

QUEST

*An
Adventure
of
Ideas*

Editors: Abu Sayeed Ayyub, Amlan Datta

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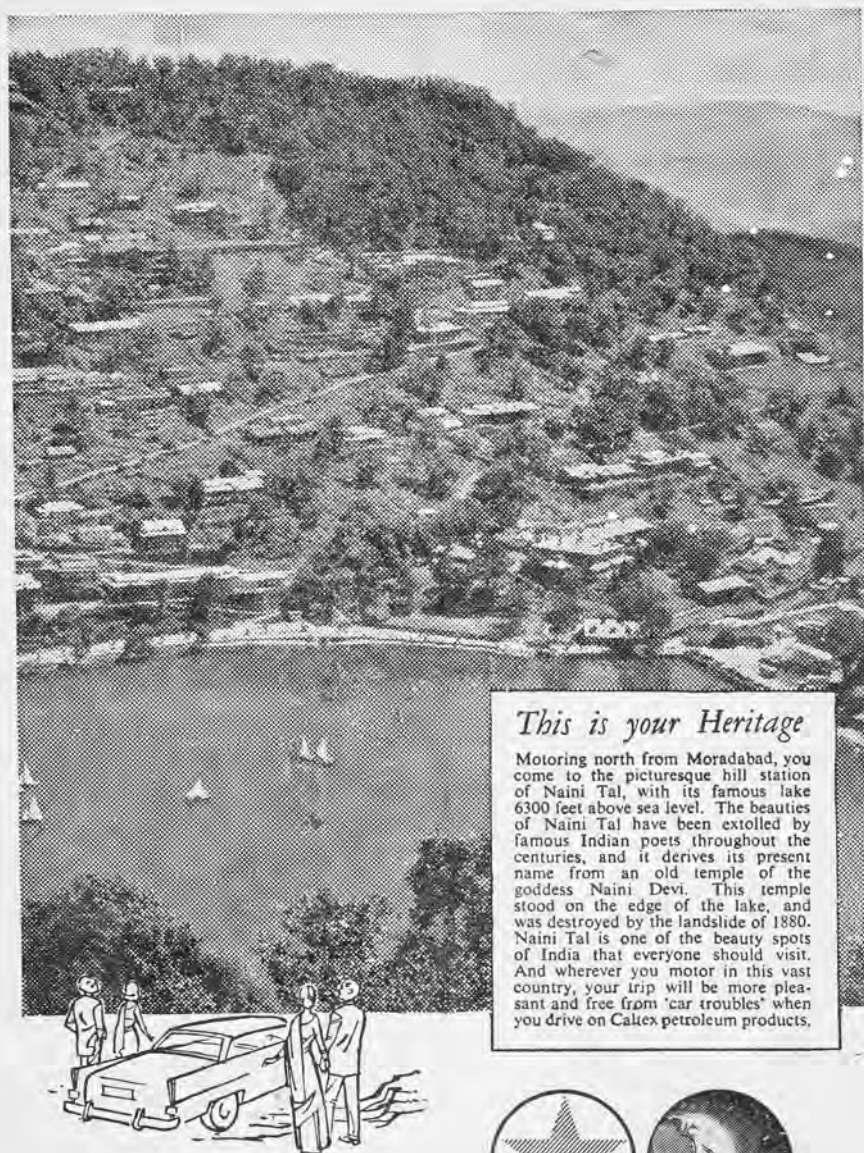
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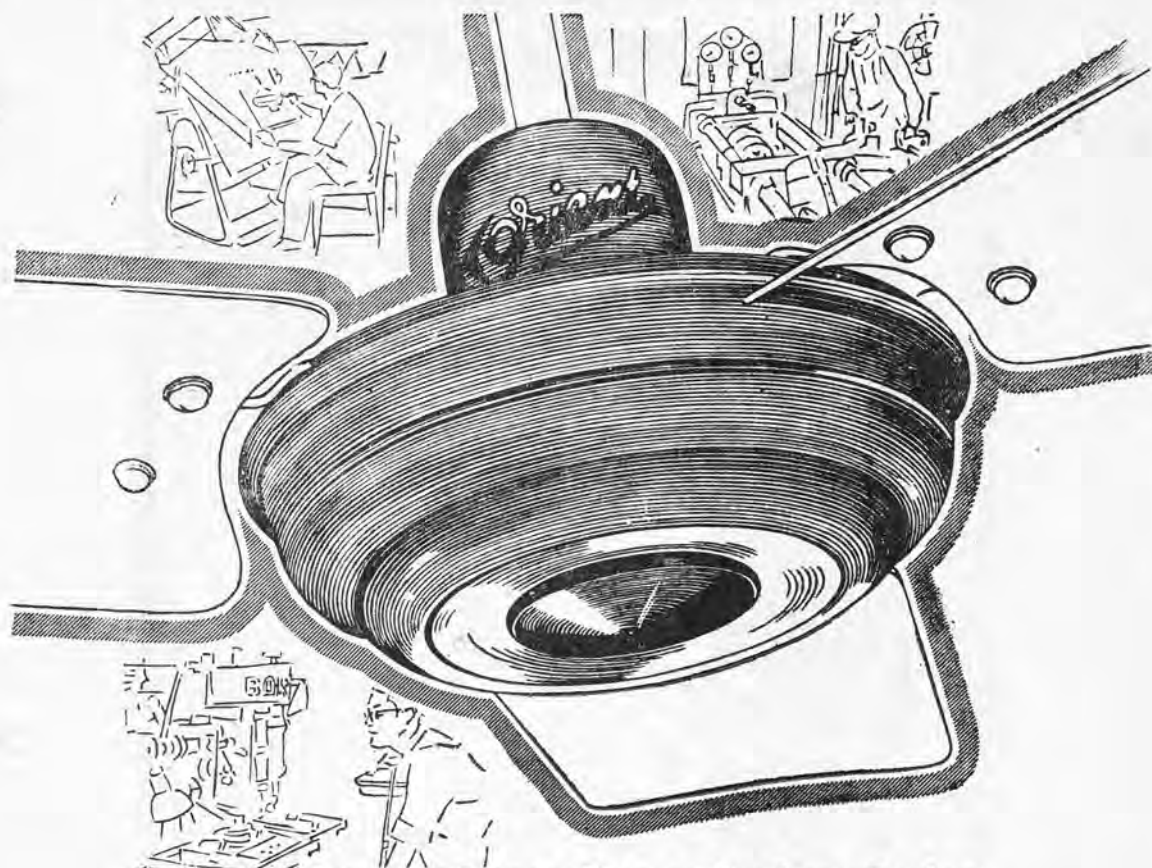
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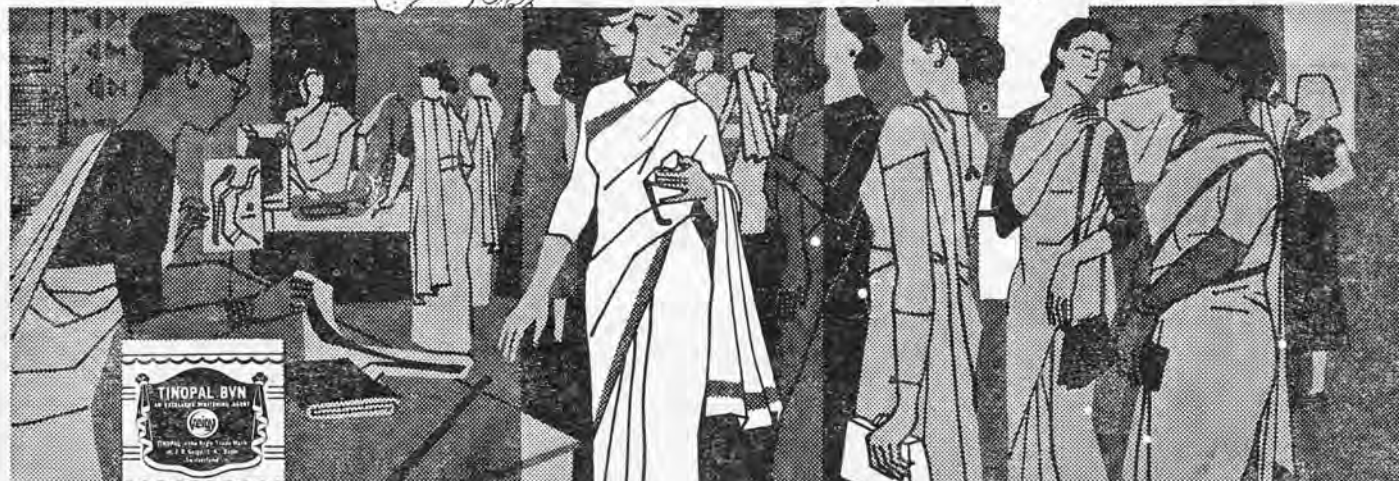
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Q U E S T

A Quarterly of Inquiry, Criticism and Ideas

Edited by ABU SAYEED AYYUB *and* AMLAN DATTA

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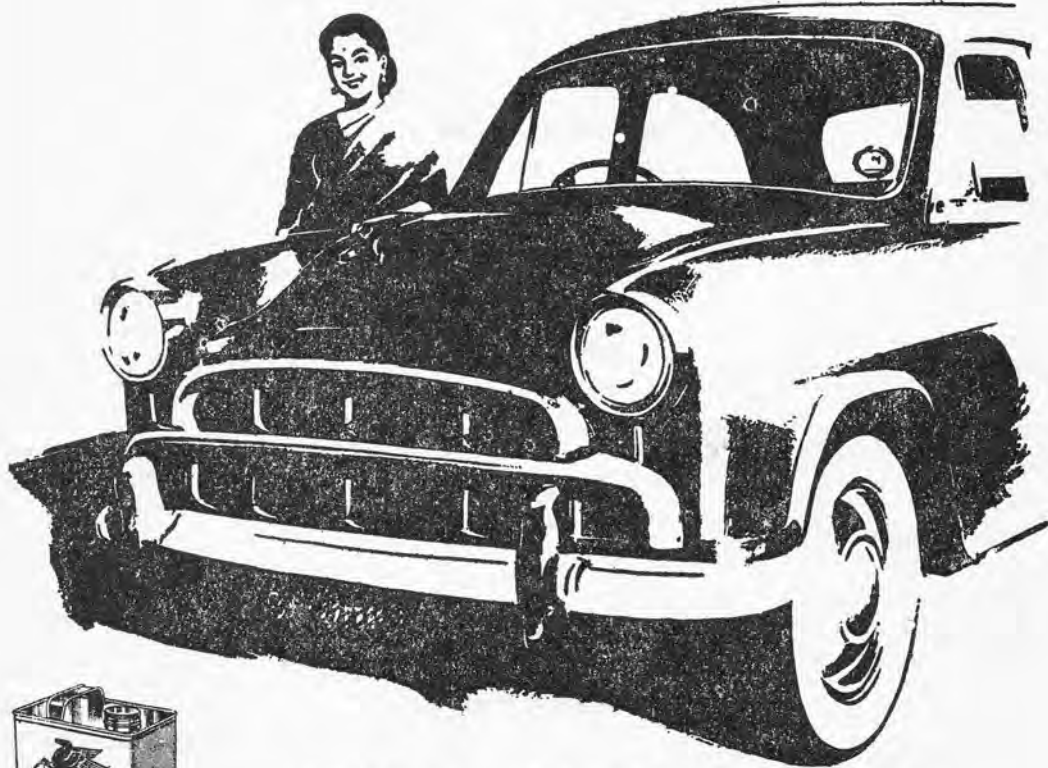
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WHY WAR ?

Prophetic Correspondence

between

*Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud**

Dear Professor Einstein,

WHEN I learned of your intention to invite me to a mutual exchange of views upon a subject which not only interested you personally but seemed deserving, too, of public interest, I cordially assented. I expected you to choose a problem lying on the borderland of the knowable as it stands today, a theme which each of us, physicist and psychologist, might approach from his own angle, to meet at last on common ground, though setting out from different premises. Thus the question which you put me—what is to be done to rid mankind of the war menace?—took me by surprise. And, next, I was dumbfounded by the thought of my (of *our*, I almost wrote) incompetence; for this struck me as being a matter of practical politics, the statesman's proper study. But then I realized that you did not raise the question in your capacity of scientist or physicist, but as a lover of his fellow men who responded to the call of the League of Nations much as Fridtjof Nansen, the Polar explorer, took on himself the task of succouring homeless and starving victims of the World War. And, next, I reminded myself that I was not being called on to formulate practical proposals but rather to

explain how this question of preventing war strikes a psychologist.

But here, too, you have stated the gist of the matter in your letter — and taken the wind out of my sails! Still, I will gladly follow in your wake and content myself with endorsing your conclusions, which, however, I propose to amplify to the best of my knowledge or surmise.

You begin with the relations between might and right, and this is assuredly the proper starting point of our enquiry. But for the term 'might' I would substitute a tougher and more telling word: 'violence.' In right and violence we have today an obvious antinomy. It is easy to prove that one has evolved from the other and, when we go back to origins and examine primitive conditions, the solution of the problem follows easily enough. I must crave your indulgence if in what follows I speak of well-known facts as though they were new data; the context necessitates this method.

Conflicts of interest between man and man are resolved, in principle, by recourse to violence. It is the same in the animal kingdom, from which man cannot claim exclusion; but men are also prone to conflicts of opinion, touching, on occasion, the peaks of abstract thought, which call for settlement by another method. This refinement is, however, a late development. To start with, brute force was the factor

* Einstein's letter, to which this is a reply, was published in our previous issue, *Quest* 22. These two letters were written just over twenty-five years ago at the invitation of the International Institute of Cultural Cooperation, by whose permission they are reproduced here.

which, in small communities, decided points of ownership and the question of which man's will was to prevail. Very soon physical force was implemented, then replaced, by the use of various adjuncts; the proved victor was the man whose weapon was the better, or handled the more skilfully.

For the first time, with the coming of weapons, superior brains began to oust brute force, but the object of the conflict remained the same: one party was to be constrained, by the injury done him or impairment of this strength, to retract a claim or a refusal. This end is most effectively gained when the opponent is definitively put out of action—in other words, is killed. This has two advantages; the enemy cannot renew hostilities, and his fate deters others from following his lead. Moreover, the slaughter of a foe gratifies an instinctive craving—a point to which we shall revert hereafter.

But another consideration may be set against this will to kill: the possibility of using an enemy for servile tasks if his spirit be broken and his life spared. Here violence finds an outlet not in slaughter but in subjugation. Hence the practice of giving quarter; but the victor, having now to reckon with a craving for revenge that rankles in his victim, forfeits to some extent his personal security.

THUS, UNDER primitive conditions, it is superior force—brute violence, or violence backed by arms—that lords it everywhere. We know that in the course of evolution a path was traced that led from violence to law. But what was this path? Surely it issued from a single verity: the superiority of one strong man can be overcome by a union of many weaklings. Force is overcome by union, the allied might of scattered units makes good its right against the isolated giant. Thus we may define

'right' (i.e. law) as the might of a community. Yet it, too, is nothing other than violence, quick to attack whatever individual stands in its path, and it employs the selfsame methods, follows like ends, with but one difference: it is communal, not individual, violence that has its way.

However, for the transition from crude violence to the reign of law a certain psychological condition must first obtain. The union of the majority must be stable and enduring. If its sole *raison d'être* be the discomfiture of some overweening individual and, after his downfall, it be dissolved, it leads to nothing. Some other man, trusting to his superior power, will seek to reinstate the rule of violence and the cycle will repeat itself unendingly. Thus the union of the people must be permanent and well organized; it must enact rules to meet the risk of possible revolts; must set up machinery ensuring that its laws are observed and that such acts of violence as they demand are duly carried out. This recognition of a community of interests engenders in the members of the group a sentiment of unity and fraternal solidarity which constitutes its real strength.

So far I have set out what seems to me the kernel of the matter: the suppression of brute force by the transfer of power to a larger combination, founded on the community of sentiments linking its members. The rest is mere tautology and glosses. Now the position is simple enough while the community consists of equally powerful individuals. The laws of such a group can determine to what extent the individual must forfeit his personal freedom, the right of using personal force as an instrument of violence, to ensure the safety of the group. But such a combination is only theoretically possible: in practice the situation is always complicated by the fact that, from the outset, the group includes elements of unequal power, men and

women, elders and children, and very soon, after war and conquest, victors and vanquished—masters and slaves.

From this time on the common law takes notice of these inequalities of power, and laws are made by and for the rulers, giving the servile classes fewer rights. Thenceforward there exist within the state two factors making for legal instability, but legislative evolution, too: first, the attempts by members of the ruling class to set themselves above the law's restrictions, and secondly the constant struggle of the ruled to extend their rights and see each gain embodied in the code, replacing legal disabilities by equal laws for all. The second of these tendencies will be particularly marked when there happens to be a positive mutation of the balance of power within the community, the frequent outcome of certain historical conditions. In such cases the laws may gradually be adjusted to the changed conditions or (as more usually ensues) the ruling class is loath to reckon with the new developments, the result being insurrections and civil wars, a period when law is in abeyance and force once more the arbiter, followed by a new régime of law. There is another factor of constitutional change, which operates in a wholly pacific manner, namely the cultural evolution of the mass of the community; but this factor is of a different order and must be dealt with later.

Thus we see that, even within the group itself, the exercise of violence cannot be avoided when conflicting interests are at stake. But the common needs and habits of men who live in fellowship under the same sky favour a speedy issue of such conflicts and, this being so, the possibilities of peaceful solutions make steady progress. Yet the most casual glance at world history will show an unending series of conflicts between one community and another or

a group of others, between large and smaller units, between cities, countries, races, tribes and kingdoms, almost all of which were settled by the ordeal of war. Such wars end either in pillage or in conquest and its fruits, the downfall of the loser.

No single all-embracing judgment can be passed on these wars of aggrandizement. Some, like the war between the Mongols and the Turks, have led to unmitigated misery; others, however, have furthered the transition from violence to law, since they brought larger units into being, within whose limits a recourse to violence was banned and a new régime determined all disputes. Thus the Roman conquests brought that boon, the *pax romana*, to the Mediterranean lands. The French kings' lust for aggrandizement built a new France, thriving in peace and unity.

Paradoxical as it may sound, we must admit that warfare might well serve to pave the way to that unbroken peace we so desire, for it is war that brings vast empires into being, within whose frontiers all warfare is proscribed by a strong central power. In practice, however, this end is not attained, for as a rule the fruits of victory are but shortlived, the new-created unit falls apart once again, generally because there can be no true cohesion between the parts that violence has welded. Hitherto, moreover, such conquests have led only to aggregations which, for all their magnitude, had limits, and disputes between these units could be resolved only by recourse to arms. For humanity at large the sole result of all these military enterprises was that, instead of frequent, not to say incessant, little wars, they had now to face great wars which, if less frequent, were so much the more destructive.

REGARDING the world of to-day the same conclusion holds good, and you, too, have

reached it, though by a shorter path. There is only one sure way of ending war and that is the establishment, by common consent, of a central control which shall have the last word in every conflict of interests. For this, two things are needed: first, the creation of such a supreme court of judicature; second, its investment with adequate executive force. If this second requirement be unfulfilled, the first is unavailing.

Obviously the League of Nations, acting as a Supreme Court, fulfils the first condition; it does not fulfil the second. It has no force at its disposal and can only get it if the members of the new body, its constituent nations, furnish it. And, as things are, this is a forlorn hope. Still, we should be taking a very short-sighted view of the League of Nations were we to ignore the fact that here is an experiment the like of which has rarely—never before, perhaps, on such a scale—been attempted in the course of history. It is an attempt to acquire the authority (in other words, coercive influence), which hitherto reposed exclusively on the possession of power, by calling into play certain idealistic attitudes of mind.

We have seen that there are two factors of cohesion in a community: violent compulsion and ties of sentiment ('identifications,' in technical parlance) between the members of the group. If one of these factors becomes inoperative, the other may still suffice to hold the group together. Obviously such notions as these can only be significant when they are the expression of a deeply rooted sense of unity, shared by all.

It is necessary, therefore, to gauge the efficacy of such sentiments. History tells us that, on occasion, they have been effective. For example, the Panhellenic conception, the Greeks' awareness of superiority over their barbarian neighbours, which found expression in the Amphictyones, the Oracles, and Games, was strong enough to

humanize the methods of warfare as between Greeks, though inevitably it failed to prevent conflicts between different elements of the Hellenic race or even to deter a city or group of cities from joining forces with their racial foe, the Persians, for the discomfiture of a rival. The solidarity of Christendom in the Renaissance age was no more effective, despite its vast authority, in hindering Christian nations, large and small alike, from calling in the Sultan to their aid.

Today we look in vain for some such unifying notion whose authority would be unquestioned. It is all too clear that the nationalistic ideas, paramount today in every country, operate in quite a contrary direction. Some there are who hold that the Bolshevik conceptions may make an end of war, but, as things are, that goal lies very far away and perhaps could only be attained after a spell of brutal internecine warfare. Thus it would seem that any effort to replace brute force by the might of an ideal is, under present conditions, doomed to fail. Our logic is faulty if we ignore the fact that right is founded on brute force and maintained by violence.

I can now comment on another of your statements. You are amazed that it is so easy to infect men with the war-fever, and you surmise that man has in him an active instinct for hatred and destruction, amenable to such stimulations. I entirely agree with you. I believe in the existence of this instinct and have been recently at pains to study its manifestations.

May I set out a fragment of that knowledge of the instincts, which we psychoanalysts, after so many tentative essays and gropings in the dark, have compassed? We assume that human instincts are of two kinds: those that conserve and unify, which we call 'erotic' (in the meaning Plato gives to *Eros* in his *Symposium*), or else 'sexual' (explicitly extending the popular

connotation of 'sex'); and, secondly, the instincts to destroy and kill, which we assimilate as the aggressive or destructive instincts. These are, as you perceive, the well-known opposites, Love and Hate, transformed into theoretical entities; they are, perhaps, another aspect of those eternal polarities, attraction and repulsion, which fall within your province.

But we must be chary of passing over-hastily to the notions of good and evil. Each of these instincts is every whit as indispensable as its opposite and all the phenomena of life derive from their activity, whether they work in concert or in opposition. It seems that an instinct of either category can operate but rarely in isolation; it is always blended ('alloyed,' as we say) with a certain dosage of its opposite, which modifies its aim or even, in certain circumstances, is a prime condition of its attainment. Thus the instinct of self-preservation is certainly of an erotic nature, but to gain its ends this very instinct necessitates aggressive action. In the same way the love-instinct, when directed to a specific object, calls for an admixture of the acquisitive instinct if it is effectively to possess the object. It is the difficulty of isolating the two kinds of instinct in their manifestations that has so long prevented us from recognizing them.

IF YOU WILL travel with me a little further on this road, you will find that human affairs are complicated in yet another way. Only exceptionally does an action follow on the stimulus of a single instinct, which is *per se* a blend of Eros and destructiveness. As a rule several motives of similar composition concur to bring about the act.

