotiations." Eventually the Negev oil fell under the control of the Iraq Petroleum Company, an American-British-Dutch-French cartel. Most of the concessions for oil exploitation in Palestine are still in this company's hands.

Yale's secret reports also provide additional testimony concerning the thoroughly pro-imperialist character of Zionism. The American intelligence agent regarded Zionism, Manuel writes, "as primarily an instrument of British imperial policy." He comments further: "The British might have to countenance the French in

Syria, Yale thought, but in that event they would erect a buffer state between the French area and Suez. . . . Yale believed that the Zionists had fallen in with this policy of the buffer state and favored British control." And Manuel, who is strongly sympathetic to Zionism, himself testifies to its anti-working class character when he writes that in the period of the First World War "political Zionism, for the most part dominated by middle- and upper-class Jews, was often posed as a counterbalance in Jewish life to socialist and communist revolutionary influences."

The weakest part of the book is that which deals with the more recent period. In fact, the closer the author comes to contemporary events, the more astigmatic his vision. Thus Roosevelt emerges as something of a villain in relation to Palestine and Truman very much of a hero. The evidence of Truman's complicity in the effort to strangle Israel in the womb, given by Jorge Garcia-Granados, Guatemalan representative on the U.N. Special Commission on Palestine, in his book, *The Birth of Israel,* is ignored in favor of the Zionist myth of a White House Galahad battling single-handed against a wicked State Department.

But an even more astonishing feat is the author's account of the United Nations partition decision and the stormy events that followed it—an account which manages to omit the role of the Soviet Union! That is almost like *Hamlet* without the melancholy Dane. In a book which painstakingly records the trivia of nearly a century ago, this magisterial deletion of the most important factor in the making and saving of Israel has a single and simple meaning. This may be deduced from the political mirror-writing near the very end of the book:

"The technical skills of the Israelis and the capital supplied for the most part from America make them agents of modern industrialism in the Middle East. . . . In the context of Point 4 of the President's program as set forth in his inaugural address, the Israelis are a technological reservoir in an industrially arid part of the world."

But perhaps the people of Israel, who did not choose to build a British buffer state, will also have something to say about their becoming agents of American imperialism and a reservoir of big business exploitation of the Middle East.

A. B. MAGIL

films

Henry James in Hollywood

by WARREN MILLER

THE HEIRESS* is Hollywood's second attempt on a work by Henry James. The first treatment of a James story, about three years ago, was the absurd film based on "The Aspern Papers"; it is happily forgotten. In the new film, William Wyler is faithful to James in amosphere, language, meaning. The story or, rather, the synopsis of it, will make it appear deceptively simple; but, like nearly all of James, it has a richness of meaning and insight that transforms a trivial situation into a significant drama.

It is the story of Catherine Sloper, an unattractive young woman, dominated by her father, seeking love. Her only talent is embroidery; her only asset is her money: ten thousand a year she inherited from her mother, the thirty thousand a year she will inherit when her father, Dr. Sloper, dies. Morris Townsend (played with fine skill and grace by Montgomery Clift) is the fortune-hunter. Dr. Sloper suspects his motives, forbids the marriage. He takes Catherine on a trip to Europe. When she returns, she intends to marry Morris. The father announces that he will not leave the money to her if she does. Catherine is determined, however, and plans, with Morris, their elopement. She tells him that she will not inherit her father's fortune. He jilts her.

Meanwhile, her father has fallen ill, knows that he will die, and now wants her love. But she rejects him as, all her life, he has rejected her. Would you not have been sorry, he asks her, to have married him and then discovered he did not love you? I lived happily with you, she answers, for twenty years before I discovered you did not love me; at least I had those years of happiness. Dr. Sloper dies and Catherine, in a sense, becomes her father, takes on his manner, is decisive, cold, unrelenting. After a time, Morris returns. Catherine permits him to hope, to plan; then, with calculated cruelty, she locks the door of her house

* Produced and directed by William Wyler; Photography by Leo Tover; Music by Aaron Copland; Screenplay by R. and A. Goetz based on their stage play; suggested by Henry James' novel, *Washington Square*. Actors: Olivia De Haviland, Montgomery Clift, Ralph Richardson, Miriam Hopkins.

and the film ends with Morris pounding on the door.