This was noted by a colleague of yours, Professor G. C. Lichtenberg, sometime Professor of Physics at Gottingen; he was perhaps even more eminent as a psychologist than as a physical scientist. He evol-

ed the notion of a 'Compass-card of Motives' and wrote: 'The efficient motives impelling man to act can be classified like the 32 wind-directions, and described in the same manner; e.g. *Food-Food-Fame* or *Fame-Fame-Food*.' Thus, when a nation is summoned to engage in war, a whole gamut of human motives may respond to this appeal; high and low motives, some openly avowed, others slurred over. The lust for aggression and destruction is certainly included; the innumerable cruelties of history and man's daily life confirm prevalence and strength. The stimulation of these destructive impulses by appeals to idealism and the erotic instinct naturally facilitates their release.

Musing on the atrocities recorded on history's page, we feel that the ideal motive has often served as a camouflage for the lust of destruction: sometimes, as with the cruelties of the Inquisition, it seems that, while the ideal motives occupied the foreground of consciousness, they drew their strength from the destructive instincts deep in the unconscious. Both interpretations are feasible.

You are interested, I know, in the prevention of war, not in our theories, and I keep this fact in mind. Yet I would like to dwell a little longer on this destructive instinct, which is seldom given the attention that its importance warrants. With the least of speculative efforts we are led to conclude that this instinct functions in every living being, striving to work its ruin and reduce life to its primal state of inert matter. Indeed it might well be called the 'death-instinct'; whereas the erotic instincts vouch for the struggle to live on. The death instinct becomes an impulse to destruction when, with the aid of certain organs, it directs its action outwards, against external objects. The living being, that is to say, defends its own existence by destroying foreign bodies. But, in one of its activities,

the death instinct is operative *within* the living being and we have sought to trace back a number of normal and pathological phenomena to this *introversion* of the destructive instinct. We have even committed the heresy of explaining the origin of human conscience by some such 'turning inward' of the aggressive impulse.

Obviously when this internal tendency operates on too large a scale, it is no trivial matter, rather a positively morbid state of things; whereas the diversion of the destructive impulse towards the external world must have beneficial effects. Here is then the biological justification for all those vile, pernicious propensities which we are now combating. We must admit that they are really more akin to nature than the stand we are taking against them, which, in fact, remains to be accounted for.

All this may give you the impression that our theories amount to a species of mythology and a gloomy one at that! But does not every natural science lead ultimately to a sort of mythology? Is it otherwise today with your physical science?

The upshot of these observations, as bearing on the subject in hand, is that there is no likelihood of our being able to suppress humanity's aggressive tendencies. In some happy corners of the earth, they say, where nature brings forth abundantly whatever man desires, there flourish races whose lives go gently by, untouched by aggression or constraint.

This I can hardly credit; I would like further details about these happy folk. The Bolsheviks, too, aspire to do away with human aggressiveness by ensuring the satisfaction of material needs and enforcing equality between man and man. To me this hope seems vain. Meanwhile they busily perfect their armaments, and their hatred of outsiders is not the least of the factors of cohesion amongst themselves. In any case, as you have observed, the

suppression of man's aggressive tendencies is not at issue; what we may try is to divert it into a channel other than that of warfare.

From our "mythology" of the instincts we may easily deduce a formula for an indirect method of eliminating war. If the propensity for war be due to the destructive instinct, we have always its counter-agent, Eros, to our hand. All that produces ties of sentiment between man and man must serve us as war's antidote. These ties are of two kinds. First, such relations as those towards a beloved object, void though they be of sexual intent. The psychoanalyst need feel no compunction in mentioning "love" in this connection; religion uses the same language: Love thy neighbour as thyself. A pious injunction easy to say, but hard to carry out! The other bond of sentiment is by way of identification. All that brings out the significant resemblances between men calls into play this feeling of community, identification, whereon is founded, in large measure, the whole edifice of human society.

In your strictures on the abuse of authority I find another suggestion for an indirect attack on the war impulse. That men are divided into leaders and the led is simply another manifestation of their in-born and irremediable inequality. The second class constitutes the vast majority; they need a high command to make decisions for them, which they usually bow to without demur. In this context we would point out that men should be at greater pains than in the past to form a superior class of independent thinkers, unamenable to intimidation and fervent in the quest of truth, whose function it would be to guide the dependent masses.

There is certainly no need to point out how little the rule of politicians and the Church's ban on liberty of thought encourage such a new creation. The ideal conditions would obviously be found in a

community where every man subordinated his instinctive life to the dictates of reason. Nothing less than this could bring about so thorough and so durable a union between men, even if this involved the severance of mutual ties of sentiment. But surely such a hope is utterly utopian, as things are. The other indirect methods of preventing war are certainly more feasible, but entail no quick results. They conjure up an ugly picture of mills that grind so slowly that, before the flour is ready, men are dead of hunger.

AS YOU SEE, little good comes of consulting a theoretician aloof from worldly contacts, on practical and urgent problems! It would be better to tackle each successive crisis with means that we have ready at our hands. However, I would like to deal with a question which, though it is not raised in your letter, interests me greatly. Why do we, you and I and many another, protest so vehemently against war, instead of just accepting it as another of life's odious importunities? For it seems a natural thing enough, biologically sound and practically unavoidable. I trust you will not be shocked by my raising such a question. For the better conduct of an inquiry it may be well to don a mask of feigned aloofness.

The answer to my query may run as follows: Because every man has a right over his own life and war destroys lives that were full of promise; it forces the individual into situations that shame his manhood, obliging him to murder fellow men, against his will: it ravages material amenities, the fruits of human toil, and much besides. Moreover, wars, as now conducted, afford no scope for acts of heroism according to the old ideals and, given the high perfection of modern arms, war today would mean the sheer extermination of one of the combatants, if not of both. This is

so true, so obvious, that we can only wonder why the conduct of war is not banned by general consent. Doubtless either of the points I have just made is open to debate. It may be asked if the community, in its turn, cannot claim a right over the individual lives of its members. Moreover, all forms of war cannot be indiscriminately condemned; so long as there are nations and empires, each prepared callously to exterminate its rival, all alike must be equipped for war. But we will not dwell on any of these problems; they lie outside the debate to which you have invited me. I pass on to another point, the basis, as it strikes me, of our common hatred of war. It is this: we cannot do otherwise than hate it. Pacifists we are, since our organic nature wills us to be so. Hence we can easily find arguments that justify our standpoint.

This point, however, calls for elucidation. Here is the way in which I see it. The cultural development of mankind (some, I know, prefer to call it civilization) has been in progress since immemorial antiquity. To this process we owe all that is best in our composition, but also much that makes for human suffering. Its origins and causes are obscure, its issue is uncertain, but some of its characteristics are easy to perceive. It may well lead to the extinction of mankind, for it impairs the sexual function in more than one respect, and even today the uncivilized races and the backward classes of all nations are multiplying more rapidly than the cultured elements.

This process may be likened to the effects of domestication on certain animals—it clearly involves physical changes of structure—but the view that cultural development is an organic process of this order has not yet become generally familiar. The psychic changes which accompany this process of cultural change are striking, and not to be gainsaid. They consist in the

progressive rejection of instinctive ends and a scaling down of instinctive reactions. Sensations which delighted our forefathers have become neutral or unbearable to us; and, if our ethical and esthetic ideals have undergone a change, the causes of this are ultimately organic. On the psychological side two of the most important phenomena of culture are, firstly, a strengthening of the intellect, which tends to master our instinctive life, and, secondly, an introversion of the aggressive impulse, with all its consequent benefits and perils. Now war runs most emphatically counter to the psychic disposition imposed on us by the growth of culture; we are therefore bound to resent war, to find it utterly intolerable. With pacifists like us it is not merely an intellectual and affective repulsion, but a consti-

tutional intolerance, an idiosyncrasy in its most drastic form. It seems that the esthetic ignominies of war play almost as large a part in this repugnance as war's atrocities.

How long have we to wait before the rest of men turn pacifist? Impossible to say, and yet perhaps our hope that these two factors—man's cultural disposition and a well-founded dread of the form that future wars will take—may serve to put an end to war in the near future, is not chimerical. But by what ways or by-ways this will come about, we cannot guess. Meanwhile we may rest on the assurance that whatever makes for cultural development is working also against war.

With kindest regards and, should this *exposé* prove a disappointment to you, my sincere regrets.

Vienna
September, 1932

Yours,
Sigmund Freud

An English Poet Discovers India

By BISHNU DEY

WHEN the news of Alun Lewis's untimely death was announced, Keidrych Rhys wrote:

Going forward on detachment in Arakan,
Carrying the usual revolver loaded at the time,
He tripped and fell and the hammer struck a
stone.
He died on a Sunday in March at eight o'clock.

Lewis was posted in the Arakan front in the Military Intelligence and the work was uncongenial. One day, we were told, he stood on the edge of a sharp precipice, with his revolver in hand, the revolver, it may be as he wrote to Robert Graves, which he had learnt to fire with either hand. Then his body was found below with the bullet's singeing mark on his forehead. So the leave was not to be spent in Calcutta. We only received the news of his death. His countryman, Vernon Watkins wrote a fine sonnet on his sad death:

He was astonished by the abundance of gold
Light. In the street a beggar stretched her hand
Dying. Then the shudder ran through him.

Once he had planned
To outdistance the sun in a chariot.

But how might he hold
That instant, those uncurbed horses, and mix
with the mould
Her liquid shadow near the lotus and timeless
sand?

A slighter man would have noticed the ripples
expand

From the stark regenerate symbol. But to him
that cold

Figure was real. Ah yes, he died in the green
Tree. What was it, then, pierced him, keen
as a thorn,

And left him articulate, humble, unable to
scorn

A single soul found on Earth? O, had he seen
in a flash, all India laid like Antony's Queen,
Or seen the highest for which alone we are
born?

Alun Lewis and Sidney Keyes were the two most important English poets who gave their lives in the Second World War. And Lewis is very close to us, because of all the English poets the Indian empire had ever inspired, Lewis with his poet's pure passion seems to have been the most significant, not merely during the war, but throughout the whole British period. Many of these finegrained Englishmen who came to fight in India, and felt the impact of the horrible Indian scene, perhaps did not continue to write after the War; some died, like Clive Branson. But from their poems we had come across during those grim years it was clear how deeply the Indian empire in its reality had moved them. That is why verses by quite a number of them endure in our memory, even though some of them did not turn to be professional poets as such in the safer sanctities of English life. In the words of Martin Kirkman, one could say, in those days:

You say this is not poetry:

You are right:

Upon this page

Is bloodred rage. (*In No strange Land*)

Yes, rage, scorn, shame, despair, that is to say, sheer human pity or pure sympathy; quite a number of these soldiers, conscripts rather than non-descript Englishmen (to

quote someone's witty phrase) had the fundamental pity which binds men to men; so that they themselves felt co-responsible and started asking terrible questions regarding human life in an empire they had come to think as their own. Most of them were in the noble tradition of Owen with his poetry which is in his pity, though many of them, perhaps, will not leave their names in an official history of English poetry. But in this particular case, the pity of war acquired a new sharpness, from the sense of a kind of sin of a long war of exploitation, of a ruthless occupation, covering some two centuries.

So, George Taylor thought:

I sit here in my uniform
Ignored because of what has been.
If only one would turn aside,
Incorporate me with a glance
Into these secret purposes
And to me, lost, become a guide.

And John Turner who belonged to the same regiment as Alun Lewis and published an interesting volume of verse in Calcutta, called *Soul Journalist*, wrote:

O Brother, it is strange that you and I
Should be so far divided yet so near —
and he felt the need for prayer:
O God that I could break this iron shell
And give this dry and thirsty country rain.

The shell indeed was too painful for most of these fresh young people who came from the metropolitan country to this rustic empire, suffering like Sindbad under the burden of the war, the famine, the political despair. Expiation by making friends with the natives was difficult for various reasons. The only way out on this Indian scene was to identify oneself with Nature, with the landscape; the gap could perhaps be bridged a little on a vague basis with what may be called the lowest class of English-less simple Indians, like the sweepers of one's own army camp, or if one were fortunate,

with the peasants, on some sort of a relationship, from a certain distance. Alun Lewis was informed of the Karanje temple by that sort of a sweeper, who received this epitaph from Paul Widdows:

Monotonous, yes. Degrading, perhaps. But still
He has, for what it's worth, a cast-iron defence,
Who passed his whole God-given existence,
Emptying the faeces of sahibs until
Death eventually rewarded his diligence.
At last he can claim in Nirvana without
pretence
That his life was dedicated to the Fundamental.

Hence, their distaste for the usual sight-seeing places in India. Reg Levy looked at the Taj Mahal and the historical irony of Mughal splendour rose before his eyes:

Their lifetime's living glory built great halls,
In jewelled state enthroned to sit all-wise
Among the passive people — they who weighed
With agony and tears such graciousness.
(*Poems from India*)

Ralph Brooke closed his poem on the Taj Mahal with these lines:

Children lay hungry in their mud-built huts
And war was waging over all the earth,
And rocker bombs fell on the ones we loved:
We came to see the wonder of the world.

Helpless death, death from the disorder brought about by an incompetent government during war, from famine in the sunset light of the empire, acquires more power for many of these visitors than the spectacle of the Taj. In Douglas Gray's words:

The outstretched hand
Of mute request
Condemns the soul
Who yet can rest.

The mere human in India attracted Currey's eyes, appealed to his Loti-like sensibility:

Wearing this single garment with an air,
Of swaying gracefulness I once thought dead.

One wonders what further development these poets had or what else grew out of their Indian experience. We do get some more information regarding some of them. Stuart Piggott with his specialist's interest naturally turned to Prehistoric India. Clive Branson, killed in Arakan, reveals something of his vision in his letters, and if not quite so well, also in his few poems. Branson was equipped with excellent theoretical knowledge, a fine tool to understand the life of men or to master history, and used this advantage well. A genuine artist, he could naturally, with his instinct for the concrete, avoid the disadvantage of holding a theory, that is, of coming to a too quick scheme of solution of the problem in the abstract. Yet why, one may ask, did not Branson achieve compelling success in the world of creative writing, where nothing can be done except in the depth of one's consciousness? Perhaps, the reason lay in the fact that Branson was primarily a painter, dominated by the visual, and poetry was a secondary passion with him. One can see something of a similar contradiction in an elder writer, who died in the Spanish War: Caudwell's astonishing passionate prose makes the conventionality of his verse, due no doubt to the pressure of the English poetic tradition, even clearer by contrast. In Branson's letters is revealed his artist's personality, which did not allow him any short cut on his road to the experience of India, in spite of his mastery over the most effective theory of history. There is little scope for any escape or for any easy solution in an artist's honesty to himself, which, one can find even in a completely different kind of writer, for example, in Somerset Maugham. Maugham had none of the advantages of a comprehensive philosophy that Branson had, but even this elderly inhabitant of rich alien Belgravia had to end his tour in India on this note:

'When I was leaving India people asked me which of all the sights I had seen had most impressed me. I answered as they expected me to answer. But it wasn't the Taj, the ghats of Benares, the temple of Madura or the mountains of Travancore that had most moved me; it was the peasant, terribly emaciated, with nothing to cover his nakedness but a rag round his middle the colour of the sun-baked earth he tilled, the peasant shivering in the cold of the dawn, sweating in the heat of the noon, working still as the sunset red spread over the parched fields, the starving peasant toiling without cease in the north, in the south, in the east, in the west, toiling all over the vastness of India, toiling as he had toiled from father to son back, back for three thousand years when the Aryans had first descended upon the country, toiling for a scant subsistence, his only hope to keep body and soul together. That was the sight that had given me the most poignant emotion in India.

'Wellington is supposed to have said that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. It may be that the historians of the future will say that India was lost in the public schools of England'.

Perhaps, the great Duke was not fully right: do they teach in English public schools book-keeping and how to run country houses? At any rate, India is bound to provide a terrific impact of experience for any artist or writer who keeps his genuineness awake, who can mould his receptivity into the habit of his art-work, as Maritain might have said. And the reality of the Indian scene is sure to come out in his thoughts, in the images worked out in his consciousness. That is why, the poetic genius of Alun Lewis progressed into the stage of crystallisation by the starkness of what is India now. It was a loss indeed to English poetry—and to us, that this development in depth came to a stop in Arakan, before it had reached the Kailasa of crystalline organisation.

It was a relief to me to find Robert Graves, the elder British poet and critic, writing the fine introduction to *Ha! Ha! Among the Trumpets*, Lewis's second book of verse, which also contains his twenty-

nine Indian poems. In this introduction, as also in his Cambridge University Clark lectures, the senior poet considers the younger as one of the most important figures in modern English poetry. I needed this reassurance that I was not being led entirely by my Indian loyalties in my estimate of Lewis. The support of a remote and hardboiled English poet and critic confirmed my belief that the value of the Indian experience has been synonymous with the significance of Lewis's poetry as English poetry.

As was only right for his kind of honesty, Lewis's Indian inferno began naturally with a pained bewilderment. It was early at that time, I remember, that he wrote in spite of the army censorship his remarkable letter to the *New Statesman*: how the British had given India, not bread, but stone. Throughout his stay in India, his mind was fighting in vain against this gift of a stone which never quite sank down the soul of India. In his poems, in his stories, in his letters this note of pain is the key. He did not arrive at once at the discovery of cause and effect, of the roots of the question. He was a poet and had to toil to his own discovery of India. Consequently he thought of the enemies of the Indo-British state with introversion:

And though the State has enemies we know
The greater enmity within ourselves —
though we
Kept from the dew and rust of Time.
Instinctive truths and elemental love.

And in the despair of the dimly political poet, it seemed to him

Only aloneness, swinging slowly
Down the cold orbit of an older world
Than any they predicted in schools
Stirs the cold forest with a starry wind,
And sudden as the flashing of a sword
The dream exalts the bowed and golden head
And time is swept with a great turbulence,
The old temptation to remould the world.

However, in this consolation of the cult of the lonely, human beings continue to be isolated and the problem continues to be acute. It is easy in this mood to feel one with the tiger's pawmark or with the instinctive rightness of the pied poised kingfisher. It was an inevitable pendulousness, though his poet's mind at the other end asked in despair:

Then would some unimportant death resound
With the imprisoned music of the soul?
And we become the world we could not
change?

Had he not seen earlier in England, the awful vision of Easter at Christmas:

An agitator and two thieves are swaying in
the wind.

Then came Bombay, the Bombay of 1942, the Mahratta hills, the orange-grove, the little temple in the village of Karanje, the call of Vishnu, the god of being:

But the people are hard and hungry and have
no love,
Diverse and alien, uncertain in their hate,
Hard stones flung out of creation's silent matrix
And the Gods must wait.

Even the dried-up soil of India strangely disturbed Alun Lewis. And he knew all the time that in the human world, socially, culturally, politically he was an outsider, an intruder. 'So my easiest commerce and most natural source of health and poetry is the peasant, of whom I see a great deal during our lengthy field exercises. Untouched in these parts by the Famine, the peasant seems to be the repository of everything that civilised India has lost'. That is why in another letter to W. G. Archer, he wrote: 'what an untouched wealth the Indian writer has—if only the climate of the soul were more conducive to a free and deep development of his material. Something seems to have gone wrong out here, and everything is tainted. *Tant pis* is all a

soldier can say'. And Lewis himself realised that 'India is a hard country to mature in'. He asked Archer: 'Don't you think India has reached the stage where the lotus becomes as much a 'lie' as the rose in Europe (Mallarmé's theory) and there is need for a screeching sweated realism also, as much in the village as in the city. And why is this realism so hard to attain? The sun teaches it every day.'

And the question got mixed up with the Rilkean problem of being:

Rilke, if you had known that I was trying
To speak to you perhaps you would have said
'Humanity has her darlings to whom she's
entrusted
A farthing may be, or a jewel, at least a
perception
Of what can develop and what must be always
endured
And what the live may answer to the dead.
Such ones are known by their faces,
At least their absence is noted;
And they never lack an occasion.
They, the devoted'.

But I have to seek the occasion.
Labour, fatigue supervene:
The glitter of sea and land, the self-assertion
These fierce competing times insist upon.
Yet sometimes, seeking, hours glided inwards,
Laying their soft antennae on my heart,
And I forgot the thousand leagues I'd journeyed
As if Creation were about to start.

I watched the pure horizon for the earth
To rise in grey bare peaks that might unfold
The empty crumbling soil between the hands
Or coloured things a child's small fist might
hold
Delightedly; I knew that unknown lands
Were near and real, like an act of birth.

Then I fell ill and restless.
Sweating and febrile all one burning week,
I hungered for the silence you acquired
And envied you, as though it were a gift
Presented on a birth day to the lucky,
For that which IS I thought you need not seek.

The sea is gone now and the crowded tramp
Sails other seas with other passengers,

I sit within the tent, within the darkness
Of India, and the wind disturbs my lamp.

The jackals howl and whimper in the nullah,
The goatherd sleeps upon a straw-piled bed,
And I know that in this it does not matter
Where one may be or what fate lies ahead.

And Vishnu, carved by some rude pious hand,
Lies by a heap of stones, demanding nothing
But the simplicity that she and I
Discovered in a way you'd understand
Once and for ever, Rilke, but in Oh a distant
land.

In the midst of his torturing experience it was Lewis's honesty as a poet and his love which carried him through to this realisation of being, always a precarious even though sure sense of balance. As a result, the basic form of his experience in India slowly took shape in his mind into something genuinely his own, and in many of the twenty-nine poems reached the fullness of original or personal acceptance of experience. Stephen Spender had dismissed Lewis in a few lines as facile. At least in this Indian phase it is his lack of facility that is so striking. Of course, to realise the quality of this experience, one must have humility, which is so difficult for messianic Englishmen to achieve. And that a hurried tour across the subcontinent does not bring this, has been recently proved by Karl Shapiro in his poem *In India*.

Lewis was very patient with his India, and the sure deepening of his poetic mind was already so well-organised—it can never be finally and irrevocably organised in any one—that even though there may be incompleteness in his personal observations as there was bound to be, it is all empathetically fulfilled in his poetry. One often finds a poet understand a lot as a man with his intellection, with his knowledge of things, but the understanding may not be crystallised in the deeper transformation of his poetic power. In the case of Lewis, it was his poetry's promise that was

primary; with him the reality or his life in India was a matter of identification for his whole being, it was not at all a facile solution by extraneous knowledge. Because the process was personal with him, as it must be with any serious person, its realisation was slow, a little baffled, a great deal of it painful, and dependent, negatively, on a sense of his loneliness. That is why the mind felt at ease with the first step of the straight line, of the truth of elemental nature, because '.....India is a hard country to mature in. There is so much to anger you in the human scene, so much to dismay you in the social scene, so much to humble you in the universal scene. It hollows and exhausts me often, and I just haven't the heart to write of the things I want to write to you about. But here among the green tides of a clean and proven—oh dear, my pen keeps on making such sentences. I want to say something much simpler. I came upon the huge pads of a tiger in the riversands yesterday and I gazed with refreshed eyes, satisfied to see these marks of some independent and self-sufficient life. And I thought if those deep prints on the sand should rise and strike me into silence with a single cuff — well! And that was the first spontaneous flicker of a poetic sensation and value that has touched me for so long. Poetry being like love, and soldiering a kind of impotence'. He knew his own difficulties well enough, he did not know the language or the ways of the people, he could only be the quiet and respectful stranger. But there were a few less involved ways of contact. As he wrote: 'I crossed a rickety bridge yesterday over a jungle stream with a sort of sensitivity in my feet that was more a sense of treading in village ways than doubt as to the bridge's safety; and it's from this respect for this old and unpremeditated way of life that I write such hesitant poems as I write.'

One is reminded of Hardy by the

tonguetied pity in Lewis's Indian poems; this clear vision, humble and hesitant with sympathy, would have pleased Clive Branson. And in the darkness of the Indian night, even the European past acquires a more universal focus for Lewis. Let me quote the last poem from *Ha! Ha!*

MIDNIGHT IN INDIA

Here is no ruined and cratered deep
As in the fenced-off landscapes of the West,
Within this Eastern wilderness
The human war is lost.

The three dark quarters bow their heads
To where the fourth in radiance glows;
The withered villages look up and smile;
The moon's annunciation grows.

Oh I have set the earth aflame
And brought the high dominions down,
And soiled each simple act with shame
And had no feelings of my own.

I sank in drumming tides of grief
And in the sea-king's sandy bed
Submerged in gulfs of disbelief
Lay with the red-toothed daughters of the dead.

Until you woke me with a sigh
And eased the dark compression in my head,
And sang and did not cease when I
Broke your heart like holy bread.

We cast away the bitter death
That holds the fine circumference of life
And gathered in a single breath
All that begins and ends in man and wife,

And though the painful errors grow
And youth sprawls dead beside the Gate
And lovely bodies stiffen in the snow
And old devotions breed a newer hate,

Yet time stands still upon the east
The moonlight lies in pools and human pain
Soothes the dry lips on which it lies
And I behold your calm white face again.

Mysterious tremors stir the breast,
In unknown worlds he dies,

I lie within your hands, within your peace,
And watch this last effulgent world arise.

It was our loss that death took him away before his poet's development had reached its inevitable mature stage. SEAC in Calcutta announced his death, and newspapers in England must have followed up. Graves writes: 'Search the backfiles and you will find no preparatory announcement: Alun Lewis writes Great Poetry.' According to Graves, the journey to India in 1942 was a major event in the growth of Lewis's integrity, because as Graves says, 'India is a country which at the best of times tries love almost beyond endurance.' Alun Lewis faced the trial, he wrote to Graves: 'England is, compared to India,

easier to corrupt and easier to improve India! what a test of man!' Lewis preserved his integrity, he fought and died for it, but he felt the torture: My insides are haggard, he wrote to a friend. But he was undefeated, even to the day of his death. We needed some one who would talk of this unconquerable mind of the man who loves and creates, whose discovery is ceaseless 'by seeking and not finding and *still seeking*, by a robustness in the core of sadness', as he wrote to his wife. That is why Alun Lewis is so close to us; an English poet, he sets an example, which is valid for us, too. He made the Englishman's discovery of true India. We remain grateful to him.

Habitual distrust is morally far more flagrant than credulity. The distrustful man sins against the one who is trustworthy; in him is lacking the feeling for the goodness of an upright disposition when it is presented to him. All trust, all faith is an adventure; it always requires something of moral courage and spiritual strength. It is always accompanied by a certain commitment of the person.

NICOLAI HARTMANN

The Swatantra Party

A Restatement of Political Ideals

By S. Y. KRISHNASWAMY

Till recently all the leading political parties in India spoke in the name of socialism, and even the comparatively weak 'Right' stopped short of a frontal attack on this widely accepted doctrine. The birth of the Swatantra Party marks a break in this tradition. This should impart a new edge and realism to public discussions in this country. *Quest* is not committed to any political line, except the negative one of being opposed to all political theory and practice based on the subordination of thought and art to the requirements of the State or the Party. In deciding to publish Mr. Krishnaswamy's competently written article the editors have not been guided by their political preferences, but by a belief that the principles and ideas expressed in it deserve to be submitted to critical discussions from a broad perspective, particularly from the standpoint of those who accept socialism in some form or other.

—EDITORS, *Quest*

PART I

Introduction

THE cardinal principle on which the Swatantra Party is founded is explained by the name itself; namely, that it stands for individual freedom against State and other compulsion. The Sanskrit word "Swatantra" has, however, a wider meaning than the English word 'freedom'. Freedom is a negative concept. It connotes a desire to be free from something. But the expression 'Swatantra' means 'responsible to one's self' as opposed to being responsible to someone else, and thus it puts conscience before law and recognises a subjective rather than an external compulsion as the motive force for conduct and action.

From this principle stems the attitude of the Party towards the State and the individual and to all forms of activity like industry, agriculture and trade.

Western Socialism

The so-called socialistic pattern of society, which has become the central

cliché of much recent political and economic thinking, is the product of certain historical circumstances of nineteenth century Europe. Towards the second half of the nineteenth century, the industrial countries of the West, and especially England, were confronted with the spectacle of heavy industrial production leading to great accumulation of wealth in the hands of entrepreneurs and capitalists, together with the existence of poverty and want amongst large masses of the people who were employed as labourers.

The first socialistic doctrine to emerge out of this condition was that of the minimum wage, and conditions of steady employment for labour to be enforced through collective action. The emergence of this first aspect of socialism was the consequence not of poverty, but of plenty. The injustice of the then existing society lay in the mal-distribution of the heavy incomes that industry was producing.

The second stage of socialism was the contribution of the Fabians, who adumbrated the principle of the State taking

over certain enterprises of national importance, like Electricity, Railways and Coal. Both the first and the second stages were recommended at a time when the State itself was concerned mainly with what are called Police functions, and did not enter into the fields of industry or trade even indirectly. During the First World War, however, shortages of essential articles like food, and the necessity for disciplining and gearing production towards victory, brought into being (by the back door as it were) interference, control and management by the State of numerous industries and several aspects of distribution; and after the war the struggle between those who advocated State ownership and those who believed in free enterprise, went on as an election cry for sometime.

The first jolt to all complacent economic thinking was given by the great depression of 1929. Those who advocated unrestricted private action were confronted with the spectacle of a terrific market crash which upset the entire economy of the whole country, and a new class of thinkers arose who believed that the economy of a nation should be planned. This may be called the third stage of socialistic thinking. It was aided partly by the principle of the five year plan which Russia had by then launched; the basic principle of planning being that both in production and in distribution all the resources available should be controlled and canalised by the State in the best interests of society. The philosopher of planning was the late Lord Keynes, the distinguished economist, who evolved the concept of public expenditure as creating employment which in turn would start a movement towards fuller production and greater purchasing power. By then the second World War was in full swing, and the need for State Planning had become a major aspect of governmental policy. But it is at this stage, which may be called the

fourth, that the concept of 'welfare' as the objective of State action came to the forefront. The Welfare State through planning of resources by the State may be said to be the plank on which the Socialists won the 1945 elections in the United Kingdom.

But fifteen years of the Welfare State have brought out the difficulties of working this concept without creating new complications, and more recent socialist thought on this subject is inclined to question the correctness of the earlier assumptions on which the theory of the Welfare State was based. Everyone of the four major principles which were historically evolved by contemporary circumstances, namely, (a) joint action and strikes by labour to enforce their demands, (b) nationalisation of the means of production, (c) State Planning through control of resources, and (d) the principle of welfare to be enforced through State action—have all been called into question. A great socialist thinker, Lord Beveridge, has said of the right of labour to strike, that it is inconsistent with a planned society where everyone has to perform an allotted task so that the objective of the plan may be fulfilled. To-day in all advanced countries there is ample legislative protection for labour both in respect of wages and the conditions of employment. It does seem to be an anachronism to give one sector of society, namely industrial labour, the additional protection of direct action, which may have been justifiable at a time when the State allowed full freedom to employers, but is unnecessary in the context of the numerous protections now available to labour. It has also been found that the two advantages claimed for State ownership of essential industries have not been fulfilled in practice. The State has not shown itself a more capable or less expensive employer than the private industrialist. From the point of view of the consumer therefore, controlled

private industry, with a certain degree of control on profits and a certain measure of taxation which cuts off profits at a reasonable level, is seen to be a better institution than was originally conceded. The new approach towards the Welfare State also arises out of the realisation referred to above. The State can either take over industry and then use the proceeds for spending on welfare schemes, or the State can allow a large measure of private industry to thrive and impose a suitable system of taxation to raise the resources for the welfare schemes. But a State which wants to increase the public sector and also wants to impose heavy taxes on other sectors, including consumers, kills the goose that lays the golden eggs, because, its area of taxation diminishes and it is then driven to the economically unsatisfactory and even dangerous expedient of increasing commodity taxes, which, in order to be expensive enough to be successful, have to be imposed on the necessities of life. Therefore, the concept of welfare as one of the objectives of a democratic State involves the existence of a large taxable sector which in turn is inconsistent with a policy of large nationalisation. Thus, advanced socialist thinking has come round to the acceptance of welfare as the objective of State policy, and the creation of the conditions for heavy taxation as the means of achieving this welfare. Some thinkers go to the extent of questioning even the concept of welfare without a satisfactory means test. They say that it is not the duty of the State to feed the poor man because he is poor, but that it should rest content with the creation of the opportunities for full employment and directly help only those who are disabled. Another set of thinkers have questioned the advantage of the State taking over all aspects of welfare through heavy taxation. They say that this omnivorous State action has dried up the

springs of private charity which satisfies an inherent craving of all human beings and is the source from which the charity of the church, and of such lay institutions as hospitals and schools, has been sustained in the past.

Swatantra

This long account of political and economic thinking in the West is necessary in order to appreciate the principles on which the Swatantra Party rests. It will be seen that while Western thought, even on the socialist front, is pragmatical and progressive, in India we are fifty years behind the times, and are just entering the Fabian era! Indian political thought is partly the result of historical circumstances and partly the result of half-baked borrowings of ideas from the West, which have been torn out of their historical and political context. When the British were ruling India, the only focal point of attraction for all those interested in politics was the movement to make India free from foreign rule. Freedom then had only one meaning: namely, freedom from rule by an alien people. It was political freedom in the strict and narrow sense of the word. Further, the capitalist and the foreign ruler were more or less the same and so capitalism gained a specially bad odour. Along with this, during the nineteen thirties, a band of theoretical thinkers in the Congress developed the idea of planning as an essential ingredient of a free Government and a democratic society. These plans were motivated by the desire to abolish poverty and to raise the standard of living of the people, and they were largely concerned with providing the large masses of the people with adequate food, clothing, housing, education and sanitation. Many of them are now in the seats of power; and have learnt to look upon Plan-

ning as an essential part of Government action. Their idea of Planning is weighed in favour of a vague distributive justice. But the planners have not paid attention to one circumstance. Planning through State action involves the existence of adequate resources, and these have to be raised by means of taxation, and loans, whether internal or foreign. Resources are the result of production surpluses. Therefore, in a country where industrial production is meagre, and agricultural production is hardly sufficient to meet the daily demands of the people, the State has very little surplus left to tax. Planning, therefore, takes on the un-welcome character of expropriating the existing resources in land or industrial profit. This kind of expropriation is hardly sufficient to meet the large demands on minimum welfare. Secondly, this hurts the very object with which the planners start, for, by cutting into capital the capacity to increase production by saving and re-investment is curtailed, and the resulting loss of resources reduces the chances of even a modest plan going through.

Meanwhile, with heavy capital schemes and insufficiency of goods to absorb the income generated thereby, inflation gains hold of the economy. It is a spiral which is easy to start, but difficult to control.

A first condition of any welfare in a poor country, with a heavy population pressing on the land, and a steady increase in population, is to go all out and create those conditions which will make for increased production; and this can be achieved only by introducing and maintaining a cycle of less taxation, more saving, more investment, more production and more employment. This cycle has at the present juncture necessarily to start at the point of less taxation, more saving and more private investment. In achieving this purpose a policy of increasing the number and variety of industries managed by the State is a direct

hindrance. On the other hand, a policy of giving every incentive and facility to private enterprise will be helpful. The fear of the accumulation of large wealth in a few hands is an out-moded nineteenth century apprehension. Modern taxation and control of profits, as much by public opinion as by legislation and the puissant voice of labour, prevent lopsided benefit from accruing to anyone. On the other hand, a poor country like India cannot afford to lose the benefit of the initiative and the enterprise of individuals in favour of a dull and inefficient bureaucracy whose management of such State institutions as the Life Insurance Corporation of India is a clear warning against the State taking over such institutions.

Agriculture

The other aspect of India's economy relates to agriculture. The farmer in India has not benefited by the recent rise in prices. Statistics show that the prices of the things which the farmer has to buy have risen to a greater extent than the prices of the things which the farmer has to sell. In the more advanced countries there is a large surplus available from the other sectors of the national economy like industry and these surpluses are being used (as in U.K. and U.S.A.) to subsidise agriculture in several ways, such as Government off-take at a guaranteed price, and the sale of the necessities of agriculture at less than cost. But in India the other sectors are unable to produce such divertable surpluses, and the scope for subsidising agriculture is limited. Further, while the prices of industrial commodities are based on the cost of production of those commodities, the prices of agricultural produce are largely regulated by the purchasing power of the urban consumers, and measures of price regulation for agricultural

produce are based on this consideration rather than on the profit over costs that the farmer is entitled to ask for. There is yet another vital consideration. The tendency has all along been to look upon the agriculturist as a producer, but it is even more important to look upon him as a consumer. Eighty per cent of the people of this country live in villages and seventy per cent live by agriculture. The purchasing power of this large rural population is the yard-stick by which any industrial advancement should be measured. To-day in India we are confronted with the spectacle of cloth accumulating in the textile mills, and an analysis of the situation shows that the coarse and medium varieties which are usually purchased by the agriculturists are the ones which are most un-saleable. This is because of lop-sided industrial investment which is un-related to the purchasing power of the primary producers of this country, namely, the agriculturists.

In these circumstances the introduction of large schemes of distributive justice leads firstly to a diminution of capital, and secondly, to a greater spread not of wealth but of poverty. Lopsided gains also result from the application of theories of equity. There is, for example, no equity or justice in industrial labour asking for five or six rupees a day as wages, when seventy per cent of the labour force in India, represented by agriculture, whether it be that of an owner-cultivator or a tenant or of a casual labourer, do not go up even to a rupee or a rupee and a half a day. This is not equity, but the tyranny of bargaining power. So much so, it may be said that what is happening to-day is not the exploitation of labour by capital, but of the exploitation of rural by urban labour which by persistent demands is pushing up industrial costs.

Over and above all these considerations, there lies the question of the springs of

human conduct. The doctrine of the trusteeship of the rich towards the poor is not a vague and abstract thesis or a counsel of perfection. It is the one principle which has sustained the people of this country through long periods of political insecurity and insufficient surplus wealth. The giving of food and shelter and cloth, of which so much is being made in State plans, has been recognised in India to be a kind of duty which the well-to-do owe towards the weaker member of society. The number of temples, Bhojansalas, private rest houses, and choultries, in all of which discriminate charity has all along been practised, are standing monuments to the practical application of the principle of trusteeship in this country. It is not possible for the State to take over all these innumerable varied kinds of charitable action. But its present policies of taxation and expropriation are helping to dry up these old and traditional methods of discharge of social obligation. In other words, in a poor country, the State, while it cannot fully take over what private persons have been doing, is doing its best to prevent private charity. It seems to think that by abolishing riches altogether, there is an automatic accrual of benefit to the poor.

PART II

THE SWATANTRA PARTY is the result of a certain amount of practical thinking about the conditions of this country along the lines mentioned in the preceding section. It has a pragmatic approach to problems of prosperity and social justice, based on a recognition of the major economic factors of this land, namely, the large population pressing on the land, and the need to foster agricultural productivity both for solving the food problem and for giving the 'consumer approach' to industrialisation. Those who talk of diverting surplus population

from agriculture to industry are not aware that all the industries put together during the coming ten or fifteen years will not be able to provide for the annual increase in population that is taking place, let alone diverting the heavy pressure that exists today. The Swatantra Party therefore believes that increasing food production is the first plank in any national programme. It does not believe that this can be achieved by putting pressure on the individual cultivator to join a cooperative farming society. It also believes that it is positively injurious to take away land from the rich without proper compensation and give it in small and uneconomic units to the landless labourers or to the tenants. Indian agriculture is based on the small and self-sufficient farmer who is self-employed and is exploited by nobody as a capitalist or master. He owns a family unit, often insufficient, but he and the members of his family get as much yield from it as nature can possibly provide. But he does not get good seed or manure in sufficient quantities, or adequate credit, or proper prices. Steps have also to be taken to increase the area of his holding wherever possible so as to form economic units of production. If these measures are taken, then, the love of the land, which is the farmer's emotional asset, will make him work all the harder and produce very much more from the land than what obtains at present. Research has shown that Indian yields can be stepped up very considerably. But there is not enough water or enough manure. Nor has the State created any enthusiasm on the part of the farmer to produce more. To herd such an individual into a cooperative farming unit is to take away the existing incentives and to make of him a dull and managed labourer who, instead of being a self-reliant peasant-farmer, becomes a dependant unit in an organism run by bureaucrats with huge over-heads. This is a transformation which has to be avoided

at all costs. Not only will cooperative farming inhibit production, but it will destroy the one individual who stands for the principle of non-exploitative employment. This may be said to be the major purpose for which the Swatantra Party has been formed, namely, to preserve the independence of the peasant-farmer and increase the facilities to be given to him for enhancing the yield from the land, and thus create a rural society consisting of individuals with sufficient purchasing power to maintain a suitable scale of industrialisation in the country. This would naturally involve the decentralisation of industry so as to create the conditions for supplementary income to the rural population.

This is the positive content of the Swatantra Party's programme. The Party, therefore, opposes the Government's policy of ceilings on land holdings and their drive towards collectivism through cooperative farming. The aim of the Party is to build up the individual peasant-farmer and it is interested in opposing the two measures mentioned above only because of its conviction, born of experience, that they will hurt the farmer, reduce farm out-put, and destroy the harmony of rural life amongst the various units that compose it.

This is not to say that the Party is in favour of absentee landlordism. It believes in the functional farmer. It has no love of the rentier owners. It, therefore, proposes to afford facilities to all those who desire to dispose of surplus land, which is in addition to what they can manage, by means of suitable financial assistance to purchasers and permissive legislation. For instance, if a landlord feels that he can himself cultivate a hundred acres out of a two hundred acres farm, then, it will be the duty of the State to give facilities for the sale and purchase of such surplus land, and also to insist on a certain measure of priority in the disposal of such land to the uneconomic farmers

and tenants. By this means land transfers will be smooth, voluntary and equitable, though not uniform. There is no object in interfering with a farmer merely because his holding is large, when he produces high yields from it and thus helps food production. On the other hand, an intelligent taxation policy, if used uniformly over all sections of the people, will be sufficient to draw off the surpluses for the benefit of the nation.

The Industrial policy of the Swatantra Party is also based on the necessity for increasing production. To-day private investment is practically at a stand-still. Some expansion takes place in existing Companies by the ploughing back of a certain proportion of the profits, but this too is hesitant and tardy. The large increase in Bank deposits is not an index of the prosperity of the people, but an indication of the unwillingness to invest in land owing to uncertainties created by Government's land policies, and of their unwillingness to invest in industry owing to the restrictions on industrial investment and trade. In other words, it is a sign of ill-health and not good health. A policy of nationalisation is fraught with grave dangers. Neither the State Trading Corporation, nor the Life Insurance Corporation of India, have justified State ownership. The investment policy of the Life Insurance Corporation has come in for a great deal of justifiable criticism. That institution has become the forum of politically influential speculators. The cautious policies pursued by the Private Insurance companies and the competitive rates which they made available to the country have now been lost. From the point of view of the public no gain of any kind has accrued by States taking over the L.I.C. Similarly, the State Trading Corporation is being used by the Government as an engine of taxation. Cement, for instance, is sold at

nearly 100 per cent above factory prices, and the extent to which this has hurt the building industry is well-known. In the interests of a future prosperity which is ever receding, imports have been cut down to such an extent that prices have gone up to an unreasonable extent. The Government have introduced half-hearted controls in regard to food grains. We are to-day confronted with the paradox of the Government boasting of phenomenal increases in food production and apologizing for corresponding increase in food prices. The Government figures of production are unreliable. The Government system of controls has created an artificial black-market without any need thereof.

The latest threat of the Government is to take over the grain trade. The grain trade is a specialised one, and by long tradition certain centres of production have been linked with certain markets. The retailer in grain is a small trader who works long hours for meagre profits. He gives credit on trust which is very necessary in a poor country, and he sells several articles which the public require and not merely grain. The Cooperative society can never take his place. It can supplement him in selected centres, but it cannot supplant him. There is also an economic absurdity in the theory behind State trading. There are many stages to be gone through between the producer and the consumer. This is especially so in respect of bulky articles like food grains. They have to be ware-housed, transported to centres of whole-sale trade, despatched to the retail trader, and then sold to the consumer. The people who undertake these functions perform a necessary social task. Even if the Government takes over the grain trade, these functions have still to be performed by some one. It is useless for a Government to supplant the existing persons who do this work and then employ

in their place a hierarchy of officials. No social or economic problem is solved thereby. On the other hand, a new species of inefficient people will creep into what is essentially a specialised task.

For all these reasons, the Swatantra Party bases its industrial policy on the encouragement of private initiative with suitable safeguards against excessive profits, but allowing such profits as are necessary for creating new investment potential. It believes that trade should be controlled but not taken over by the State. It believes that the small trader performs a useful function in a poor society and that the conditions of his business should be improved by suitable loans and grants. It stands for a policy of industrialisation in which the present is not utterly sacrificed to a distant future, and in which stability rather than speed is the factor that conditions expansion.

All dictatorial and totalitarian policies stand for quick results. Democratic countries do not fix targets in time. India is the only exception. And herein lies the danger to democracy. It is easy for Russia to cut off all electric supplies to a large part of the country and indulge in ballistic and super-atmospheric flight tests. But that is not possible in a free country. The moment we yield to centralised control, the desire for speedy success, irrespective of the heavy economic and social cost, takes hold of the Planning-mind. This is precisely what is happening in India to-day. The Plan has become an engine of gigantic State interference and it leaves no room for anyone else to act.