Curiously, Morris is not the villain of the piece; indeed, finally, all our sympathy is for him. Not the fortune-hunter, but money itself is the cause of Catherine's misery, Morris' despair, the father's cruelty. Here, money is a presence, not a thing to be held or spent; it becomes a character in the drama, a force that motivates and drives the helpless characters who possess or desire it. In the end, all three are touched and corrupted by it; each commits an act of cruelty because of it. If, finally, all our sympathies lie with Morris, still, we understand that the tragedy, for James, certainly, is Catherine's loss of innocence.

But Catherine's loss of innocence is less significant and, surely, less interesting than the means by which it is brought about. At one point, Catherine tries to console Morris with the thought that, whatever the obstacles to their marriage, she does have some money. And Morris replies: "It is from the fact of your having money that our difficulties come."

We know, from stories like "The Jolly Corner," that James was aware of the corrupting effects of money; and, from his writings on Balzac, that he was sensitive to the use a writer could make of this insight. Yet James' morality was a class morality, that of the aristocracy. He will say, on occasion, that the pursuit of money and the uses to which it may be put are evil; but he is a child of his class and cannot see that the *source* of a great fortune is evil. James would not agree with Augier's statement, quoted by Marx, that money "comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek"; and certainly he would not accept Marx's addendum: and "capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."

In *The American Scene,* written at the time when a rapacious group of industrialists were extending and tightening their control of the nation's riches, James can criticize only the "vulgar" use of the money; he speaks of the "right enjoyment" of the luxuries only the rich can afford and criticizes the rich only for their "inferior and desecrating use of" these luxuries. It is because his criticism is so shallow that *The Heiress* can be made today, that a bank would agree to lend the two million dollars required for the production of this film.

Even so, this is one of those extremely rare Hollywood films that involves the intelligence of the audience; it is a motion picture that could, if the word had not been used so carelessly in the past, be called *adult.*

But it is not without flaws, and the most serious of these is the film's static quality. For it is in effect a photographed stage play. In the theatre, the spoken word carries the weight of a play's force and meaning. In film, the spoken

word, dialogue, must develop out of the action; it must never replace action. The conception of a film must be in terms of things seen, not of words heard. In this production of *The Heiress,* image is used to augment sound, the thing seen is merely to provide a rich background for the spoken word.

The language of *The Heiress* is calculated, intelligent, Jamesian; Wyler provides it with a rich and tasteful setting. He attempts to mitigate the unfilmic character of the script by the use of deep-focus photography, a technique that renders a setting in sharp focus from near distance to far distance. It is a non-realistic method that results in a heightened feeling of reality. The human eye does not see with equal sharpness objects near to it, in the middle distance, and the far distance. But the camera can, and when the photographed image is projected on a screen, the eye too can take in all planes at once.

Wyler uses this method to give movement to a scene that, otherwise, would be a rigidified set-shot. He gives us movement in depth as a means of overcoming the script's failure to provide opportunity for movement across the screen, action.

Wyler's achievement is this: he has given us perhaps the most perfectly photographed stage-play ever made. But this is by no means the same thing as a fully satisfying motion picture.

art

NEW SEASON

by WILLIAM THOR BURGER

SINCE the opening of the art season there have been at least a few evidences that social art is not entirely dead. The first month has already provided us with half a dozen shows of more than passing interest. Painters of widely recognized stature, like Ben Shahn and Anton Refregier, have added to their large productions. From those not so well known, such as Anthony Toney and Irving Amen, have come groups of works which wrestle with the central problems facing young social artists today. And a first exhibition by nineteen-year-old Ed Strickland foretells a brilliant and exciting maturity. Yet all of these in their diversity have traits in common when seen in comparison with a display of a large group of prints by Mexican people's artists.