Also, there is an insufficient realisation of the serious danger of inflation to the country's economy. There is a great deal of statistical manipulation here that masks the magnitude of the rise in prices that has taken place. During the war years the belligerent countries of the West kept

prices in check, but in India by 1946 the price index had already crossed the 300 mark. Comparisons of the rise in prices since then are therefore totally misleading. The rupee to-day is worth less than three annas of its pre-war value. This is not the position with respect to the pound or the dollar. The large mass of the people, especially the lower middle classes, are being severely hit by the rise in prices. Every policy of the Government threatens to further reduce the purchasing power of the rupee. When controls are introduced the tendency to buy a little more against a rainy day increases. This in turn sets up a blackmarket. There takes place a huge movement of petty consumer-hoardings. An untrue scarcity is thus created. In this way controls also defeat their own purpose. They do not reduce hoarding, but encourage it in some other way. The Swatantra Party believes that the inflation is due partly to the introduction of huge capital schemes (like the three Steel Plants) which create employment and spending power without anything to spend on. It also believes that having created an imbalance between income and availability of goods, the Government further accentuates the situation by heavy import restrictions and the introduction of internal controls which lead to smuggling and blackmarketing. The most conspicuous example of the failure of controls and the consequent rise in prices is in respect of food. The Government have cut up the country into zones, and smuggling takes place in areas outside the zones. The surplus States within a zone are unable to enforce controlled prices. Thus a needless price increase is encouraged. Since a great part of the income of the people is spent on food, the effect of these artificial zones and non-enforced controls in putting up prices is very much greater than may be realised. Inflation can therefore be arrested

only by a bold policy of internal free trade and a lowering of capital expenditure. The problems of this vast country cannot be solved over-night. An adjustment between purchasing power potential and increased production has necessarily to be made. The Swatantra Party believes that these correctives are the only means by which inflation can be halted and the professional and the lower middle classes saved from starvation.

The agricultural and industrial policy of the Party is not brimful of large promises of violent transformations; on the other hand, the Party has been called into being just as a protest against the changes which have already hurt the country and which threaten to hurt it more if allowed free play. The Congress Party which came into power as representing the patriots who fought for Indian freedom, has now established itself as a monopolist-controller of the Government, and, therefore, it has been able to indulge in these expropriatory policies without any serious opposition. The Swatantra Party has to function as such an opposition. The criticism of the present measures of Government contains in itself an indication of the positive principles for which the Party stands. The Party has put forth a positive developmental programme based on (a) the small self-sufficient farmer, (b) the small trader, (c) controlled private initiative, (d) encouragement of saving and investment, (e) developing the springs of trusteeship and private charity which is much more frugal charity than benefits distributed by Government. That these are not spectacular, or expropriatory, or promise-laden, are not the defects of this programme, but its merits.

Those who have studied the post-war history of the Western world should know that the countries that have attained maximum prosperity and maximum welfare have not followed the so-called socialistic

methods. The Scandinavian countries have a scheme of welfare which has no parallel anywhere in the world, and it is private enterprise that is the ruling industrial pattern of those countries. Both West Germany and Japan have created phenomenal prosperity, from less than scratch, as it were, during the last decade, and this has been achieved through a free market and private initiative sponsored at every stage by State help. Even in the United Kingdom, which has taken to the Welfare State as the main objective of Government policy, private enterprise is recognised as the greatest nourishing agent for those policies. In India the Government has turned a blind eye to these standing examples and illustrations. That a country with a keen intellectual class like India should have been paralysed by the Congress is a sad commentary on our political maturity. What is wrong must be opposed, however unpleasant the task may be.

A process of hypnotism has been working in this country and words have taken the place of thought. We refer to such terms as 'Capitalist', 'Private sector', 'Landlord', 'Rightist' in such a way that we are made to feel that these expressions are self-condemnatory of what they stand for. This is a semantic illusion, and prevents further thinking on those subjects.

As will be evident from the foregoing analysis of the Agricultural and Industrial policy of the Swatantra Party, it believes that State interference with private life should be decreased and not increased. Uniformity is not unity. In a country with a vast area and diversified cultures, State interference in any walk of life tends towards centralisation and the reduction of local units to order-receiving subordinates. This tendency is manifesting itself in the country. The party believes that the process of centralisation should be halted. A reduction of the functions of the State is

one method by which this objective can be achieved.

A necessary consequence of the innumerable controls which the Government have introduced is the spate of corruption that has been let loose. It is the fashion in governmental circles to speak of administrative corruption. But the real corruption to-day is in the rank and file of the Party in power. Influence-mongering is the order of the day; and every member of the Ruling Party is a focus of influence and interference. For this single reason alone, apart from anything else, the country will benefit by the abolition of controls. The Swatantra Party stands firmly for preventing the interference by party bosses at various levels with administration, and it believes that this restriction will eradicate corruption in the country more than any other single measure.

The Party stands for certain basic principles and it does not wish to lay down a party directive on every problem that arises. The tendency today is for the political parties to have an all-embracing programme. This has resulted in the legislatures becoming mere echoes of decisions taken at party meetings. It has also created ill-will and differences of opinion among persons who are otherwise broadly agreed on major principles. It is inevitable that in a vast country there should be many local problems in which there are conflicts of interests. These problems should be settled in a democratic manner by the contending parties. They should not be raised to the level of programmes in an all India Party. The Swatantra Party proposes to lay down certain major objectives to which all its

members should subscribe. For the rest it believes in giving a measure of freedom to the members, so that the Parliament itself may represent the free vote to a greater extent than at present. By this means it believes that a truer representative picture of public opinion can be sustained than under conditions of severe party dictatorship in respect of details.

Two criticisms have been levelled against the Swatantra Party. The first is that it concentrates on criticising the Party in power without offering a positive programme to the country. The second is that it is a Party of the Right. These objections have no substance. To say that a Party belongs to the Right is not a criticism by itself. It is merely to say that the Party is not in the Leftist Political fashion. When Leftism means expropriation, inflation, inefficiency and corruption which are present in this country for everyone to see, that a new Party does not tread the same path and make even wilder promises is not intelligent criticism. The corrective to the present tendencies has necessarily to come by way of restoration of traditional values. Progress has to be lasting and not spectacular. The Swatantra Party firmly stands for such progress which can be attained only through the effort of the individuals that compose the Society and not by the State by itself. It stands for the small peasant, the small trader, the professional man, all of whom have been hard hit today. Its concept of freedom is based on the greater activity of the individual and lesser activity on the part of the State.

*A Short Note on Economic Development**

By AMLAN DATTA

THERE are three fairly well-known and yet basic and very important features of the situation obtaining in underdeveloped countries to which attention may be drawn at the very outset as a background to other observations to follow. The first of these relates to the gap between the underdeveloped countries and the more advanced countries. Let me quote a couple of well-known facts. The per capita income of the United States of America per year is slightly less than \$2,000. India's per capita income is about \$60. The per capita income in the USA is thus about thirty times as much as that in India. Let me put the same point in a more general context instead of comparing a particular developed country with a particularly underdeveloped country. Taking the world as a whole, we find that the poorer countries, which account for two-thirds of humanity, have only one-sixth of world income, whereas the richer countries, with one-sixth of world population, have two-thirds of world income. This order of inequality recalls what obtained within individual capitalist countries when the revolutionary socialist movement began.

The second feature to which I would now draw your attention is again well-known, and yet bears repetition. That is that the inequality is still growing. The fact that it is doing so is perhaps not obvious when you consider only the last couple of years, but if you take the period from 1950

to 1955 the facts are clear enough. In Western Europe the rate of growth has varied. The rate of growth of per capita income and of total national income, for instance, was higher for Western Germany than the United Kingdom—but if you consider Western Europe as a whole, then the estimated rate of growth of per capita income for the period 1950 to 1955 was just under 5 per cent per year. Again there is a great difference in the rate of growth of per capita income in the Latin-American countries — for instance, the rate is much higher in Brazil than in Argentina—but if you consider Latin-America as a whole the estimated increase per capita per year is about 3½ per cent. In India for the same period the rate was put at 2 per cent per year, but, because of miscalculation of population increase, there are grounds for believing even this may be an over-estimate. These facts indicate—if it were necessary to indicate—that not only is the gap between the underdeveloped and the more advanced countries very wide, but that it is widening.

The third of the three features I want to stress relates to the problem of instability. There is one special point in this connection which I should like to highlight, and that is this: in a period of recession the terms of trade become more favourable to the more advanced countries and more unfavourable to the less developed countries. This means that a period of economic depression is doubly disadvantageous for the underdeveloped countries. Advanced countries, when they are confronted with a

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period of recession, have at least the inadequate consolation that the terms of trade turn in their favour precisely when the economic situation is otherwise unfavourable; but underdeveloped countries, precisely when the economic situation is unfavourable, find that the terms of trade usually turn against them.

These then are the three general features of the situation which, I hope, will serve as some sort of a background to other observations that follow: the very simple fact of the gap, the fact that this is widening, and the fact that instability is an additional disadvantage for the underdeveloped countries.

I should like now to turn to another aspect of the situation. Let us compare the situation in the development-seeking countries of the world today with that in the industrially advanced countries when they first started developing themselves — let us say during the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th Century and early 19th century. It will be seen there is one very important distinction. Before I make the distinction precise it is necessary to make a brief digression. We know, and it has been pointed out in the ICFTU document, that the passage from an underdeveloped stage to a developed stage can be described in technical terms from the viewpoint of one particular characteristic, namely, capital formation. It can be described as a passage from something around a 5 per cent saving and investing economy to about a 15 per cent saving and investing economy. This means that as long as one is in transition between 5 and 15 per cent the proportion of the national income that is consumed dwindles, not in absolute terms, but as a proportion of the national income. Yet, as we all know, it is precisely in this period when a country is still underdeveloped, when it is short of necessities and when it is for the first time

coming into contact with developmental processes, that the propensity to consume of ordinary people tends to rise. Now this poses a serious problem: here is a period when the natural instinct of the people is to raise their consumption as a long-deferred fulfilment of desires, yet it is essential for development that at this very time the proportion of the national income spent in this way should diminish in order to enable the proportion of the income saved and invested to increase. It is for this reason that, historically, a period of transition in economic development has always been one when wages rise less than proportionately to productivity. If consumption is to rise less than proportionately to income, then as a reflection of this we find wages rise less than proportionately to productivity. Whether this is desirable is not the question, but there is hardly any other way of passing from a 5 per cent saving-and-investing economy to a 15 per cent saving-and-investing economy than by making the income and consumption of the great majority rise slower than productivity and national income taken as a whole.

Now let me come back to the distinction between the underdeveloped countries and the developed countries, to which I referred a little earlier. When the industrially advanced countries of today started developing in the 19th Century the trade union was either illegal or exceedingly weak. For instance, the trade union movement was illegal in England between 1799 and 1824. It was illegal in France even after 1824. On the other hand, although the trade union movement is not as strong in a country like India as we would like to see it, nevertheless it is stronger there today than it was, for example, in the first half of the 19th Century in an industrially developing country of the West.

Now the significance of this is that in the Western European countries when they

began to develop themselves industrially, the fact that the trade union movement was either illegal or very weak made it possible for productivity to be raised faster than wages, without the government and the investing class meeting any substantial opposition. But in the development-seeking countries today the trade union movement is stronger than it was in the early 19th century in Western Europe, although it is not as strong as we would like to see it today.

This is an important distinction, and from this distinction I draw one very important conclusion — that it is necessary for the development-seeking countries of today to bring about, for the purpose of economic development, a much closer co-operation between the trade union movement and other democratic organisations and the policy-making authorities, the political authorities, than was necessary in the 19th century in the then developing countries.

A country like India can either take a dictatorial way by crushing the movement, but if it does not do so the alternative is to take the trade union movement into its confidence. The alternative between taking up a blatantly dictatorial way and openly cooperative way is therefore more sharply focussed for these countries. It seems obvious that for a development-seeking country today which wants to combine economic development with democracy, the workers must be persuaded that this is the bare logic of the economic situation, they will have to be persuaded to take proportionately less than the rise in labour productivity, although this does not mean taking absolutely less. The point is to make this consistent with the existence of a free trade union movement.

Now I suggest that this can be done by the adoption of three important types of measures. The first is simply this, that the

workers should be made to feel that they are not being called upon to shoulder more of the burden of economic development than other sections of the community, and, more important, that the richer sections of the community are going to shoulder their part — and I mean a proportionately larger part of the burden. Whether the idea has been fulfilled in practice or whether it is going to be fulfilled in future is a different question, but that is surely one of the main ideas behind such fiscal innovations as have been introduced in India in the form of an expenditure tax and a wealth tax, which seems to have frightened some investing people in other countries. The idea behind these taxes is precisely to make it clear to the richer people that if they want to spend more they must pay much more in taxation, and the tax on wealth should be taken as an evidence of the sharing of the burden for fulfilment of the development programmes necessary for the country as a whole. This is one type of measure necessary to induce the working classes in a free democratic country to do their part. They must feel that measures are being adopted whereby the richer people also share, and undertake proportionately more of, the burden that the country has to carry.

The second type of measure is, of course, educational. What common people detest or resent most is not so much sacrifice as one which they do not understand. A sacrifice for a reason one understands is more easily accepted. It is, therefore, essential to explain the economic compulsions of the transitional period. Then I believe the sacrifice would appear more reasonable to the ordinary people.

The third type of measure necessary is that the trade unions, the workers' associations and other democratic organisations should not merely be given to understand what is being done by the government, but

should be given responsibility by bringing them in, wherever possible, for consultations so that policies may be framed on the basis of understanding by the people from whom sacrifices are demanded.

The point that I am making then is that there can be no economic development without a certain amount of sacrifice, and I do not believe that it is possible to throw the entire sacrifice on one particular section of the people. The burden must be shared, and for obvious reasons the rich will have to carry more of the burden than was necessary for their counterparts in the early 19th Century. It is also important to make educational facilities available and to build up certain institutions for mutual consultation and sharing of responsibility among trade unions and working class associations on the one hand, and the political authorities and the administration on the other hand.

I am sure I have said enough to convince some of our friends who may have some doubts on this point that we believe that underdeveloped countries must help themselves if economic development is to be secured. But the industrially advanced countries have also a very important role to play in this respect.

I referred earlier to the interesting fact that, taking the world as a whole, the inequality in income among nations is at least as great as it is within nations. I would now draw your attention to an interesting ideological reflection of this fact. In the 19th Century the rich people in the capitalist countries used to say that the poorer people had only themselves to blame for their poverty. They said, 'We are not responsible for the poverty of the poorer people. The poor are poor because they are lazy or improvident and because they have too many children'. Not a few among the rich countries today speak a similar language, or have long done so, in

relation to the poorer countries. I would like to point out that this attitude of trying to apportion blame is very unhelpful. The point is not who is to blame for poverty but what are its possible consequences. The developed countries of today soon discovered that the only possible consequence of the situation that obtained in those countries in the 19th century was a revolutionary explosion, and this could be averted only by the development of certain egalitarian measures. For the world as a whole a similar conclusion holds good. Irrespective of who is responsible for poverty, the fact remains that unless the increasing gap between the advanced and the underdeveloped countries is closed the situation will prove explosive.

Let me clarify one point. I do not believe that the underdeveloped countries of the world are going to remain underdeveloped for the next half a century. They are going to develop, and I put it to you that they will do so over the next half a century irrespective of the scale on which the industrially advanced countries help them. The point is not whether the underdeveloped countries will develop or not; it is now clear that owing to certain historical forces which have arisen the development of the underdeveloped countries cannot be stopped over the next 50 years, but it is not certain whether this development will be within the framework of democratic institutions. Without assistance by the industrially more advanced countries it is most unlikely that development of the underdeveloped countries will take place within the framework of democratic institutions.

What is at stake therefore is not just the economic development of any one part of the world, but democracy, or to put it in a broader perspective, certain basic values of civilisation. If economic development of the underdeveloped countries is to be combined with democracy, then it must take

place not in the face of opposition, not even in the face of indifference, but as the result of eager cooperation between the more developed part of the world and the less favoured.

It would be complacent to take for granted that the need for such cooperation is sufficiently realised in all the more knowledgeable quarters. I shall give you one example. It has been calculated that over the period of the third five-year plan, that is to say from 1961 to 1966, India is likely to need foreign exchange to the tune of at least £300 million per year, and perhaps a little more. Commenting on this, a liberal English journal wrote, 'The resources of the West are not unlimited'. That is obviously true, but the total resources of the chief capital-exporting countries

of the West as calculated recently are \$500,000 million compared with £300 million, or just under \$1,000 million mentioned above. Even if we take all the under-developed countries into account—and put their needs at the maximum—what is required of the more advanced countries is assistance to the tune of 1.5 per cent of their national incomes.

Now 1.5 per cent is something; but whether the advanced countries feel they are in a position to give that percentage in order to help the less advanced countries depends on the sense of urgency with which they approach the whole problem.

Is it presumptuous to suggest that the problem is of such a degree of urgency as to justify the advanced countries stepping forward with aid to this extent?

There is no one of critical ability who has not experienced intense and profound pleasure from something simultaneously with a low critical valuation of what produced it.

NORTHROP FRYE

Democracy : A Romantic Attitude

By PRAVAS JIVAN CHAUDHURY

THE basic political antagonism in the world to-day may be viewed as an aspect of the fundamental one existing in our culture. The issue between democracy and communism is an element of the issue between romantic and classic attitudes of the mind. The classic attitude believes in and seeks for balance and order in cultural disciplines such as science, art, philosophy and religion; seeks a perfect comprehension of the given materials of the discipline in an appropriate form, while the romantic attitude believes that materials transcend forms. The classic mind expects ultimate intelligibility and the human conquest of the world while the romantic submits to ultimate mystery or the inscrutable will of the world. The former loves to understand and use nature while the latter loves to wonder at it and live within it like a stoic. One glorifies reason while the other glorifies instinct and intuition. One sets up logic, rules, conventions, dogmas and rituals, thereby exalting social communication and the regimentation of beliefs and conduct, whereas the other regards all this as partial, relative and provisional and worships at the shrine of anti-intellectualism, of feeling and instinctive living, of individuality and freedom. One passes from particular observations to general propositions and builds up science while the other subscribes to Blake's stricture, 'To generalise is to be an idiot' and opposes to science imaginative insight and vision. One conceives of a finite and distinct universe with well-established laws, for the other everything is in a fluid state with

infinity hovering over all. One is essentially objective in outlook, and holds all objectifiable and communicable forms to be explanations of a reality that is an inter-subjective impersonal object. The other is essentially subjective holding reality to be an unique personal world to every witnessing self and believes that all objectification and socialisation of the real is a biologically motivated effort that succeeds only partially and temporarily and produces a secondary reality besides the primary one. One considers this subjective or inward attitude to be an abnormal condition of a mind regressing to its prenatal state, the other considers the outward movement of the mind, that comes to posit physical objects and other minds beyond itself behind the sensations it is immediately aware of, and certain intellectual forms too for organising perceptual data, to be but an universal malady to be cured by the true science of the mind and by true art, philosophy and religion which teach us to take all these objects as objectifications or projections like dreams, and, so, as biologically useful but spiritually distracting figments.

No one is in fact a perfect classicist nor a perfect romantic; we have but described two ideal types of mind. Further, it is impossible to decide with any finality which outlook, the romantic or the classic, is the truer, for we have only incomplete knowledge and have not yet come to the final stages of art and religion. At present we have to put up with duality of outlook and must leave a final verdict on the matter to our successors. They will be wiser by our

experience. For the present, one has to be sincere and relentless in the pursuit of one's own ideal, in working out the consequences of it and carrying it to its logical extreme. Only thus can one help in the co-operative and long-term task of deciding the issue between the two opposed ideologies. After all, the truth can be arrived at only after a long trial in social practice. We have to experiment with truth patiently.

Although it is the future man who will finally decide the issue, yet we cannot sit by, idle and unthinking. One must decide for oneself and act upon the decision. We for our part believe that the extreme of either classicism or romanticism will vitiate and block our cognitive, artistic and religious enterprise. The classical mind, taking everything to be amenable to law and order will tend either to overlook the refractory data of experience or will force them into grooves they do not really fit in, while the romantic may develop a sceptical attitude to the intellectual comprehension of our experience and thus ignore the universal and communicable aspects in it. So each will come to stagnancy in the cultural enterprise—which, we believe, is an endless progression requiring ever new forms and conceptual frameworks to cope with the fresh and novel data of experience. Our experience appears to have side by side two aspects or moments: that of the novel, the unique and the immediate on the one hand, and that of the repetitive, the typical and the discursive on the other. We have to mark and maintain the vital tension between the two moments, one centrifugal and the other centripetal. The rich variety and immediacy of the content of experience tends to draw away all experience from its centre, while the forms of understanding, seeking to comprehend it, collects its diverse elements toward the centre. An excess of the former force over the latter leads to a centrifugal explosion and an

opposite situation results in a centripetal collapse. So that though one tends naturally to follow one's temperament and view matters either with cold reason, or with feelings of infinite wonder, one may best take thought over the matter in the manner we have indicated here and establish, if possible, a balance between the two attitudes. But how far this *a priori* reasoning, or for that matter, any reasoning of this abstract sort, can influence one's mental outlook or attitude is doubtful. Perhaps, as the pragmatists believe, only success and satisfaction in social practice can in the long run affect beliefs and behaviour. But this pragmatic theory of beliefs cannot warrant us to trust in the emergence of some unanimous truth, for what may be success and satisfaction for one person may not be so for another. So that although we can only rest on social practice as the final and practical judge of our attitudes and ideas yet we cannot be absolutely sure that it will deliver a clear verdict. However, let us reason in a somewhat different manner from the above and see if we can arrive at some decision on the issue for ourselves and for the time being.

We will do well to investigate how far our present-day practice of science, art, philosophy and religion supports one or the other of these two rival attitudes. This support itself will be a more effective reason for one's belief in the attitude supported than all the reasons abstractly advanced in its favour. The special support of one attitude by any of these cultural disciplines means the success just that far of this particular attitude in the sphere of experience dealt with by that discipline. If, for instance, modern science proves to be romantically oriented we may justly conclude that at least in perceptual experiences sought to be organised by science, the romantic attitude appears to work better

than the classic one and, so, we shall be led to romanticism. This is the most potent way of persuasion; other means such as reasoning from certain broad premises, emotive appeals, precepts and commands do not work so well. For although a particular discipline or department of enquiry and practice may be temporarily swayed by an arbitrary attitude of one or two workers in it, in general such influences are quickly counteracted and swept away by their opposites and what has succeeded in wide inter-personal practice in the discipline comes to stay. There is no surer test of truth and we have to make peace with our destiny in this respect and rest satisfied with an instrumental view of knowledge and truth. Thus the implicit verdicts so far of modern science, art, philosophy and religion on the issue between classicism and romanticism have to be admitted as relative and temporal truths about the matter. If these verdicts agree, and we will see that they do, then we may well take the common verdict as the truth about the matter for our time and culture.

Let us see what are these verdicts. The romantic outlook of modern physics is well-known. Though Einstein and Max Planck towards the end of their lives were critics of the principle of indeterminacy in the microphysical realm and hoped that future physicists would find out a thoroughly determined system in that realm, the consensus of opinion is against such a hope. And since the elementary particles that build up the world have a kind of loose-jointedness, chance must logically be regarded as fundamental to nature which in its macro-behaviour appears to follow causality, just as the average rates of birth, death, suicide and marriage, gathered from statistical observations, show such striking regularity that economists and insurance companies rely on them for their future policies. This admission of chance means

a recognition of the limits of our scientific knowledge about facts. The physicist does not now speak of individual elementary processes in causal terms but is prepared to admit any miracle such as a piece of iron suddenly disappearing or bursting into flames which is for him a very improbable but not an impossible thing to happen. Chance rules the finer elements of nature and the causal behaviour we find in the gross objects is but regular accidents. We have no guarantee behind the so-called natural laws which are logically not different from statistical rules. Moreover, we have no logical ground to believe in the inductive principle that what has been found regularly will be repeated ever afterwards, that is, the future will resemble the past. The physicists of our day are aware of this situation and therefore treat the laws of physics as rough generalisations about the gross behaviour of things, making no claim either of necessity or certainty behind them. The use of these laws for prediction signifies only a trust and a habit of the mind and no rational belief, as Hume pointed out long ago. All this points to a romantic acceptance of the transcendent and the unknown, and of an unconditioned freedom at the heart of nature. Kant's proof of the *a priori* category of causality as a necessary presupposition of science sounds much like a begging of the question, for he assumed scientific knowledge to be categorised and possible. Causality in the strict sense can at best be regarded as a methodological policy or procedural rule for the scientist whose ideal is to build up a perfect system of natural knowledge. This classical ideal of science has been superseded by a romantic one in recent physics, one that is aware of the unconditioned beneath the appearance of the conditioned. No doubt, it still seeks and finds regularities in the phenomena it studies but it now believes

all these findings to be contingent and fluid in character rather than necessary truths.

When the physical world studied by physics is not a thorough-going causal process, the biological and the psychological worlds will be less so, and modern scientists have come to recognise this. There are definite proofs of plan, purposiveness and initiative in these realms, and the idea held by early scientists to reduce the phenomena of life and mind to physical quantities and mechanical systems is now abandoned as a naive dream. There is much on the surface of things that follow some rough causal laws and make predictions possible, yet there are many deep-lying unknown and unknowable factors which make all these laws and predictions provisional and contingent in nature. They do not describe how things must behave but only how things are, for unknown reasons, seen to behave for the present.

There has been a neo-romantic movement in recent philosophy. Though the logical positivists have been upholding science as the true pattern of all knowledge and decrying metaphysics as either downright nonsense or only emotively meaningful, they have themselves been led by their own logic to admit that their criterion of meaning is after all a matter of preference and free decision, not of any universally valid scientific principle. So that they cannot rationally object to the rival preferences and attitudes that abound in recent thought. Besides the traditional speculative metaphysics, there are now pragmatism, phenomenology and existentialism. These are all anti-intellectual movements. The pragmatist believes ideas to be instruments of action and takes truth to mean the success and satisfaction brought about by an idea. There is thus nothing like an absolute and rational truth, everything depends on the active human

situation and the temperament of the agent; what is true for one and in one circumstance may be false for another in a different circumstances. Therefore every view of the world, whether scientific, philosophic or ethico-social, is but conditionally true. Armed revolution and downright lying may be good under certain circumstances and bad under others. This attitude of mind is highly romantic, for it rejects any intellectual and universal meaning or test of truth and frankly admits a state of chaos and contingency in this all-important sphere. Truth or reality is conceived as ultimately fluid matter as variously shaped as the actual mental and physical conditions under which things are viewed. The phenomenological school of thinkers also indirectly preaches a subjective kind of philosophy so far as they advise us to suspend all existential judgements and offer as reality the phenomena that the mind is immediately aware of in introspection. The objects are all meant or intended by the mind and, so, depend on it. This is an inward-looking philosophy that does not assure us of an objective, extra-mental, ordered world, though it tries to discover some order in the objects projected by the mind. It cannot really establish a super-personal universal mind with its laws of projection of objects and is therefore essentially oriented romantically, leaving much to the unknown and unknowable subjectivity in its vision of the world. The existentialists, openly giving themselves up to this unconditioned subjectivity, distrust inter-personal communication and therefore all intellectual culture, in the form of science, philosophy, art and religion, with their claims of social validity. Truth for them is a purely subjective feeling, felt through tense moments of life, through fear, anguish, a sense of freedom and of responsibility, of ennui and of death. This is an extremely romantic, if not

decadent, outlook. The classical 'moment of order', toned down in other romantic philosophies, is completely suppressed existentialism which deliberately poses existential immediacy and indeterminacy against all essence that implies something discursive and determinate.

Turning our gaze from science and philosophy to art and religion we notice in these disciplines the same preponderance of the romantic attitude over the classical. All new movements in visual art, such as, impressionism, surrealism, cubism, dadaism and futurism, exemplify a strong distaste for order and balance, for anything determinate and of universal significance. Intense individualism and freedom are the watch-words of modern painting and plastic art. Art must not express any intellectual idea or vision, must not communicate any sensible meaning, but must affect the mind in a very vague and mysterious manner. There cannot be any rules for art which springs from freedom. The same attitude is seen in modern poetry which ordinary people do not understand and which the poets tell them is not to be understood but to be read and the words allowed to play upon the consciousness. The imagists and the symbolists are more romantic than the romanticists of early nineteenth century English poetry who in their passion for universal ideas, like love and freedom, in their belief that poetry must have some intellectual content or message and in their love of clarity of expression, showed classic virtues. The modern poet conceives poetry after music and sharply distinguishing the language of emotion from that of reference, determines to use the former language for poetry. Poetry must be, then, cognitively meaningless, it must not say anything but only do something to our nervous system. This is surely a romantic conception of poetry *par excellence* that glorifies the indescribable

but indirectly expressible emotive attitudes of man in their raw immediacy and subjectivity at the cost of its intellectuality and inter-subjective significance. Old romanticism sought rich and delicate emotions for poetic subject but it believed in and attempted the understanding and intellectual communication of these emotions. Neo-romanticism seeks for emotions that are intrinsically incommunicable unique occurrences but which may somehow be expressed in the language of emotion and so roughly evoked in the reader's mind. Poetry is the art of evocation rather than description of human emotions; it does not reveal any truth about the emotions it expresses but gives us their taste. This neo-romantic idea of poetry would be condemned by romantics like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats, who meant by poetic imagination a faculty of intuitive knowledge superior to reason or scientific understanding. And, of course, this new idea of poetry would be opposed by scholastic thinkers as well as classical Indian aestheticians who believe that poetry offers us a kind of objectification and knowledge of our emotional nature and, so, indirectly helps us to master this somewhat weak side of our nature. Catharsis, which, Aristotle said poetry must effect, is best interpreted in this psychotherapeutic manner; and the Indian concept of *Rasa*, said to be the soul of poetry, seems to mean a similar catharsis of emotions. The neo-romantics have purged all intellectuality from their conception of poetry.

A similar situation is to be seen in the sphere of fictional literature where novelists like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Marcel Proust set the model. Plot and characterisation are deliberately neglected because the novelist believes in the living flux of experience, the stream of consciousness. He considers the weaving of a

plot and development of typical characters to be an idle game and a distortion of reality. The actual 'feel' of the throbbing life, the subjective aspect of reality, must be captured in its immediacy, and all exterior forms, including a clear, conventional language, must be ruthlessly sacrificed as being artificial techniques that torture reality out of shape. The novel must be close to life which is seen as essentially chaotic, incomplete, and confusing, and not as a well-knit, logical, ordered affair.

What about modern religion? Classical religion, like classical art, seeks to comprehend and master by intellect the mystery and awe that is in our emotional life, the latter attends to the general human emotions that shake us while former addresses itself to specific religious emotions like dread, a sense of self-insufficiency and piety, which arise as we contemplate the possible existence of an all-powerful author and governor of this world and of our lives. Classical religion seeks to give some rational shape to these feelings by describing them and prescribing certain ways to express them through prayers, religious deeds and rituals. It also tones down the mystery and awe to some extent by means of dogmas which attempt to translate in intellectual terms the metaphysics of God and the cosmos. Classical religion, such as any institutionalised religion of the world, tempers and gives a concrete form to the otherwise formless wondering and excitement of the mind over the transcendental cause of the world and the suffering of the associated emotions. But in recent times we are noticing in the religious life of men an urge for the original religious feelings and a suspicion of all dogmas and outer forms of religion that, apart from separating one religion from another, distract man with mere sham and shibboleth instead of acquainting him with the true spirit of religion.

Revolt against any rational order in religion, any theology, any code, any paraphernalia and trappings, that characterised the medieval mystics of the East and the West, is the tendency of the modern religious mind. This signifies a deep romantic tone. The human soul wants nothing but the raw taste of the infinite that teases us out of thought, it seeks rich confusion and intensity in the life of the spirit rather than the meagre clarity of the life of thought. It yearns for a marvellous texture rather than any rational structure of the super-natural. It prizes this dangerous blinding emotion, more than the lucid wisdom of the religious men of tradition, prizes the confrontation of the dark abyss of transcendent reality itself more than the painted mask of it that church religions offer us.

Thus we see that romanticism is the order of the present-day culture. If so, it is natural that democracy rather than communism will finally win the approval of the people. Romanticism may be said to be justified, instrumentally and for our times, as it succeeds in our major cultural activities as shown above. Therefore democracy seems to be basically and on the whole more justified than communism. Communism is classical in outlook, it seeks to order society rigorously after some intellectual idea of efficiency and progress. But romanticism is suspicious of such rationally planned and regimented social order, and wishes to leave much to individual initiative and standards of value. It naturally gives scope for individual differences in belief and to unavoidable conflicts of interests and plans of action, and, so, favours an administration where opposition and individual enterprise are not only admitted but welcomed. Communism, insisting on uniformity and unity in political belief and action adheres to totalitarianism and centralism. It places social good much above individual interest and

so mistrusts all talk of individual freedom and initiative. A social order of imposed harmony is the altar at which individuals as such must be sacrificed. Democracy, on the other hand, holds the individual to be the primary reality and the society to be a secondary or derivative one. It respects the human person as such and holds it as an end in itself and not as a means to some other end. This exaltation of the individual man, however common he may be, implies a deep love of mystery, a sense of the transcendent which the communist cannot appreciate. Communism treats man as a cell-unit in the social organism, an instrument for social enterprise and power. The communist hates whatever defeats the intellect, hates the surds of experience that the romantic prizes more than the plain practical things. Every detail in life and politics is to the communist crystal clear in principle. He prides himself for his tough-mindedness and condemns the tender-

headed democrat who holds individual man to be mysterious and sacred.

The issue between the two ideologies will be decided for our times by the comparative success of one of them in actual practice. However, we can guess from the general success of the romantic outlook in the various cultural disciplines of man that democracy, which is inspired by the romantic outlook, is likely to win the day. This, of course, does not decide the question finally or absolutely, for as we said before, our knowledge is an open system and our experience incomplete. As creatures of time we have to rest satisfied with temporary and contingent truths and to believe and act upon them. There will always be a tension of opposing beliefs and attitudes, and only a partial and provisional resolution of them in our moments of decision and our plans of action are possible. To strive after absolute Truth in matters such as these is to run after a Will O' the Wisp.

Nepal in the World Today

By ANIRUDDHA GUPTA

NOTWITHSTANDING her 800,000 Tibeto-Buddhist population, culturally Nepal belongs to India. The king of Nepal, for instance, is a scion of the ancient Shahi dynasty of 'His late Majesty King Prithvi Narain Shah and adherent of Aryan Culture and Hindu Religion'.¹ The Nepalese language of 'Khaskura' is an offshoot of the Sanskrit language and most of the laws current in Nepal have their sources in Hindu scriptures or law-books.

Geographically also Nepal is more dependent on India than on Tibet or China. Her only facility for trade and inter-communication with the outer world lies through India, though an alternative way runs through the passes in the north to link Kathmandu with Lhasa and Peking. Even the political texture of Nepal, including the new constitution which came into force from the 30th June, 1959, is largely based on the Indian model. Most of the Nepalese political leaders had received their education and political apprenticeship in India, on whom or whose activities the Indian stamp is clearly marked. Finally, lest one forget, the anti-Rana movement of 1949 led by the Nepali Congress was indeed originally worked out

in all its details at the homes of Indian leaders in Calcutta and Patna.²

These facts may lead one to believe that Nepal and India live today on the closest term of friendship. Yet, curiously enough, the truth seems to be quite otherwise. The very fact of her proximity to India has created a psychology of fear in Nepal which can best be interpreted as the traditional fear of the weak towards the strong. Not unnaturally a very large section of the educated Nepalese think that Nepal's sovereignty is being threatened by a kind of Indian 'expansionism'. This type of thinking is indeed erroneous. Nevertheless a feeling of uneasiness exists which may prove to be a difficult factor in the future relations of the two countries.

Ever since 1951, that is when the Rana autocracy was over-thrown, a growing number of complaints is being heard about Indian interference in the government and internal politics of Nepal. The existence of Indian check-posts on Nepal-Tibet border and several clauses of Indo-Nepalese trade treaty of 1950 come under heavy fire of criticism. Even the remodeling of the Nepalese army by Indian officers was interpreted as other than friendly. A theory has, therefore, been too often provided that much of what India is doing in and for Nepal is motivated by considerations of security only.³ There is also frequent criticism of the conduct and bearing of officials attached to the Indian embassy which, if the press reports are to be believ-

¹ Article I(iii): The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal.

² See an interesting series of articles on 'Nepal in 1949' by Bhola Chattopadhyaya in *Desh* the Bengali weekly.

³ See W. Levi, 'Nepal in World Politics', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. XXX, No. 3.

ed, receives wide and ready acceptance amongst the educated Nepalese. Even a small incident of the beating of a Nepali maid servant (the facts of which are not known)⁴ creates enough stir to give the opposition parties a plank for spreading anti-Indian propaganda.

These factors no doubt play an important part in the formation of Nepal's foreign policy. The task of the Government has become more difficult in the face of the present India-China tension. Of course there is no reason to believe that a Chinese invasion from the north is imminent, but the possibility of increased communist activity inside Nepal makes her monarchical government rather shaky. As a result, fear of China has forced the Government to lean more heavily on India even though that cuts a few slices off from its popularity. Thus while the King and Prime Minister of Nepal conferred with Mr. Nehru on the Tibetan situation, other political quarters expressed fear that Nepal was abandoning her independent foreign policy. The Nehru-Koirala joint communiqué (June 14, 1959) which emphasised 'an identity of views in the policies of the two countries' was especially attacked by the United Front—a post-election grouping of three major opposition parties. Dr. K. I. Singh, one of the leaders of the front, bluntly described Indo-Nepalese agreement on the Kosi project as another instance of India's 'colonial policy'. The Nepali Communist Party also resented the communiqué as being a departure from Nepal's previous policy towards Tibet.

Nehru's visit to Nepal during the first

week of June had in fact brought a sense of realism in Nepal's foreign policy. The Nepali Congress, soon after it was voted to power, released a statement criticising Chinese policy and demanding full autonomy for Tibet.⁵ This kind of attitude would not have signified much, if Nepal, like Cambodia or Ceylon, had been miles away from China. But as a barrier state between India and China, an independent attitude by Nepal, especially when it varies from that of India, would naturally prove embarrassing to the latter. This is what made Nehru's Kathmandu visit an immediate necessity.⁶

These larger issues between her two Big Neighbours have all along affected the internal and foreign policies of Nepal. The present feeling against India is a product of that psychology of hopelessness. Even India's very liberal grants, including 10 crores towards Nepal's first five year plan, and various technical aids have not been able to alleviate this feeling. Instead, it is pointed out that Indian 'appeasement' of China had resulted in the loss of Rs. 10,000 annual tribute which Tibet used to pay Nepal since 1856. The opening of direct trade-route with Tibet through Kalimpong and Sikkim is further alleged to have caused a loss of 80 per cent of Nepali trade to India.

These signs are disturbing; but the danger of Nepal going over to China is a remote possibility. None except the communists would like to see Nepal becoming a satellite of Communist China. The ousting of Dalai Lama and suppression of monks and monasteries has deeply injured the religious sentiments of the Nepalese, and no one denies that religion plays a strong role in the political judgements of all Asian people.

For security reasons, however, Nepal cannot altogether ignore her big northern neighbour, and so long as India remains friendly towards China, Nepal has to ditto

⁴ *The Statesman*, Calcutta, July 16, '59.

⁵ *Op.cit.*, May 4, '59.

⁶ Even Nehru's stay evoked mixed feelings. 'Mr. Nehru's visit to this country nine years ago', writes a Kathmandu paper, 'aroused much enthusiasm here. But this time that enthusiasm has made itself conspicuous by its absence.' —*The Motherland*, June 6, '59.

her policy. For sometime, though, Nepal attempted to stand clear out of China, but soon reality prevailed over sentiment. In 1955 normal diplomatic relations were established between China and Nepal through the good offices of the External Affairs Ministry at New Delhi. On September 20, 1956, a treaty of friendship and trade was signed which deprived Nepal of her extra territorial rights in Tibet in lieu of certain trade concessions. Chou-En-Lai and Tanka Prasad Acharya, the then Prime Minister of Nepal, paid mutual visits to one another's country and ultimately China agreed to give Nepal economic assistance worth 6 crores of rupees. Chou-En-Lai took special care not to embarrass India and scrupulously restrained from sending Chinese technical experts to Nepal.⁷

As a means of escape from her giant neighbours Nepal will eventually fall back on the rest of the world for help and protection. Such a policy seems to be all the more necessary in view of the foreign aid and technical assistance she needs to improve her living standards. A trend towards this new 'world consciousness' is now visible in Nepalese foreign policy.

Nepal today is a full-fledged member of the United Nations where her representative has shown a remarkable independence of attitude. Earlier, Nepal had diplomatic contacts only with India and the United Kingdom, but she has now established diplomatic relations with the USA, France, Burma, Russia, Japan, Switzerland, etc. The size of the Nepalese foreign office has increased in proportion to the growing international importance of Nepal.

The leader of the new trend is the King himself who has shown during the last few

years a surprising grasp of international affairs and ability to deal with difficult situations. Patriotic sentiments, of course, back the new venture of King Mahendra, and there are many who would like to see Nepal pursuing a more independent policy. More than once it has been demanded that diplomatic contacts be established with Pakistan, and the belief that it is India which prevents Nepal from doing so makes this demand more vocal and insistent. A Kathmandu paper wrote sometime back, 'There is a school of thought here which sees no wisdom in having relations with Pakistan on the assumption that it would incur the displeasure of India'.⁸

This group has also become aware of the geopolitical importance of Nepal. It fully appreciates the USA's manifold concern with Nepal, but that did not prevent King Mahendra from making a tour of the USSR at the invitation of the Soviet Government (1958). This policy has also yielded good dividends; so far, Nepal has received Rs. 8 crores from US to meet expenses during her first five year plan, and also very liberal grants under Point Four Aid and other programmes. The number of Nepali students going to US for higher studies has increased, and US technical experts are doing admirable work in Nepal. The need for further collaboration has made the US Government decide in favour of opening her embassy at Kathmandu.

Similarly, inspite of the monarchy, Moscow today is growing more interested in this little Himalayan Kingdom. Stalin had made the blunder of vetoing Nepal's application for the membership of the United Nations in 1949. But Khrushchev has shown more flexibility: he has not only acknowledged Nepal's sovereignty but also expressed his sincere desire to help the country. Diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union were established in 1956. On April 24, 1959, the Soviet Union joined the USA, India, and China as a major aid

⁷ Full text of the treaty is published in the Current Notes on International Affairs, Australia, Vol. 28, No. 3.

⁸ *The Motherland*, June 2, '59.

donor for Nepal's economic development by agreeing to give her 'free of charge economic and technical assistance' an amount of 30 million roubles. The agreement was announced by a joint communiqué which also envisaged that the two countries would set up embassies in Kathmandu and Moscow respectively. This agreement, though generally welcomed, was severely criticised by a section of the press led by *Kalpana*, a powerful Nepali language daily. It accused the foreign office of following a policy of involving Nepal in the cold-war, deviating from the country's traditional policy of neutrality and non-alignment.⁹

Thus Nepal today is getting more and more involved in the cold-war diplomacy of the post-war era. Once the old barrier of keeping the nation totally secluded was removed, such developments as these were

inevitable. She can no longer escape from her commitments; the world also will no longer leave Nepal alone.

As a small state sandwiched between the two giant powers of Asia, Nepal faces the double problem of keeping free from (i) Asian tension, and (ii) world tension. For her own security, she must not fall foul of either China, or India, and at the same time, she must not become too dependent on the one so as to irritate the other. It is very helpful for a small nation to win international good will, but increasing world consciousness must also teach Nepal the contradictions inherent in the present day world. To achieve a policy of intelligent non-commitment is a very difficult task, but given time and opportunity, Nepal too may develop the traditional Swiss-neutrality in Asia.

⁹ *Kalpana*, Kathmandu, April 26, '59.

Poetry and the art which professes to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together.

SHELLEY

The Novels of Somerset Maugham

By G. V. VISWANATH

SOMERSET MAUGHAM wrote in his *Summing Up*: 'I have no illusions about my literary position. There are but two important critics in my own country who have troubled to take me seriously, and when clever young men write essays about contemporary fiction they never think of considering me.'

This was written nearly twenty years ago, but it stands today, for the attitude of the critics to his work has remained unchanged. On the other hand, his popularity and reputation with the general reading public has consistently increased till now he has become almost a legendary figure. The glossy magazines refer to him with bated breath as the great master, a novelist's novelist, a writer to whom no aspect of human nature remains incomprehensible. It is interesting to read in a large-selling American magazine that Grace Metalious, the author of that sensational best-seller *Peyton Place*, has said that Somerset Maugham is her favourite novelist and *Cakes and Ale* the best book she has read. And now, his announcement from his villa in Italy that he has written his last book, has made headlines in newspapers all over the world.

It seems as though Maugham's elevation to a classic eminence by the reading public is directed with a vengeance to make up for the scant attention he has had from the critics. But the critics remain as impenitent as ever before, and it is very unusual to come across a serious essay or a book dealing with his work: there has been practically no critical writing at all upon

Maugham, either friendly or hostile. Admirers, angered at the critic's refusal to take Maugham seriously, have suggested that this is because of his immense popularity, the imputation being that the serious literary critic is an obscurantist and a pedant. It is hardly necessary to deny this charge, but, strangely enough, it is precisely his qualities and attitudes as a writer which have made him popular, have also prevented him from being anything more than that.