Even if we ignore the central problem of a real audience relationship, the social artist of our day is not in an enviable position. Feeling the necessity for interpreting life as he understands it, he must first of all understand it himself and then translate it into a language capable of interpretation by others. At a time when art is thought of as no more than the making of esthetic objects, he must find a philosophy to believe in and a means of communicating that belief. This is no easy task. Many fail and create bad or unimportant art, while others have given up the struggle and turned to the less trying occupation of playing with the fragments of nature and esthetics in the realm of what is called "pure" art.

It is with satisfaction that one can greet the return of Refregier after the completion of his mural series at the Rincon Post Office in San Francisco. With the conclusion of that work the government sponsorship of art in the U.S. was officially dead, for that was the last major project left over from the "golden age" of pre-war years.

By what one can gather from reproductions, Refregier's San Francisco murals are impressive. His exhibition of easel paintings at the A.C.A. Gallery, which consisted of studies for portions of the murals and paintings which grew out of his two-year stay in San Francisco, illustrated the ar-

tist's attitude and style. Refregier is an extremely inventive and facile artist. He tells a story simply and directly. He covers a wall with broad and effective patterns which have been influenced in their stylization by modern art movements. The clarity of his statement is, however, often weakened by a dryness and a lack of emotional depth. In his smaller pieces, especially those concerning children, there is an added human warmth and charm.

Whereas Refregier's work has always had the literalness of illustration, Ben Shahn has always searched for subtlety through indirection. Where he is faced with the problem of mass communication, as in his murals or his tempera series (Tom Mooney, Sacco-Vanzetti), the meaning has been strong and clear. His easel paintings have been more subtle, more personal and more involved in symbolism. In his recent exhibition at the Downtown Gallery this tendency was quite apparent. The growing concern with paint quality, with indefinable mood, with inferential symbolism, all led to vagueness and sometimes even confusion. As against this Shahn retains his amazing ability to create memorable images which are original, contemporary and very sharp. He can achieve a tremendous depth of feeling as in "Miners' Wives," a hauntingly sad and lyrical mood as in "Sound in the Mulberry Trees," or a tart wittiness as in "Vanity." Shahn is still the most mature, consistent and satisfying of the American social painters.

Working in the same social tradition is the young and politically progressive painter Anthony Toney, whose work was shown last month at the A.C.A. Gallery. The exhibition posed a much more difficult problem than that of evaluating the work of either Refregier or Shahn, for here is an artist attempting to utilize still more abstract means of contemporary art to convey social meanings. With great seriousness he is facing a problem which seems crucial to many young artists.

As a painter Toney has been trained in a tradition of an uncommunicative art. According to the standards of this tradition he is talented and technically capable. But Toney's very ability and training provide him with a problem. Like Shahn and Refregier, he wants to use what are considered the most advanced esthetic means, and that is only natural.

But the overwhelming tradition in contemporary art is opposed to social comment. The simple, traditional and human approach, exemplified by such artists of the past as Rembrandt or Daumier, is now generally considered corny. Such an attitude is considered to be esthetically dated and emotionally primitive. Art today is more concerned with exploring the realm of esthetics, plumbing the subconscious or revealing one's

"inner consciousness" in terms of automatic expression. In the face of this, a simple statement upon a theme seems naively anachronistic.

To add to this difficulty is the fact that the world is really not as simple as it once was, although it might be added that it is not as complicated as some people in their confusion would have us think. The contemporary artist, living in a world of atomic fission and relativity is naturally impelled to express himself in much more complex terms. Toney, therefore, in attempting to project his concept of reaction in the "Monster," searches for a true and comprehensive statement and produces instead a rich but confusing view of the world. The symbols he employs range from Picasso's fascist bull to the head of Henry Wallace, juxtaposed in a kaleidoscopic rather than an integrated sense. Toney uses here what is essentially the montage technique, bringing together symbols and scenes within a single visual frame.