Maugham is not merely popular, in the sense that a writer of detective stories is popular, he is also respected. He attempts to do something more than tell an interesting story; and though he himself insists that he is first and last an entertainer, his appeal to the reader is more than a little due to a particular view of humanity that he expounds in his work. He professes to strip human activity of all pretensions and to lay bare the unpleasant truth. Nothing is sacred to him: every aspect of human behaviour is pierced, and the veil drawn asunder, revealing the ignoble motivations of lust, jealousy, and greed, of the basic man. And as an urbane, civilised individual, Maugham can only give a cynical smile and remark: 'Well, what else can you expect? Mankind has always been so, and will always be so.'

This view of humanity dominates his prolific output of novels, short stories, and plays. It is most readably presented in *Cakes and Ale*, the story of Rosie, the adulterous first wife of Edward Driffield. The construction of this novel is admirable,

and the prose is perfectly polished; the cynicism is light and airy, as though the subject of cynicism is inconsequential; and the weaknesses of the flesh and the foibles of human nature are shown up with an almost indifferent shrug of the shoulders. In a word, it is sophisticated.

The 'slick' technique is not absent from his other novels like *The Moon and Sixpence* or *The Painted Veil*, or from his numerous short stories. But often the veneer of sophistication conceals a more savage disillusionment. Maugham is really sentimentalising over his view of human nature. His protection against life and fortune is to take the lowest view of everything. Then one need not expect anything better; to inflict pain upon oneself to the utmost is to become immune to further pain. A trust in religion and the goodness of humanity would end in pain and disillusionment, but if one is convinced, as one ought to be, that all those who have anything to do with religion are rogues or fools, and that mankind is ignoble, selfish, and stupid, then one has acquired an armour. Maugham's depiction of the seamy side of life, a manner of writing which is called 'realism', in journalistic parlance, is in the nature of a magician's trick, where a curtain is whisked aside to reveal the unpleasant reality that lies behind the appearance. The reality is Maugham's view of human nature, and consequently his stories hardly rise above the nature of their themes. For instance, his celebrated short story, *Rain*, in which a preacher falls a victim to a prostitute in attempting to reform her, leaves only a painfully sordid impression.

Maugham's success is possibly due to the fact that social conditions in this century have unsettled traditional beliefs, making it necessary for large masses of people to acquire an 'armour' against life. But it is certainly due to the gift he has of persuad-

ing himself and his readers that he has seen through everything, that his preoccupations are the only genuine ones and all else is humbug and deception. The reader is made to feel that he has obtained an insight into life, which renders every aspect of it crystal clear and perfectly comprehensible. And this is got at so little cost, too. Maugham offers a short cut where, it is needless to say, no short-cuts are possible.

And what has the critic to say in defence of his refusal to consider Maugham as anything more than a popular writer? Modern criticism is a much more rigorous discipline than was the criticism in the early part of the century, and much more selective. It is difficult to imagine the modern critic who has rejected writers like Bennet and Galsworthy accepting Maugham. Maugham's contemporaries were, among others, Henry James, Conrad, Joyce, and Lawrence. These writers were concerned with the total human situation, and in exploring the possibilities of the language of their time in interpreting it. It is not suggested that these writers have a better philosophy of life than Maugham. It would be difficult to make out a well-defined philosophy of life in, say, the novels of Conrad, and even if that is possible, it is not of much relevance in assessing them. A novel does not become great having a profound viewpoint as its thesis; ideation is unimportant in a work of art; what really matters is emotional perceptiveness. Whatever view of life these writers may have held, it did not interfere with the emotional perceptiveness exhibited in their work. It is quite possible to disagree with Lawrence's convictions about the man-woman relationship and yet find greatness in his novels.

In the case of Maugham, the position, however, is quite different. His treatment of every theme is marred by his simplifying and reducing it to his preconceived view of human nature. When he attempts to

achieve depth, as in *Razor's Edge*, his very earnestness becomes drab and uninteresting. The effort is clearly beyond his capacity, and what really triumphs in the novel is his sophisticated cynicism, and his depiction of the smart set, the social snobbery of the cocktail parties, the glamorous vice of Paris; and against this background, the picture of Larry, the seeker after truth, winning his salvation amongst the seers of India becomes incongruous.

A much earlier novel, *Of Human Bondage*, flounders on the same rock of earnestness. It is a long autobiographical novel, and the fortunes of the principal character are depicted from childhood, and the centre of interest is the young doctor's incurable fascination towards a slut. It is a tale of suffering and gloom. But the attempt to delve deep into the hero's emotions, through his excessive preoccupation with himself, results in nothing more than sentimentality. He gives up Christianity because his naive interpretation of it does not harmonise with his experience of life. He at last comes to the conclusion that life is like a Persian carpet, where, for the sake of harmony, a pattern, however meaningless, has to be woven. Here we have all the makings of a late nineteenth century agnostic and free-thinker. Maugham, in not being more objective in his portrayal of human life, has tied up his art to that none too profound philosophy.

These are his limitations, but he has made wise use of them as his huge success testifies. While he has no concern for language as the poets and the great novelists have, his prose has the lucidity and grace that is reminiscent of the eighteenth century. It is interesting to read what he

has to say about prose style in *The Summing Up*: '...poetry is massive, baroque, and mystical. It demands depth and insight... But prose is a rococo art. It needs taste rather than power, decorum rather than inspiration, and vigour rather than grandeur. It is not an accident that the best prose was written when rococo with its elegance and moderation attained at its birth greatest excellence. For rococo is evolved when baroque has become declamatory, and the world, tired of the stupendous, asks for restraint.'

It is difficult to agree with most of these statements. In the first place, style is not an entity by itself. Then, the evidence of modern literature does not support this antithesis between prose and poetry; the best prose of this century has as much depth and insight as the best modern poetry.

Maugham is only trying to justify his own manner of writing by endowing an ideal prose style with those characteristics that his own prose undoubtedly possesses. But the manner of writing cannot be independent of what is written. Charles Murras wrote: 'The style is everything', including the thought too. The criticism that Maugham's novels simplify the human situation to a level of preconceived superficiality is also the criticism of his prose. He writes colloquial prose with elegance, moderation, and decorum, for he has no complex experience to describe, requiring as in the case of Henry James a complex prose, and no deeper awareness of life to reach through such complexity.

And in not attempting to write what he cannot achieve, he has turned his limitations to good account. He is easy to read.

Socialist Realism

"The article of which the following abridgement is made from a French translation, is the unpublished work of a young Soviet writer. It is, presumably, the first criticism of the official academicism by a Russian writing in his own country that has appeared in the Western Press. For reasons which will be self-evident to the reader, it could not be published in Russia, and must remain anonymous here".

The above note was prefixed to the article by the editor of *Soviet Survey* who kindly sent us an advance copy of it. We are aware that here in India where Marxist ideas and pro-Soviet feelings are widely prevalent among academic and literary circles, some readers may doubt whether this article was really written by a Soviet writer, whether it might not in fact be the workmanship of one of the several Western experts on Soviet affairs or of an emigré "white" Russian writer. If proofs are demanded from us, we have at the moment none to offer except the word of the editor of *Soviet Survey*, who presumably is in a position to provide documentary proof. We did not think it necessary to ask it of him before deciding to share the article with his journal, for, quite independently of the accident of its authorship, we were impressed by the critical acumen and literary worth of the article and by the genuineness of its tone.

—EDITORS, *Quest*

WHAT is socialist realism?...

The most exact definition of socialist realism is that given in the statute of the Union of Soviet Writers:

Soviet Realism is the fundamental method of Soviet literature and criticism: it demands of the artist a true, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Further, it ought to contribute to the ideological transformation and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism.¹

This innocent formulation serves as foundation for the whole edifice of socialist realism. It defines at once the relation of realism in the Socialist era to that of the past and what distinguishes it therefrom: both aim at a representation *in conformity with the real*, but socialist realism introduces a new element, for it seizes upon life *in its revolutionary movement*, and it can form the minds of readers and spectators in function with that perspective; that is, *in the spirit of socialism*. The earlier realists or, as they are often called, the critical realists—because they criticised bourgeois

society—Balzac, Tolstoy, Chekhov, etc. . . . gave a faithful image of reality: but, not being instructed by the genius of Marx, they could not foresee the future victories of socialism and, in any case, they had no idea of the real and concrete ways of attaining to it. That was their tragedy, their 'historical limitation'. Socialist realism, however, is armed with Marx's teaching; it is enriched by the experience of struggles and victories and it has the Communist Party, its friend and very vigilant preceptor, to inspire it. While it is describing present reality it hears the march of history and keeps its eyes upon the future. It sees the 'visible features of communism' invisible to the ordinary eye. It thus constitutes a clear advance upon the art of the past and attains the highest summit of the artistic evolution of humanity, the most realistic realism. . . .

Implicit in the formula in question ('true, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development'), is the notion of an End, of that ideal which embraces all things and to which the *real*—a correct image of which is given—is tending in an ineluctable revolutionary movement. To seize this movement, and to help the reader, by transforming his conscious-

¹ Report of the First Federal Congress of Soviet Writers, 1934, p. 716.

ness, to approach nearer this End—that is the meaning of socialist realism, the art which in our epoch is the most clearly orientated towards a definite goal.

That end is Communism, known in its younger days as Socialism. The poet not only writes verses; by doing so he helps in the building-up of Communism. That is just as natural as to see beside him, working at the same task, the sculptor, the musician, the agronomist, engineer, labourer, policeman, lawyer, and the machines, theatres, cannon and newspapers

It was the genius of Marx that discovered and proved that the earthly paradise of which so many people had dreamt before him was the End assigned to humanity by destiny. . . . At one blow everything fell into place. An iron necessity, a strict hierarchy, had shaped the course of the centuries. The ape stood up on its hind legs and started its triumphal march toward communism. The world of the primitive commune was necessary, so that slavery might come out of it; slavery was necessary before feudalism could appear; feudalism was indispensable to the coming of capitalism, and capitalism so that communism might arise.

You have only to ask a Westerner why the great French Revolution was necessary, to receive a multitude of different answers. But put the same question to any Soviet schoolboy, not to speak of better-informed people, and he will give you an exact and exhaustive explanation: The great French Revolution was necessary in order to clear the way, and hasten the coming of communism. It is a long time since men have had such a clear explanation of the world, perhaps not since the Middle Ages. Our great privilege is to have re-discovered it.

Thus, the universal history of human thought has only existed, so to speak, in

order to prepare the way for 'historical materialism'—that is, for Marxism, the philosophy of communism.

The results are never the same as the end one proposed at first The fires of the Inquisition helped to consolidate the Gospel, but then what was left of it? Nevertheless, both the fires of the Inquisition and the Gospel, both the night of St. Bartholomew and St. Bartholomew himself, add up to one single great Christian culture.

Yes, we are living in communism. It no more resembles what we were seeking than the Middle Ages were like Christ, or than contemporary Western man is like a free superman, or man like God. All the same, there is a certain likeness, is there not?

Yes? It consists in the subordination of all our actions, thoughts, and intentions, to this one End, which perhaps has long been a word empty of meaning but continues to have a hypnotic influence over us, and still propels us forward none knows whither. Obviously, then, art and literature could not fail to find themselves gripped in the vice of that system and becoming transformed, as Lenin foresaw, into 'wheels' and 'screws' of the great machine of State 'Our reviews, whether scientific or artistic, cannot be non-political The strength of Soviet literature, the most progressive literature in the world, is due to its being a literature which has not, and cannot have, any other interests than those of the people, those of the State'.²

In reading that statement in a decree of the Communist Party it is absolutely necessary to remember that, by the interests of the people and the interests of the State—which completely coincide from the State's point of view—one means no other thing than this same communism which penetrates and absorbs everything. 'Literature and art are integral parts of the struggle of the whole people for communism. . . . the highest function of literature and art is to mobilise the people for the winning of new victories in the building-up of communism'.³

² From a decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party dated 14 August 1946.

³ Report of Soviet Writers' Congress.

⁴ *La Tragédie optimiste* was published in *Esprit* (Paris) in February and March 1951.

When certain Western writers deplore the lack of freedom to create, to speak out, etc., they start from their own faith in the freedom of the person, which is the basis of their culture but is organically alien to communist culture. A convinced Soviet writer, a true Marxist, not only cannot accept such reproaches, he quite simply cannot understand them. What liberty can a religious man require of his God? Liberty to praise him still more? . . . For a believer in communism, as N.S. Krushchev has justly remarked in one of his latest declarations upon questions of art, 'for an artist who faithfully serves his people, there is no need to know whether he is free or not in his creative work. The question does not even arise: such an artist knows perfectly how to approach the phenomena of reality; he has no need to 'conform' or to force himself. Faithfully to represent reality according to his communist convictions is a requirement of his soul: he holds firmly to his positions; he affirms and defends them in his works'.

These are the aesthetic and psychological principles it is indispensable to know before one can enter into the secret of Socialist Realism.

II

The works of socialist realism are various in style and subject. But in every one of them, either literally or figuratively, explicitly or covertly, the End is present. Either it is a panegyric of communism and everything connected therewith, or a satire upon its numerous enemies, or else it is a picture of life 'in its revolutionary development'—that is, once again, in its movement towards communism.

Thus, every production of socialist realism is sure, even before it appears, of a happy ending: the end may be sad for the hero, who runs every possible risk in battling for communism, but it is always happy from the point of view of the End

which transcends the individual; and the author, in his own name or in the words of the dying hero, never forgets to make a declaration of faith in our final victory. The lost illusions, broken hopes, and unrealised dreams so characteristic of the literature of other epochs and other systems, are absent from socialist realism. Even in the case of a tragedy, it will be an 'Optimist Tragedy'—to use the title that Vs. Vishnevsky gave to one of his works.⁴ (The heroine perishes at the end, but communism triumphs.)

One has only to compare a few titles from Western literature with those of Soviet literature to be convinced of this. On the one hand: *Journey to the end of Night* (Céline); *Death in the Afternoon* and *For whom the Bell tolls* (Hemingway); *Everyone dies alone* (Fallada); *A Time to Live and a Time to Die* (Remarque); *The Death of a Hero* (Aldington) . . . and on the other hand, in the major key: *Happiness* (Pavlenko); *The First Joys* (Fedin); *It is Good* (Mayakovsky); *The Fulfilment of Desires* (Kaverin); *Light over the Earth* (Babaevsky); *The Conquerors* (Bagritsky); *The Conqueror* (Simonov); *The Conquerors* (Chirikov); *Spring-time in Victory* (Gribachev), etc. . .

That admirable End towards which the action tends is sometimes evoked directly, at the end of the work: Mayakovsky, for instance, brilliantly terminated all his important work written after the Revolution with some speeches on communism or with imaginary scenes in the life of the future and in the communist State. Gorki, too, who under the Soviet régime wrote chiefly about the pre-revolutionary period, concluded the majority of his novels and plays with a vision of the Revolution triumphant.

Even when the writer does not lead up to so grandiose a conclusion, it exists implicitly, symbolically . . . for example, many of our novels and romances hinge upon work in a factory, the construction of a power-station, the administration of agricultural reforms, etc. . . . The economic question

to be resolved . . . is presented as a necessary stage on the way to the supreme End. Seen from such a definite standpoint even technical processes can take on a dramatic tension and provide interest. The reader gradually learns that, in spite of all breakdowns, the machine-tool will be set to work, or that the kolkhoz 'Victory', despite wet weather, is amassing a rich harvest of maize; and he closes the book with a sigh of relief, feeling that we have taken one more step towards communism.

Since communism, in our view, must be the inevitable issue of the historical process, the motive force in many novels is provided by the impetuous course of history working for us . . . our literature is often concerned with history, past or contemporary, and its episodes (civil war, collectivisation, etc.) are also so many stages upon the road we have chosen. For the more distant epochs, the ascent towards communism is unfortunately a little harder to show. However, even in the remotest times, a perspicacious writer will know how to give prominence to the 'progressive' phenomena . . . and as for the 'progressive' men of the past—Peter the Great, Ivan the Terrible, or Stenka Razin—they were well aware, without even knowing the word 'communism', that a luminous future was awaiting us, and are incessantly trumpeting about it in our historical novels, rejoicing the readers' hearts by their astonishing perspicacity.

A good deal of Soviet literature consists of edifying fiction depicting the metamorphosis of individuals or of whole communities into communists. Many books, indeed, are centred upon the psychological and moral revolution which is to produce the ideal man of the future. Gorki's *The Mother* exemplified this—a case of the transformation of an ignorant and passive woman into a conscious revolutionary (written in 1906, this is regarded as the first model of socialist realism). The *Pedagogic Poem* of Makarenko is another example (showing how young criminals are converted to the life of honest work), and yet another is the novel of N. Ostrovski which

tells our young people *How the Steel was Tempered* in the fire of the civil war and then in the cold of the first industrial works of Communism.

As soon as the character is re-educated enough to become completely re-orientated and to be conscious of it, he can enter into the privileged caste, held in general respect, which is that of the 'Positive Heroes'. This is the Holy of Holies of Socialist Realism, its touchstone and its highest realisation.

The positive hero is not just a good man; he is a hero illuminated by the light of the ideal of all ideals: he is a model worthy of imitation by all, a 'peak of humanity from whose height one can see the future', according to Leonid Leonov. He has no faults, or, if he has, only in small doses (he may, to a slight degree, lose his temper now and then), just enough to preserve some verisimilitude, and also in order to have something to eliminate while he is rising to ever higher political and moral heights. However, these faults must not be important, and above all must never take away from his fundamental qualities. These qualities of the positive hero are very difficult to enumerate: ideological conviction, audacity, intelligence, strength of will, patriotism, respect for women, readiness to sacrifice himself, etc. . . . The most essential, of course, are the clearness and definiteness with which he sees the End and strives towards it. Hence the surprising precision of all his actions, his tastes, thoughts, feelings and judgments. He knows, unshakably, what is good and what is bad, he is either 'for' or 'against', and never mistakes black for white. Interior doubts, hesitations, insoluble questions or unfathomable secrets do not exist for him; and in the most entangled problem he finds the solution quite easily, by going straight for the End.

When he appeared for the first time, with Gorki, between 1900 and 1910, and when he publicly proclaimed that 'one must always say yes or no', many people were struck by his assurance and the decisive firmness of his statements, by his

tendency to preach to those around him and pronounce pompous monologues about his own virtue. Clekhov, who had managed to read *The Petty-Bourgeois*, raised an embarrassed eyebrow and advised Gorki to tone down the shriller declarations of his hero. Chekhov feared pretentiousness like the plague, and he thought that all these high-sounding phrases were signs of a boastfulness foreign to the Russian nature.

But Gorki took no notice He understood that this was the man of the future, and that 'they only would come through, the men pitilessly straight and firm like swords' (*The Petty-Bourgeois*, 1901).

A long time has passed since then and many things have changed It was during the thirties that Soviet writers gave up their groups and renounced diversity of literary currents to adopt, almost unanimously, the best and most progressive current of all—Socialist Realism That is why we have seen novels and plays where everything goes on as smoothly as on wheels; if there is any conflict between the heroes it is only between the progressives and the super-progressives, between the good and the still better. Their authors (Babaevsky, Surkov, Sofronov, Virta, Gri-bachev, etc.) were lauded to the skies and held up as examples. It is true that since the 20th CPSU Congress — one hardly knows why—there has been a slight change of attitude towards them, a tendency to look down on them for having made a 'literature without conflict' . . . which is very unjust.

Wishing not to lose face before the West, we sometimes cease to be logical with ourselves, and throw out grand declarations about the diversity of personalities and the plurality of interests in our society, and therefore about the numerous possibilities of conflict and contradiction that literature is supposed to reflect.

Of course we are different from one another by age, sex, nationality, and even intelligence. But anyone who follows the Party line knows very well that these are only variations within the limits of mono-

tony, discords within the framework of unanimity.

We have one single aim—communism; one single philosophy, Marxism; one single art, socialist realism. As it has been well put by a Soviet writer of rather second-rate talent, but on the other hand irreproachable for his political views, '*Russia has chosen her own path, that of unanimity. For thousands of years men have suffered from not thinking the same thing. We Soviets, for the first time, have understood each other; we speak a single language, universally understandable, we think in an identical way about the principal things in life. We are strong in that ideological unity. Therein lies our superiority over other men, rent and dislocated by plurality of thinking . . .*' (V. Ilenkov, *The Great Way* (1949), a novel that won the Stalin prize; italics added).

Can we, in such circumstances, reproach certain writers for having over-emphasised this harmony? If they withdrew from the actual conflicts of life, it was only to take a long view of the future—in other words, to discharge as well as possible what they owe, as writers, to Soviet Realism. Babaevsky and Surkov have not deviated from the sacred principles of our art; they have, on the contrary, developed it logically and organically . . .

If positive heroes have multiplied incredibly, and have far surpassed, in quantity, the other characters whom they overshadow and often replace altogether, this extension is also qualitative: the virtues of the heroes have become extraordinarily developed. As the hero approaches the End, he becomes more and more positive, beautiful, and grand. And, similarly, the sense of his own dignity grows within him, especially when he compares himself with a western man and persuades himself of his own incomparable excellence. '... But the Soviet man is a hundred cubits above the Occidental. He is nearing the summit whilst the other is still marking time at the foot of the mountain'. (This is a sample of the language allotted to simple peasants in

our novels.) . . . We had never had heroes of this kind before. . . . During the last century the hero who was in fashion belonged to quite another type, and all Russian literature lived and thought in quite another style. Compared with the religious fanaticism of our epoch, the nineteenth century was atheistic, tolerant, and without definite orientation. It was soft, porous, feminine, and melancholic, full of doubts and internal contradictions, of remorseful conscience. In the whole of that century, it was perhaps only Chernyshevsky and Pobedonostsev who really believed in God, apart from an indefinite number of mujiks and good women who were true believers; but these were not yet makers of history and culture. Culture was made by a handful of melancholy sceptics who had a thirst for God simply because they did not have God.

The nineteenth century was altogether one of searchings, of wanderings, of aspirations ardent or otherwise, without the power or the will to find a settled place under the sun—torn by uncertainty and dualism. Dostoevsky, who was sorry Russia was so wide—it needed to be made narrower!—made orthodoxy co-exist with nihilism and found room in his soul for all the Karamazovs at once, Alyosha, Mitya, Fedor (some say even Smerdyakov) and no one knows yet which of them predominated. Breadth excludes faith—it was not for nothing that we narrowed ourselves down to Marxism, so realising Dostoevsky's wish—and Dostoevsky well understood that sacrilege; which is why he was forever arguing with himself and longing passionately to put an end to a discussion so offensive to the one God.

Thirst for God, the desire to believe, springs up in desert places. It is not yet faith, and if the desire precedes the faith (Blessed are they who thirst!) it is rather

in the way that hunger precedes a meal. . . . It was the hunger of the nineteenth century, perhaps, that made us in Russia pounce with such gluttony upon the nourishment provided by Marx, and swallow it before we had time to distinguish its taste, odour—and consequences. But the hunger itself was due to a calamitous lack of nourishment; it was hunger for God. That is why it was so exhausting and seemed to us unbearable: it forced us to go to the people, to stagger from radicalism into the ranks of the renegades and back again, and yet to remember that we too, in spite of everything, are Christians. . . .