In an analogous manner he employs a montage of styles which range from the completely abstract to the most photographic transcription of reality. For example, in "Slave Ship" he comments upon the historical period of slave trade in America. There are scenes depicting many aspects of this monstrous activity as well as related social factors all hung together upon a scaffolding of an abstract shape resembling a ship. There are African natives in chains, a portrait of a slave-ship master, the interior of a slave ship and a glittering ball in a brilliantly decorated room of that age. These are all exciting fragments of reality, each a symbol for some aspect of a complex social phenomenon, pasted upon a structure which is itself only an abstract and arbitrary shape.

The difference in scale, the variation in technique, the mixture of styles flowing from Toney's furious creativity produce a kind of mixed visual metaphor whose meaning is not entirely clear. The intellectual effort demanded of the observer, in deciphering the symbols, relating them to each other and to the central theme, and in terms of a constantly shifting esthetic vision is usually too great. The whole thing has become too much of an intellectual puzzle to transmit the deep emotions of the artist. Even though Toney's courageous search has not yet come to a successful end, it remains moving and interesting art.

Irving Amen, whose prints were on view at the Argent and the Tribune galleries, comes closest to the Mexicans in the direct cutting of his wood blocks and the forceful simplification of form and theme. He is an artist who takes his responsibilities to the people seriously, by making prints which can be sold cheaply and understood easily.

In quite another way Ed Strickland, at the 44th Street Gallery,

reminds one of the great Mexican muralists. A Negro, trained in the public schools of Newark, working for a living, he has turned out paintings with enormous energy. For the most part they are in one or another of the "modern" manners which everyone nowadays is taught in the high schools. Even in these his content, whether it be old men discussing a problem, a lynching in the snow, or a crucified Negro, has social roots.

In his latest paintings, however, Strickland has gone on to a monumental realism. Figures larger than life size, seen almost without distortion, are placed in a real cityscape. There is a rough, and perhaps conscious, avoidance of any attempt to make a good composition, or provide interesting paint textures or color harmonies. Perhaps the most impressive is of a Negro boy with a bloody nose brooding on a curbstone. Strickland's faults, however numerous, do not obscure the fact that his is a talent of the first rank.

IT IS useful to compare the social art of these North Americans with that of Mexican artists.

Recently at the Tribune Subway Gallery, the graphic works of a group of Mexican artists, joined in the Taller de Grafica Popular, were shown. Here an entirely different approach was to be seen. The symbols used were quite simple, the themes immediately understandable. Scenes from every-day life, Mexican landscapes and incidents from the Revolution were treated in a bold and vigorous way.

All this, of course, is due to the tradition within which these men work and the purpose to which this art is put. This is a people's art which uses symbols and artistic means that the ordinary peasant and worker can understand. It is an art which grows out of the close relationship between artist and public, a common folk heritage, and a common revolutionary tradition. It has simplicity, boldness, and even in its crudity, strength.

On the whole, the social artists of the U.S. attempt something much more complex and subtle, not because they are essentially more complex and subtle as artists, but because they come out of another tradition, a tradition of estrangement of artist and public, of esoteric esthetic experiments, of intellectual complexity, of individualism, of pessimism.

Is it any wonder then that our social artists find it difficult to discover common symbols, to arrive at an esthetic language to express a social content with simplicity, power and optimism? Their efforts are isolated and individual, sometimes falling into obscurity or pessimism. It is, on the other hand, quite remarkable that in the face of such conditions we have produced even a handful of first-rate social artists, and are still producing younger artists with the courage to work in this direction.

theatre

MONTSERRAT and *REGINA*

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

IN THE two major events of the season thus far Lillian Hellman had a part. One was her adaptation of *Montserrat,* the international success by the French African dramatist, Emmanuel Robles; the second was Marc Blitzstein's *Regina,* an adaptation of Miss Hellman's *The Little Foxes.*

Montserrat has for its background the revolution which ended in the liberation of the South American nations from Spanish rule. Montserrat, an officer with Republican leanings in the Spanish imperial army, has been secretly delivering arms to the rebels. As the play opens, he has just helped their leader, Bolivar, to escape a Spanish detachment.

The frustrated Spanish troops return with evidence of Montserrat's complicity and their commander, Izquerido, a man notorious for his sadism, is given carte blanche to deal with him. He realizes that Montserrat is prepared to go through the usual tortures. Calculating on the more weakening anguish it will cause Montserrat to bear the responsibility for the lives of innocent people, Izquerido orders six passersby to be arrested as hostages.

He has them brought in and tells them, in Montserrat's presence, that their lives depend on him. Unless they can induce him to disclose Bolivar's refuge they will be executed, one by one. Izquerido gives them an hour alone with Montserrat. Four of the six plead with him for their lives, and though he is cruelly shaken Montserrat holds firm. Then the two for whose sake he is at the point of yielding give him the strength he needs to complete the ordeal.

In the current talk about the play I have heard both that the French original suffers from Miss Hellman's "American improvements" and, conversely, that her adaptation has added substantially to its power. Whatever the case may be I can report that the dramatic situation on which the play is based is developed with skill and power, that *Montserrat* is moving and impressive drama.

That the reviewers did not report it as such is an evidence of how far the current hysteria has infected them. In the gingerly

tone with which they discussed the theme, it is clear that "revolution," even when it is an old one, has become an "off color" subject. The play was grossly undervalued by them.

On the other hand it does have real flaws. The talky opening scene is virtually wasted on a character who does not reappear till the end and then only for a minute or two. Montserrat's lines lack the glow and eloquence that one listens for as a counterpoise for the wit and strength of the adversary, Izquerido. And the characterization of Izquerido himself falls too much into a current stock conception of the fascist type as the cultivated sophisticate. Brutality requires no cultivation to practice even psychological tortures.

But the heart of the play is the relation between Montserrat and the six hostages and the self revelations wrenched out by the ordeal of their six decisions. This is done with imposing emotional force.

As Izquerido, Emlyn Williams has a magnificent presence but his performance seems to me to compound the playwright's fault in the conception; he played on the sophisticated note all the way. The roles of the hostages were well performed particularly by Reinhold Schunzel as the merchant and George Bartenieff as the Indian boy.

MARC BLITZSTEIN'S *Regina* gives further evidence of something to which his own *The Cradle Will Rock* had given satisfactory testimony before, namely that there can be such a thing as modern music drama.

Blitzstein, here, does not produce music that can be extracted from the score for what might be called anthology performance. There is, of course, nothing wrong in writing theatre music that can be performed in extracted pieces; it happens, however, that Blitzstein's music for *Regina* is quite severely functional. Since his theme, here, is mainly the selfishness and ruthlessness incited in human beings by the acquisitive drive, his music is, for the most part, relevantly biting and harsh. But where another sort of music is called for he provides it as in the lilting quartet that opens the second act and the moving confession of Birdie as she discloses the misery that has driven her to solitary drinking.

Blitzstein's chief contribution, however, one that is close to genius, and in which he again shows his sure satirical sense, is his use of a local Negro jazz band as his chorus. Through these players and singers he is able to voice telling satirical commentaries on the rapacious Hubbards and their circle. Their music is wittily counterpointed against the inanities of the Hubbard ball for which Blitzstein provides a bitter recitative patter for the gossiping guests and

furious dance rhythms for their revels.

Blitzstein has been served wonderfully well in the direction and the settings by Robert Lewis and Horace Armistead. Jane Pickens, in the title role, has a nearly perfectly proportioned vitality of person and personality though the strain of her part which calls for sustained high tension throughout began to show at the end. The other parts were all given better than competent performances and the jazz players were magnificent. It will be a long time before William Dillard's trumpet and voice and Philip Hepburn's part as Chinkypin will fade from my memory.