I want to make peace with Heaven,

I want to love, I want to pray,

I want to believe in the Good.

Who is that weeping? who has such longings for faith? Why, let us see; it is the *Devil of Lermontov*⁵. . . . It is a very Russian Devil, too inconstant in his passion for evil to be completely diabolical and too inconstant in repentance to make his peace with God and rejoin the loyal angels. . . . Do you remember what happened to that Devil? . . . It is the same story with Russian culture throughout the nineteenth century. . . . the slightest contact with God led to denial of Him, and the denial of God aroused a nostalgia for the faith unrealised. . . .

The universal Pushkin underlined this oscillation in *The Prisoner of the Caucasus* and other poems of his youth, before developing all its implications in *Eugene Onegin*. The theme of *Eugene Onegin* is simple, anecdotal: whilst she loves and is ready to belong to him, he is indifferent, but as soon as she is married to another, he loves her passionately and without hope. That commonplace story includes all the contradictions that Russian literature mumbled about ever afterwards right up to Chekhov and Blok. . . .

The 'useless man' is the name usually given to the central hero of this literature—Onegin, Pechorin, Belov, Rudin, Lavretsky⁶ and many others—because, for all the noble impulses stirring within him, this

⁵ A celebrated poem by Lermontov (1842).

⁶ The references are to Pechorin, in the novel *A Hero of our Time*, by Lermontov (1839); Belov, in Herzen's novel *Whose Fault is it?* (1847); Turgenev's *Rudin* (1856); and Lavretsky, the hero of Turgenev's *A Nest of Gentlefolk* (1859).

hero is incapable of finding a meaning in his life, and sets a deplorable example of the man without any deep unity; he is necessary to no one. He is generally of a meditative disposition, prone to introspection and self-flagellation. His life is full of unrealistic projects, his fate is sad, slightly ridiculous. It is a woman who has to play the part of fate in his life.

If only he were a low fellow, incapable of elevated sentiments. But no! this is a worthy man, and the most charming of women bravely gives him her heart and her hand. But instead of rejoicing in this, and looking on the bright side of life, he begins to take unconsidered action and, against his own wishes, he does everything to ensure that the woman who loves him shall never be his. . . . As for the women, all the innumerable Tatianas, Lisas, Natalias, Bellas, Ninas, they are as resplendent as the intact and inaccessible ideal¹ cherished by the Onegins and Pechorins who love them so clumsily and always without success. It was they who in Russian literature were synonymous with the ideal, who stood for the supreme End: their ephemeral nature lent itself to this very well. . . .

In Blok's poem *The Twelve*—a work on the frontier between two hostile or mutually exclusive cultures—one episode puts the full stop to the development of the sentimental theme of the nineteenth century. The Red Guard, Petka, carried away by a fit of anger, accidentally kills his well-beloved, Katka the prostitute. This crime, and the suffering caused by the loss of the loved one, resuscitate the old drama repeated ever since Lermontov's *The Devil*, *Masquerade*, etc., of which there are numerous variants in Blok's own work. But whereas the earlier heroes. . . after having turned their souls inside out, became 'stuck' in a state of incurable remorse, and Petka is going the same way, he ends differently. His more conscious comrades push him forward and re-educate him:

—Sure, he was going to show us

His soul inside out. Get on!

—Keep your dignity!

—Control yourself!

And Petrushka slows down

His hurried pace. . .

He lifts up his head,

He's recovered his gaiety. . .

That is how the new hero is born, such a hero as has never been seen. In the bloody struggle against the enemy, in the sufferings and the labours of the new epoch, he cures himself of sterile reflections and useless twinges of conscience. Proudly 'throwing his head back' and manifestly recovering his gaiety under the flag of the new God whom Blok by force of habit calls Jesus Christ, he marches into Soviet literature.

The useless man of the nineteenth century, who became still more useless in the twentieth, was alien and incomprehensible to the positive hero of the new epoch. . . . 'Who is not for us is against us' was the attitude of the new culture. Where it still paid any attention to this type of ineffectual man, it was to show him that he was by no means useless, but harmful, dangerous, negative. . . .

This revaluation of the useless man, and his rapid transformation into a negative character, were in full swing during the twenties, the time when the positive hero was shaped. When the two were put side by side, everyone saw clearly that there could be no aimless hero, there were only people for or against; and that the useless man was, all things considered, only an enemy in disguise, a vile traitor to be unmasked and punished without delay. That is what Gorki wrote in *The Life of Klim Samguin*, Fadayevev in *The Nineteen*, and many others elsewhere. K. Fedin, in *The Towns and the Years*, emptied his heart of the last drops of pity for the formerly enchanting hero. The one discordant note was, perhaps, *Quiet Flows the Don*, in which Sholokhov portrays the tragic destiny of a useless man, Grigori Melekhov, and bids him a fully sympathetic farewell. But because Melekhov was a man of the people and not of the intelligentsia, people winked at this. Nowadays, this novel is

regarded as a model of socialist realism—one which, of course, has no imitators.

Meanwhile, the other useless men who wanted to save their lives renounced their past and were rapidly re-educated into positive heroes. As one of them said lately: 'There is nothing in the world more hateful than neutrality . . . Yes, yes, I am Red! Red, devil take you!' (K. Fedin, *An Extraordinary Being*, 1949). The malediction is not now aimed at the Reds, of course, but at the Whites.

Thus did the hero of nineteenth century Russian literature perish ingloriously.

In their theoretical works and articles, Soviet writers sometimes use the terms 'romanticism' or 'revolutionary romanticism.' Gorki said a good deal about the fusion of realism with romanticism; he always had a nostalgia for 'the exalted illusion that uplifts,' and maintained that the artist had a right to embellish life by painting it better than it is. These appeals were not fruitless, although . . . obviously, one cannot frankly avow that what one wants is a beautiful falsehood. No, no, God forbid! We are against illusion, against idealisation; we want nothing but the truth, but besides that, we depict life 'in its revolutionary development' . . . we do not want to prettify life; it has no need of that to be beautiful. We do not mean to prettify it but only to show the seed of the future that it contains. 'Revolutionary romanticism'—which is equivalent to this seed of the future, this 'revolutionary development' is actually inherent in this life that we represent truthfully, and which is romantic in the highest degree . . .

Truth to tell, romanticism is much to our taste, and Gorki knew it: he tends towards the ideal, he makes wishes pass for realities, loves pretty knick-knacks, is not afraid of fulsome phrases, etc. . . . That is why he has always had a certain success among us. Yet romanticism . . . for all the status he has conferred on it, has occupied a much less important place in our art than might have been expected. It makes itself

felt chiefly in the beginning of socialist realism; and in its maturity, during the last thirty years, the romantic tinge grows rather faint.

Romanticism is intimately linked with the *Sturm und Drang* period of Soviet literature—the first five years of the Revolution when life and art were dominated by unbridled passions, and when the ardours of that surge towards a happy future had not become strictly regulated by governmental policy . . . Both by those who took part in the Revolution and by those born after it, its memories are cherished as sacredly as those of a dead mother. It is easier for us to allow that everything since then is a betrayal of it than to speak of the Revolution itself with reproach or suspicion.

We are living between the past and the future, between the Revolution and Communism . . . We have had the Revolution; how could we dare disavow it or blaspheme it? We are psychologically 'jammed' between the two. And if—supposing it imaginable—our enemies overcame us and made us go back to the pre-revolutionary style of life (or join in Western democracy—it matters little), I am persuaded that we should start all over again from the previous point of departure—the Revolution.

While working at this article I have many times found myself dropping into irony—that literary indecency! But at the same time I was trying to avoid such expressions as 'Soviet power!' I preferred to replace them by synonyms—'our State', the 'socialist system', etc. . . . For it is enough, for me, to pronounce the words 'power of the Soviets' immediately to imagine the Revolution, the storming of the Winter Palace, the crepitating ribbons of the machine guns, the bread cards, the siege, etc.; and to speak of all that with disrespect would make me sick. If I have something against the socialist State—and not so very much, either—I have nothing whatever against the Soviets. Is that odd? Perhaps; that is just where the romanticism comes in.

Yes, we are all romantics about our past.

And yet, the farther we get away from it and the nearer to Communism, the weaker is the romantic glamour that the Revolution imparts to our art. That is understandable; romanticism corresponds to only a part of our nature, and sometimes is even opposed to it. 'The madness of the brave, that is the wisdom of life', wrote the young Gorki. It is quite true that, just when the Revolution was happening, madmen were necessary. But can one call a five year plan 'the madness of the brave?' Or the leadership of the Party—or even, for that matter, a Communism arriving inevitably by the logical march of history? When every point is thought out, reasonably foreseen, and divided into corresponding paragraphs? A queer madness. H'm; you hadn't read your Marx, comrade Gorki!

When it sets up an ideal, romanticism has not enough sense of the obligatory; it takes its wishes for reality. That is not bad, but it smacks of the arbitrary, of the subjective. Yet the desire is real, because things ought to be so. Our life is beautiful, not only because we wish it so, but because it ought to be: we have no choice.

All these arguments, more or less unconsciously have led, little by little, to a drying-up of the ardent current of romanticism. The stream of art has congealed under the ice of a classicism which, being more definite, rational, finally more theological, has supplanted romanticism. As early as 1922, A. Effros, in *The Messenger on the Threshold*, declared that 'The classical spirit has already come in upon us from all sides. Everyone is breathing it, but people either know not how to distinguish it, or what to call it, or they are quite simply afraid to speak of it'...

The first heroes of Soviet literature marched to the assault of capitalist fortresses in shoes of bark worn to shreds, their mouths full of oaths. They were coarse and natural Now they have an air of correctness, they have good manners and are neatly dressed. If they sometimes lack taste, that only denotes the national and

social character of our classicism, born of the Russian democracy. But neither the authors nor their heroes have any doubts about it; they do their very best to be handsome, polite, cultivated, and they want to do 'the done thing' down to the smallest detail.

Under the white ceiling, the ornamental lustre twinkled with its pendants of transparent glass threaded like beads of ice. The tall silvered columns sustained a dazzlingly white dome, spangled with festoons of electric lights.

What is this? A palace of the Tsars? No, it is an ordinary club in a little provincial town.

On the platform, near the gleaming wing of the piano, stood Rakitin, dressed in a dark suit, his necktie flowing like a blue river down his chest

You think this is a singer, some fashionable tenor? Not at all; he is a worker for the Party. Now let us look at the people. They are not swearing, fighting, or drinking like fish. That was all right formerly. Nowadays, if they drink, it is at a wedding breakfast around a table loaded with delicate viands, and then in response to a toast:

Casting a glance around at the guests, Terenti, who was slightly inebriated, coughed discreetly into his hand, and smoothed with trembling fingers the silvery waves of his beard.

—First of all, let us congratulate the young couple and drink to their health; may they beautify the earth!

The guests assented with a friendly hubbub, and a crystal clinking of little glasses.

—May they honour their parents!

—May they have children with good health!

—May they be a credit to the kolkhoz!

The novel from which these quotations are taken, E. Maltsev's *With all his Heart* (1949), is similar to dozens and hundreds of others. It is a sample of classical prose of mediocre literary quality. These banalities have long pervaded our literature, passing from one author to another without much change.

Every style has its distinction. But classicism, more than others, is prone to

clichés, to pedantic observance of definite norms and canons. It is one of the most tenacious of styles. It brings in new elements or adopts them chiefly at the beginning; later on, it strives faithfully to follow the established models and is averse from any search for new forms, experimentation or originality

Mayakovsky was too revolutionary to become traditional. Even now, he is allowed less for his poetry than for his political significance. In spite of all the panegyrics heaped upon him, his rhythms, his images, and his languages seem extraordinarily audacious to most contemporary poets. Those who want to follow in his footsteps only copy his manner; unable to seize what is essential; his audacity, invention, and passion. They copy his verses without following his example. Perhaps this is because Mayakovsky was the first classicist, right at the beginning; and, having no predecessors, he built on virgin ground Or perhaps because he had genius; in any case, his poetry is filled all through with the breath of novelty: a breath that vanished from our literature with his death.

True, geniuses are not born every day, and the state of art rarely satisfies contemporaries. Still, it must be confessed that, as many others have said, our literature has done nothing but deteriorate for the last two or three decades. As they have developed and come to creative maturity, K. Fadeyev, I. Ehrenburg, V. Ivanov and many others have written worse and worse. Since our writers in the mass went over to socialist realism—early in the thirties—literature has languished. Some rare flashes such as those at the time of the Patriotic War have not saved it.

For this contradiction between the victory of socialist realism and the feeble quality of literary production, socialist realism is often blamed, from a belief that great art is impossible within its limitations, that it is deadly to art in general. Mayakovsky, first of all, enables us to

refute this Art does not fear dictatorship, nor severity nor repression, not even conservatism and the cliché. Art, when it has to be so, can be strictly religious, or stupidly official, or without individuality and still be great art. We enthuse before the style of Ancient Egypt, or Russian iconography, or folklore. Art is fluid enough to fit into the Procrustean bed that history offers it. But there is one thing it cannot endure—eclecticism.

Our misery is that we are not sufficiently convinced of socialist realism; that, after having obeyed its cruel laws, we fear to go on right to the end of the road we ourselves have traced out. Were we only less cultivated, no doubt it might be easier for us to attain the degree of integrity indispensable to the artist. But we have been to school, we have read different books and learnt all too well that there were remarkable writers before us—Balzac, Maupassant, Tolstoy . . . and one other; let us see, who was that? Ah, yes! Chekhov! . . . *That* has undone us. We wanted to become famous, to write like Chekhov at the first attempt. From that unnatural liaison proceeded monsters.

In the very term 'socialist realism' there is a manifest, insurmountable contradiction. An art that is socialist—which means religious, orientated to a unique End—cannot be created by the literary means called 'realist' in the nineteenth century. A picture perfectly true to the real, including all the details of everyday life, the psychological analyses, the landscapes, portraits, etc., does not lend itself to depiction in a language of theological speculation. If socialist realism really wants to rise to the level of the great world-cultures and create its 'Communiada' there is only one way—to have done with realism; to renounce its pitiful, and anyway futile efforts to create a socialist *Anna Karenina* or *Cerisaie*. When once it no longer wants to conform to a reality that is non-existent for it, it will be able to express the grandiose, unbelievable meaning of our epoch.

Unfortunately, that development is hardly likely. The events of the last few years have driven our art along a road of half-measures and half-truths. The death of Stalin dealt a mortal blow to our system of religious aesthetic, and to replace this by reviving the worship of Lenin is difficult. Lenin is too much like an ordinary man, he has too realistic an aspect—small, bald, and in civilian garb. Stalin, now, he had been specially created for the hyperbole that awaited him. Mysterious, omniscient, omnipotent, he was the living monument of our epoch and only lacked one quality to become God—immortality.

Ah, if only we had been more intelligent; if only we had surrounded his death with miracles! We should have given it out on the radio that he was not dead but had gone up into heaven, from whence he was still looking at us, silently, over his mystical moustache. That his relics had cured paralytics and people possessed with devils. And children, before going to bed, would have been praying by their windows, with their eyes turned towards the bright stars of the celestial Kremlin.

But we did not listen to the voice of conscience. Instead of betaking ourselves to prayer, we set to work to unmask the 'cult of personality' that we had created. We ourselves have sapped the foundations of that classical masterpiece which, had we waited but a little longer, might have rivalled the pyramids of Cheops or the Apollo Belvedere, those treasures of universal art. . . .

The strength of a theological system consists in its permanence, its harmony, its order. Once you admit that God has carelessly sinned with Eve and that, jealous of Adam, he sent that unhappy husband away to labour at land reclamation, then the whole conception of the creation of the world is done for, and it is impossible to revive the faith. . . .

Meanwhile, our art is marking time between a realism and a classicism, both incomplete. . . . In the panegyrics, vulgarity

and tartaffery sound more and more clearly; and the writers who now attain success are those who describe our victories in a fashion as consistent as possible with reality, and our failures with tact, delicacy, and in a fashion as inconsistent as possible with reality. Any work that errs on the side of 'excessive verisimilitude', of 'realism' is a fiasco. That is what happened to Dudintsev's novel *Not by Bread alone*, which aroused much comment and was publicly anathematised for having sullied our shining Soviet reality.

But is it possible that the old, good-and-honest 'realism' can be the only secret heresy that is tempting Russian literature? Is it possible that all the lessons we have had are lost, and that we want nothing better than a return to the naturalistic school and a critical orientation? Let us hope that is not the whole story, and that the demand for truth will not obstruct the work of thought and imagination.

At present, I place my hopes in a phantasmagorical art, which would have hypotheses instead of a goal, an art in which the grotesque would replace the realistic in the description of everyday life. This is what would best respond to the spirit of our epoch. May the unearthly imaginations of Hoffmann and Dostoevsky, of Goya and Chagall, of Mayakovsky (the most socialist realist of all), as well as those of many other realists and non-realists — may these teach us how to express truth with the aid of the absurd and the fantastic!

In losing our faith, we have not lost enthusiasm before the metamorphoses of God that are taking place before our eyes, before the monstrous peristaltic upheaval of his entrails and his cerebral circumvolutions. We know not where to go; but, having understood that there is nothing to be done about it, we begin to imagine that we must create enigmas, put forward suppositions. Shall we perhaps invent something astonishing? But that will no longer be Socialist Realism.

SHORT STORY

Mother

By C. L. NAHAL

JANAK and I have known each other long. We belong to the same town, were together at the same school, the same college. After graduation our lives drifted apart. He joined an oil company and went to Persia. I continued with the academic career, went through the Partition, and finally settled down as a teacher in a university town. I am still there.

Though our association stretches over years, we have remained apart temperamentally. He was a great sportsman, the best boxer in the town, daring and dashing. I was a quiet type, shy, reserved, with an endless passion for books. But we were both great lovers of long walks. That was the only form of exercise to which I resorted. Walks of miles and miles, undertaken not merely for the fun of it, but to absorb what I read, to muse. As time passed I devised and developed other methods of assimilating knowledge. But the love for walking tours remained. To forget oneself in the fresh air, to meet simple people,—it became an object in itself. And it was here that Janak and I came the closest to each other. He too was a giant on his legs. He never got tired, never complained. And between the two of us we organised a number of hikes to various places of interest, sometimes by ourselves, sometimes with a bigger group; formed a mountaineering club at the College with myself as its President; walked endurance tests.

It was a sheer delight, therefore, when one day I received a letter from him. He asked amongst other things, if I were free to go on a hitch-hike with him. That was after a lapse of more than a decade. The letter-head read: Janak Kumar Bhatia, Representative, Tehran Oil Company, Hyderabad. Briefly he mentioned his experiences abroad, and how he had returned to India as the agent of a foreign firm. He was still single, rather bored, and feeling lonely. From a common friend he had met the very first day he landed in Bombay, he had obtained my particulars. He had learnt that I too was still unmarried, and presumably, feeling bored and lonely. So would I care to take a short holiday to some quiet place where we could be on our own and talk about the good old days. He left the choice of the place to me, making only one condition,—that we must hitch-hike to it.

And that's how we reached Rishikesh. It is a small place on the banks of the Ganges, directly on the route to many sacred places of the Hindus in the Himalayas. The railway and the road-link with the rest of India terminates here. Beyond, there is a fair-weather track leading upto the borders of Tibet. The town is a collection of a few hundred houses, placed in the centre of a big valley. There are towering hills on all sides, and there is no noise except the gurgling sound of the river.

We had decided to walk from Delhi onwards, a distance of about two hundred miles. Our reunion at Delhi railway station was a memorable one. Our trains brought us from different directions almost simultaneously. We embraced and thumped each other, and repeatedly asked, 'how are you?', 'how are you?' Janak had not changed much physically. Short and stocky, he had the old mischievous look in his eyes. His face looked tired, worn out. But he was bubbling with energy. He called me affectionately, 'Prahlad!', and I said, 'Hullo, Janak!' But within a few minutes we came down to our nicknames and were shouting at each other. We bought a ticket for my servant who was proceeding straight to Rishikesh with our beddings and a number of other items, like a gramophone, a parcel of books, two suitcases full of clothes, a chessboard and chessmen, playing cards, and the like. 'We might as well be comfortable, while we are there,' we had agreed. After seeing the servant to his train, we left with our small bags hung on our backs, feeling gay and young.

The journey on road was not very interesting. May is burning hot in the north. But that gave us the advantage of moving light. We were lucky on the first lap of our trip, when we reached Dehradun the next afternoon. From Dehradun to Rishikesh we could not find a single private vehicle. We were determined not to spend anything on transport. So we trekked fifteen miles and spent the night in a lonely hut by the roadside, where the only occupant, an old man, was glad to have company. The following day a truck carrying grain to Rishikesh took us there by breakfast time.

Though it had been enjoyable meeting Janak after such a long time, it soon became apparent that he had not developed mentally. As a youth, he had never gone near serious society. While some of us

were busy winning debating trophies and quiz competitions, he kept himself aloof and made fun of the 'book-worms'. He was most of the time non-serious, gay and full of mirth. We said he had a queer sense of humour. But it was good, it made you laugh. Vulgar, pointless, and often stupid, he knew how to make you join him in all things.

I had gone over all this in my mind when I received his letter. I had felt a warm glow coming over me. I thought it would be good to meet this great boxer, the romantic philanderer, and onetime companion of mine.

But I was somewhat disappointed. Our conversation never drifted to the serious topics of life, and I found him as irresponsible and immature as ever. He seemed to have had a fairly comfortable life in Persia. Plenty of rest; not much work; good salary. But he did not appear to have gathered much wisdom. He was polished, but superficial. He reminded me of army officers who work most of their way through cool, neat-looking offices and clean, well-kept bungalows, and end up like them, structures of bricks, with no feelings, no understanding, except glitter, neatness and shadows.

On top of that he had become singularly cynical. The very first evening of our arrival at Rishikesh we went for a stroll to the river-side. It was dusk, and hazy figures could be seen entering the water and emerging after a dip. Heh Gangai; Hari Om. The riverside was filled with such cries. We could also hear the bells of a temple nearby. We walked up the stream and stumbled across shrouded human beings, squatting, meditating in isolation. 'What bunk!' said Janak suddenly.

'Bunk what?'

'All this'.

He motioned towards the river, the

temples and the human beings, the darkness.

I was profoundly shocked. Rishikesh occupies a very sacred place in the Hindu mind. As the name implies, the town is a gathering of rishis, saints. Men and women for centuries have been going there to find some peace of mind, some sense. And it has essentially retained its sombre atmosphere through all the vicissitudes of life. Wars, famines, displays of wealth, these monuments of human decay and deception appear to have passed it by without disturbing its peace. But we did not discuss this and returned to the Rest House where we were staying. Later when I asked him how he thought it was all bunk, he raised his eyebrows, said 'well', and kept quiet.