THE rest of the season has proved both drab and scanty. With production costs at $85,000 for an ordinary one-set show, and theatre rental maintained at monopoly level, this season got off to the slowest start in years. September, a usually lively month, saw virtually no openings. And as October rolled in, a number of productions expired on the perilous passage to Broadway and some others did not survive public exposure more than a day or two.

For a few weeks a certain Mr. Chartock's company sought to carry through a Gilbert and Sullivan season. With the exception of the dainty Kathleen Roche as heroine there was the sort of miscasting that is tolerated only in grand opera. That the performances nevertheless gave some pleasure is a tribute to the unkillable pertinence of the Gilbertian satire and the tunefulness of the Sullivan music which Lehman Engel rendered with clarity and elegance.

A much happier revival was the Roger Stevens production of *Twelfth Night,* one of Shakespeare's brightest comedies. For me it provided an opportunity to compare a conventionally competent professional performance with the more spontaneous and ingenious off-Broadway presentation of the same comedy done by Piscator's Dramatic Workshop.

There were two English importations, Douglas Home's *Yes, M'Lord* and Terence Rattigan's *The Browning Version* presented with a one-act afterpiece by the same playwright, *Harlequinade.* The two productions are reported to be hits in London which would indicate that matters are no better there than on Broadway.

In *Yes, M'Lord,* the Labor Party's sweep topples a Tory stronghold that has elected a member of the local aristocratic family from time immemorial. The Labor Party's winner, however, is immediately elevated to the ministry and a peerage, making a by-election necessary. By agreement the defeated candidate, son of the local earl, runs on the Labor Party ticket, on the assumption that he will be unopposed. But at the instiga-

tion and with the financial support of his American fiancee, who cannot bear to see aristocracy falter, the butler, who is staunch for the maintenance of caste, runs against him and wins. Then the butler's devotion to caste makes it impossible for him to sit in the seat of his masters. He resigns, encouraged by the housemaid who sacrifices dreams of an upper-class misalliance to the same sacred principle of everybody keeping in his place.

The playwright imitates Bernard Shaw in a persistent manipulation of paradox, but Home's paradoxes only intensify the confusion and leave everything mired in cynical helplessness. What the play says, to the extent that it bothers to say anything, is that the British aristocracy may be decaying but there is always a labor man to take the vacated place on labor's back; and the masses want somebody on their back—look at the butler and the housemaid; so all's well for an eternity of master and slave.

The only relief from this mess was the performance of A. E. Matthews as the simple-minded earl whose powers of concentration are limited to the sights on his squirrel gun.

The other English importation, Rattigan's *The Browning Version,* was on a higher level but hardly up to that of his *The Winslow Boy.* Its theme is essentially the moth-eaten one that the female of the species is more deadly than the male.

Rattigan's destroying female is the wife of a Greek professor whom her persistent torture has left a gray and sapless husk. The drama turns upon what at first appears to be her lethal stroke, her disparagement of a student gesture, dousing the flicker of self-respect in him that the gesture had kindled. But the lethal stroke destroys her instead. It sends her lover flying from her in revulsion; and it incites such reviving anger in her husband as to enable him at last to cast her off.

This may have satisfied the playwright's desire for evening up on his destroying woman but it wrecks the plausibility of his characters. To make it come out he has to endow the lover with a naiveté and the husband with a strength that pulls them out of line with their previous portraiture. This is not to say that the play is a botch; there are some keen insights into the disintegrative powers of grievance and guilt in human relationships and also into the withering inhumanity of capitalist budget-bound college administrations.

Maurice Evans, as the living dead man in *The Browning Version,* gave a moving yet not quite convincing performance; while Edna Best, as the persecuting wife, probably because of the lines that were given her, was a little too unrelievedly malevolent.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

ART

(NOTE: *Figures in parentheses indicate page.*)

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946

Of Masses & Mainstream, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1949.

State of N w York }
County of New York } ss.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Joseph Felshin, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of Masses & Mainstream and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily, weekly, semiweekly or triweekly newspaper, the circulation) etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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