The Rest House is situated about half a mile out of town. The river here has cut itself a deep gorge in the undulating valley, in the form of a big S. The Rest House occupies a place of vantage about three hundred feet above the water level. There is a big compound circling the building and a lot of shady trees. A vast expanse of the wide valley over which the river flows is visible from here. It looks like a big python slumbering.

We occupied one half of the small, concrete bungalow. That meant a bedroom, a kitchen, and a bath-room. The other set was vacant. For a while we sat in the compound watching the lights quiver in the distance. Later the sumptuous dinner put us in a wonderful mood. We played the gramophone, listened to Lata and Sehgal and joined loudly in most of the melodies.

It was about ten when we heard a car coming to a halt outside on the gravel. It appeared to be an old vehicle, with dim lights, and a lot of queer sounds which ended when it stopped. Soon human voices and the noise of luggage being put in the veranda were heard.

'Some visitors seem to have come', said Janak and strolled towards the wire-gauze door of the room to have a look.

'By God, she is pretty!' he cried, suddenly turning.

'Pregnant', he added, looking out again. 'But *very* pretty'.

I listened to his commentary in silence. Soon the other portion in the Rest House was opened up and the new-comers settled down. Their bedroom adjoined ours and we could hear the movements of life there. We, however, didn't attach much importance to this arrival and soon were asleep.

Later we came to know our neighbours better. They were Kauls from Lucknow. Originally from Kashmir, the family had shifted to its present environment centuries ago. The couple looked highly cultured and refined. They were big zamindars and had had hundreds of acres of land at one time. With the abolition of zamindari by the state, they were left financially depleted but still quite rich. The gentleman was about thirtyfive, thin and tall, graying. The young lady was very young, hardly twenty. She appeared to be his second wife; or, probably, he had married late. She was ravishingly beautiful. Extremely fair, tall, it appeared her features had been cut in wax first to give them a better mould. She had big, almond eyes and long eye-lashes, just like what one sees in Indian painting but never in actual life. Her whole body looked cool, preoccupied, as she sat in the easy chair looking at the river. Her rounded arms and hands, her small feet, gave her an unearthly charm. Her pregnancy, which leaves most of the women ugly, famished-looking, had added another attractive curve to her body. It was in a fairly advanced stage and prevented her from quick and sudden movements. So she glided about the place with endearing softness. She seemed to be completely at peace with the world.

The zamindar introduced us to her. She regarded us as intruders upon her privacy and after the initial conversation kept herself aloof. The zamindar too was not a very communicative sort. He explained that they were visiting some holy places and would be in Rishikesh for a couple of days. After that our intercourse was confined to occasional greetings when we met, while he went about the various shrines and temples along with his wife.

Janak almost fell in love with the young woman. He described her physical advantages in superlatives, and often, during the course of the day, referred to her. It was not an innocent type of devotion a lonely young man may have for someone beyond his reach. It was infatuation. He went over her body in detail; thought of her neck, her breasts, her legs. And he would present her to me like this in his impassioned, revealing language. He mentioned the child in her body and how it must have stretched beyond proportion her fair belly, creating new depths and cavities.

In a burst of profanity he said late in the evening, 'I would like to lie with her in her present condition'. He added, in the same breath, 'It would be fun sleeping with a pregnant woman!'

'Shut up!' said I, with irritation.

He looked up at me and smiled.

The couple was not aware of the dirt in our minds. They were away most of the day, performing religious rites, probably praying for the birth of a son. We too visited places. Muni-ki-raiti, Lakshman Jhoola, Swarag Ashram. At Swarag Ashram I entered into an interesting conversation with a sadhu on the theory of Karma and rebirth. Janak looked stubbornly on at the sadhu and stood apart.

We soon wandered down to the *ghats*, where a vast congregation was, as usual, bathing in the holy river. It was joined by

a number of permanent inhabitants of the town, washing their dirty clothes. Scantly dressed men and women, of all sizes and shapes, were scattered over a long stretch of the area. Janak and I plunged into the river, swam to the deep water, and lay panting on the sand afterwards.

'Ah! That's fine', said Janak, 'I like it'. He was flushed with the exercise.

'These fellows have a really good time', he said, after some time, pointing towards a pandit who was helping a semi-nude young woman with some rites in ankle deep water.

'In what way?' I asked testingly.

'In every way!' he replied, staring at me. 'Look at that bastard. He is paying more attention to her bare thighs and her uplifted skirt than to the *mantras* that he is reciting. I am sure, he could easily make her lift the skirt even higher with a promise of a future heaven'.

'Don't be vulgar, Janu'. I was getting fed up with this constant display of indecency.

'It is not vulgarity, brother, it's a fact'.

'I have no mind to listen to your facts', said I.

But he went on and gave me a heated account of what he had seen abroad. He talked of the war, the closeness into which men and women were thrown, the intimate situations to which this closeness easily led. He said women were good for only one thing. 'And that's the bed'. He spat in derision and sat up to go back.

'Well, Janu', said I calmly, 'it only shows that you have not met a single decent woman in your life. At least no one has ever given you genuine love.'

'Oh, be quiet!' His tone was extremely contemptuous.

This provoked me into an equally heated outburst. I said that the things he talked about happened everywhere in the world. There were probably bad people in this

town as well. But why not accept the good before us. There was plenty of it there.

"There is no Good", he said.

Our relations remained slightly strained after that.

The next day we were out from morning till evening. We went on a ten mile hike to Narindranagar, a village in Gharwal district. We returned tired and exhausted, but happy. After our meal Janak went out into the compound for 'a little walk'. Shortly afterwards I could hear him in conversation with the zamindar and his wife. There was subdued feminine laughter, mixed with the loud male roaring. I knew he must be trying to impress them.

He returned mystified.

"Did you hear the wonderful voice of the lady?" he asked.

"Yes".

After a few expressions of admiration and wonder, he came down to: 'It would be fun sleeping with her these days'.

"Well, I am glad, you cannot!" I said.

I then ignored him and busied myself with Father Brown stories, which I carried with me. Janak sat listless for a while, and then I was surprised to see him go on all fours and strain his eyes to the door dividing our bedrooms.

"What are you doing, Janak?" I threw the book and got up.

"I am going to watch them", he said, pointing towards the other room. His voice sounded hollow, but intent.

"Don't behave like a child", I said gently, and tried to push him away from the door.

He stood his ground and said peevishly, "You mind your business. I wish to see what they are doing".

I knew it was useless to argue. I had been with him for enough days to know better. So I went back to my book, turned my back on him, and started reading.

Janak remained like that for the major part of an hour. Occasionally he got up, walked the length of the room, and then nervously sat down before the door again.

It had grown fairly late by now. Suddenly Janak hissed, 'I say, come soon'.

He sounded urgent. I looked towards him but did not get up. He ran to me, snatched the book and threw it away, blew out the lantern and dragged me to the door. When I wanted to speak he 'hished' me and shut my mouth.

We crouched before the door. There were many small holes there and he pushed me before one of them. He whispered, 'He is going to have her' and glued himself to the next hole. The uncanny communication of the news numbed me with surprise and curiosity. I couldn't detach myself from the place. I moved closer, pressed myself against the woodwork and looked beyond.

I will never forget what I saw there. It was a small room, of the same size as ours, shorn of curtains or much furniture. There were two beds, one on the side next to ours, the other near the entrance door; a table and a chair in the far end; that's all. On the table the lantern burnt low, but it illuminated all the objects. Neatly piled on the chair were male and female garments. The man and the woman were on the bed nearer to us. The lady was lying and the zamindar sat on the edge, holding her hand. He was kissing her.

It looked like a page out of some remote past. The soft light, stillness, love. Moving away from the door was impossible; and we stayed there, watching.

The zamindar released her lips and sat up.

"Mother!" he said, looking at her affectionately.

She smiled, stroked his hair, and came closer. She felt very proud when he called her so.

The man slowly moved his hand over the fat, round belly.

'My child', he said softly.

She smiled again, and nodded.

'My son!'

She got up, kissed him on the cheek, and lay down once more.

The man lifted up her long shirt to reveal the belly. It was pinkish white, with big, blue veins running along it. He started kissing it all over: to the left, to the right, centre, up, down. She lay smiling, withdrawn. There was no passion in her eyes, or limbs; nor in his.

'A month more to go', she spoke for the first time.

'Yes, mother, a month'.

'How strange!'

The man didn't ask 'strange what?' They seemed to sense each other's thoughts.

'And when he comes out, I am going to give him a good spanking'. She laughed girlishly.

'Why, mother?' He was trying to show surprise, but it appeared he knew the answer.

'What a lot of trouble all these months! Pains, cramps, lack of appetite'.

'Yes, mother'.

'Not a day without something or the other wrong!'

'Yes, mother!'

They were quiet for a long while after that, absorbed.

The man lifted her shirt up to the chin. She appeared indifferent. Her breasts were small, circular discs, swollen with liquid. He put his head on them, and rested there. She put her arm around him and drew him up closer. She kissed him on his head. Finally he lifted himself on his elbows and said,

'But remember one thing, mother, always'.

'What?' She looked worried, as if there

could still be a secret between them which she didn't know.

'Don't neglect me, when the child comes!'

'How you talk!' She covered his mouth with her delicate hands.

He bent low and kissed the dark nipples.

'You are my god,' she said, 'do you know it?'

'Over and above everything else', she continued.

The man pulled her shirt down, patted her on the cheek, and said, 'You must sleep now, darling'.

'Yes', she answered, but did not release his hand. 'Pray for the child', she said.

'I always keep praying for him, mother'.

'I too', she added softly.

'I say, please God, let him be a great man'. She went on, after a short pause, 'I want him to be a big engineer'.

'No, a doctor', he said with a laugh.

'Now don't you argue with me on that', she said loudly, as if annoyed, 'I want my first son to be an engineer'. And then more kindly, 'The second one a doctor. All right, eh?'

'As you say, mother'. The man was laughing.

'I will give you many sons!' She said generously.

'I want you only'.

'Let's pray'.

The man kneeled down by the side of the bed and hastily mumbled a few words to pacify her.

'Now sleep, love', said he, rising.

'Yes. Do all children come like this?' she suddenly asked.

'Yes, mother'.

'With pain and cramps and unrest?'

He nodded affectionately.

'And they don't even remember it afterwards!' she said in a tired tone.

'No, mother', he kissed her, covered her

up with a sheet and tucked it in properly on all sides.

'Now sleep, mother', he said kindly.

She heaved a deep sigh and rolled on to one side.

The man stood for some minutes watching her, dimmed the light, and went to his bed. After a few minutes absolute stillness reigned in the house.

We didn't talk to each other after that. We didn't look at each other.

During the night the Zamindar's wife had premature labour, and by the morning she was dead.

Everything went wrong during the childbirth, we learnt later.

It was a tremendous shock to us. With mute horror we followed her dead body to the pier by the side of the Ganges. In a few more hours the little breasts, the round arms and the belly, the blue veins, the mother's smile, they were all consum-

ed by fire. Nothing was left of her. And the many sons that she had promised her husband were also dead and gone. We felt a vacuum around us. The place hung heavy with her maternity which had now vanished into the air, permeating it with her softness, her hopes, her fears. It was too much for us to bear, and we left Rishikesh in the evening.

But the mother had wrought a miracle. During the return journey Janak was no longer sneering, or vulgar. He didn't generalise on anything; he remained extremely morose. Six months after that he quietly got married to a young lady suggested to him by his parents. He sent me a card, but I couldn't attend the wedding owing to professional pre-occupation. I have met the couple frequently after that. They appear to be quite happy.

The mother had wrought another miracle as well. She made me a disbeliever. Her sudden, meaningless extinction closed many doors in my mind which were previously open. They remain closed till today.

DISCUSSION

I. The Future of World History *

By FRITZ STERNBERG

Marx and our own Time

KARL MARX was 'refuted' in literally hundreds of books published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and one of his chief critics, the Austrian economist, E. Böhm-Bawerk, even sought to prove that Marx was 'scientifically finished'. Henceforth he would live on only in a certain kind of superficial propaganda literature.

Well, Marx's work outlived Böhm-Bawerk, and it is still very much alive today, in the second half of the twentieth century. Böhm-Bawerk's best-known pupil, Josef Schumpeter, devoted the first part of his own magnum opus, 'Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy', to 'the Marxist doctrine'; and at the beginning of this book he writes:

'Most of the creations of the intellect or fancy pass away for good after a time that varies between an after-dinner hour and a generation. Some, however, do not. They suffer eclipses, but they come back again, and they come back not as unrecognizable elements of a cultural inheritance, but in their individual garb and with their personal scars which people may see and touch. These we may call the great ones—and it is no disadvantage of this definition that it links greatness to vitality. Taken in this sense, this is undoubtedly the word to apply to the message of Marx. . . .'

Yes, the work of Marx is a great creation.

But he died without completing it. Of the whole great work he envisaged, only the first volume of 'Capital' appeared during his lifetime. The second and the third volumes of 'Capital' and the four volumes of 'Theories of Surplus value' appeared only after his death.

If Marx had been granted a long span of life in which to complete his work would these books have remained unchanged? This is very improbable. In his introduction to the third edition of 'Capital', which appeared only after Marx's death, Friedrich Engels wrote:

'It was at first Marx's intention to revise the text of the greater part of the first volume, to clarify certain theoretical points, and to introduce others, and also to supplement the historical and statistical material in order to bring it up to date. His state of health, and the necessity of completing the revision of the second volume for publication, prevented him from doing this'.

Marx's work is thus a torso only, because important parts of it were not prepared for publication by him and were issued only after his death, and because other important parts were not even worked out by him in draft. For example, and in particular, those parts which would have dealt with the clash between capitalism and other economic and social systems—and, be it noted, not the clash in the early days of the rise of the capitalist system, but the clash at a time when it had begun its victorious advance all over the world, when it was extending the periphery of the

* This is Fritz Sternberg's reply to Herbert Luthy's review-article on his book "Capitalism and Socialism on Trial" published in *Quest* 20, Jan-March 1959.

capitalist mode of production, are missing altogether.

Further, Marx's work is incomplete, because, as we have it, it deals primarily with European capitalism; that is to say with capitalism developing in its own country of origin and at the same time destroying feudalism and the pre-capitalist forms of production—and not, for example, with U.S. capitalism, which expanded in an almost uncolonised continent.

Incidentally, Marx was quite clear in his mind that the results of his analysis of European capitalism applied only to that particular form of capitalism. In a letter dated March 8th 1881 (two years before his death) to Vera Sasulitch, Marx quotes a passage from the French edition of 'Capital' which did not appear in the German edition, namely: 'The "historical necessity" of this movement is thus expressly confined to the countries of Western Europe'.

When Marx wrote his books, American capitalism was still in its infancy; agriculture was still dominant in the United States, which was still engaged in the process of economically conquering its own continent.

Sociologically speaking one can say that this process was completed more or less about the time of the First World War, when the industrial production of the United States had become as great as that of Great Britain and Germany—the two next industrial countries—put together. Therefore in all my own books, and in particular in 'Capitalism and Socialism on Trial', in which U.S. capitalism is analysed in relation to its own specific conditions, I never fail to point out that when Marx was dealing with capitalism in Great

Britain and in Europe; he was not analysing capitalism *per se*. And further therefore I deal concretely with the circumstance that the expansion of capitalism all over the world affected its own social structure. In both these analyses the Marxist methods and their further development proved extremely fruitful.

In dealing with my book* Herbert Luthy criticises the Marxist method, saying:

'...Marx, like the classical authors of economic liberalism, based his analysis on an ideal type of integral, uniform and autonomous competitive economy, with no structural elements other than private property and the free market; that is, by *disregarding any established political, social and national framework*'. (italics mine. F.S.)

This was, says Luthy, an abstraction even at that time, but nevertheless a useful working hypothesis. But the situation had changed even in the seventies:

'However, in the decades following 1870, the economic structures of these countries, even of those which were the most liberal, departed so far—and in so irreversible a way—from this archetype that an analysis of the latter contributes little more to an understanding of the actual evolution than knowledge of elementary mechanics helps to an understanding of nuclear physics'.

Herbert Luthy has an impressive style, and, as is so often the case with outstanding stylists, he allows it to lead him into glossing over and evading the real problems. It really is not necessary to waste many words on this primitive attack on the marxist method. Every line of Marx's own work refutes it. Marx was so little a mere economist that the sub-title of his book 'Capital' is 'A Critique of Political Economy', and not, for example, 'A Critique of Economics', or 'A Critique of Pure Economics'. Having regard to the prevailing circumstances, Marx regarded the achievement of the legal Ten-Hour Day as a tremendous act of intervention on the part of the State in the economic system, and a victory for an important principle. And

* Cf. *Quest*, No. 20, January-March 1959. In my article not only are the conclusions of this book applied, but also conclusions from my later books, 'Marx und die Gegenwart', Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, Cologne 1955, and 'The Military and Industrial Revolution of our Time', Frederick Praeger, New York, 1959 and Atlantic Books, London 1959.

this State intervention took place in capitalist liberal England. It is particularly characteristic of Marx, as distinct from the liberal economists of his day, that he invariably stressed the *indivisibility of economic analysis and political intervention*.

And now to the effects of the tremendous outward expansion of capitalism. When Marx was writing, the proportion of those people living under the capitalist mode of production was probably not more than ten per cent of the world's population. But from the middle of the nineteenth century upto the outbreak of the First World War there was a great and steady rise in this proportion. At that time capitalism was the only expanding mode of production, and by the first decade of the twentieth century not only had the proportion increased to twenty-five per cent of the population of the world, but capitalism already dominated the greater number of the remaining seventy-five per cent politically, economically and militarily.

This tremendous outward expansion—to which imperialism certainly contributed but only in part (a point which must be particularly stressed), though it was, of course, a very important part—had decisive reactions on the social structures of the leading capitalist States, on the situation of the labour markets, on wages, and on the phenomenon of economic crisis.

My books show in a very concrete fashion how this outward expansion of capitalism as a whole, and within its framework, imperialist expansion too, very greatly influenced precisely those factors from which Marx expected the undermining of the capitalist system. But of course this naturally does not mean that the capitalists, the prime movers in this process of outward expansion, motivated their actions with the effect this expansion would have on the labour market or on the phenomenon of economic crisis. Such an idea would be quite absurd, because this expansion took place in a period of capitalist development when there was no question

of any big planned-economic intervention either in the leading industrial countries, in those countries which had made a certain amount of progress along capitalist lines, or in the colonial empires of the day.

Therefore my book 'Capitalism and Socialism on Trial' declares (pp 73-4).

'Capitalist expansion, and within its framework, imperialist expansion in particular, had decisive effects on the development of the whole capitalist system, including the very important result of greatly diminishing the severity of the economic crises. This development can be fully understood only when the relation between imperialist expansion and economic crises in this phase of capitalist development is taken into account.

'Capitalist expansion, and, within its framework, imperialist expansion were not something which came about in addition to—so to speak, on top of—a capitalist system which was already functioning very well without it; capitalist expansion and imperialism were the decisive factors which resulted in the smooth working of the capitalist system in this period, above all because they gave a great impetus to both home and foreign trade. A standstill in capitalist expansion in this period, including a standstill, or even a decline, of imperialist expansion, would have had tremendous repercussions on the capitalist system as a whole. Later on, between the two world wars, the world was to see in practise just what those repercussions were. Thus a decline of imperialism would not have meant merely the loss of surplus profits for various capitalist groups, but also a tremendous intensification of the economic crises even in that period.

'Therefore if we are to obtain a complete picture of its all-important effects on the capitalist metropolitan centres, imperialism must be analysed on three levels.

'The first approach is to discover why certain capitalist groups showed such a great interest in imperialist expansion and in the subsequent maintenance of colonialism. The answer to this is quite simple; it was the urge to obtain greater profits than they could hope to obtain at home, and to win positions for themselves in the colonies which could not be won at home. In this connection James Mill rightly refers to the colonial empires as 'a vast system of outdoor relief for the upper classes'.

'The second approach is to discover how it came about that these capitalist groups which profited directly from imperialist expansion wielded

such power that they were able to influence the foreign policy of capitalist states at the time in their own interests. J.A. Hobson gives us the answer to this question in his book on imperialism⁸, and he shows how, although they were never all-powerful, yet together with certain militarist circles, they were able to guide foreign policy in a direction favourable to their interests.

'The third approach is to find out what were the effects of imperialist expansion, within the framework of the general outward expansion of capitalism, on the whole social and political structure of the capitalist metropolitan centres.

'Only if we combine our analysis in this way shall we be able to understand the full scope and intensity of the impelling force which urged capitalism to its enormous imperialist drive.'

Herbert Luthy did not consider it necessary even to present my analysis of the effects of imperialism and the exterior expansion on the labour markets and on the crises. He makes it very easy for himself, and writes:

'But what this rather banal observation produced among the theoreticians of the 'imperialist deviations' is, strictly speaking, an aberration. In their version of history, the capitalists hurled themselves into colonial expansion in order to escape the consequences of Marx's pitiless diagnosis. . . . This manner of writing history, which has been practised by generations of Marxists, is an insult to simple chronology. The history of colonial empires began long centuries before 'capitalism'—which was then in an embryonic state, and quite unable to perceive the slightest symptoms of its 'contradictions'. When, in 1494, the Kings of Spain and Portugal ran a line through a map of the earth and divided the globe between them, they escaped the closed world of the Middle Ages—but not a slump in the cotton trade. This matter cannot be reduced to the dimensions of a note appended to Karl Marx's 'Capital'.

It is clear from the previous lengthy quotation from my own book that my critic has not even succeeded in grasping what the matter at stake really was.

In this analysis of the reactions of im-

perialism and the outward expansion of capitalism in the second half of the nineteenth century up to the outbreak of the First World War in the twentieth we are not dealing with the history of the great world empires. It has also nothing to do with the suggestion that England subjugated India 'in order to sell her excess products there and to avoid the class struggle in the home country'. It is deplorable that a critic of my book should attribute opinions to me in order then to polemicise against them. Whatever the reasons may have been which impelled the British to subjugate India, the fact remains that the expansion to India, which represented only a part of the total outward expansion, had very important reactions on the social structure of the Mother Country. My critic meticulously avoids even mentioning my analysis of these reactions, for example, the effects on the labour market. He equally meticulously avoids any mention of the relationship between imperialism and the old feudal reactionary strata in the empires. Amongst other things, the aim of imperialist policy was to prevent any large-scale industrial development in the colonial empires, or at least to hamper it. In my book I mention the conclusions to which Charles Robequain,[†] certainly no marxist, came:

'The free development of industry has never been allowed in any colony; even the possibility of such development was long considered paradoxical, almost inconceivable, by the Mother Country. Indo-China is no exception to this rule'.

What was then the result for the labour market in the metropolitan States? My book declares (p.67).

'Thus the fact that no industrial working class arose in India and in the British Empire in general, or in any other of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, decisively affected the condition of the English working class, and of the working class in all other capitalist countries. But, as Nehru[‡] writes:

'The cost in human suffering was paid, and paid in full, by others, particu-

⁸ J. A. Hobson, 'Imperialism', Allen & Unwin, London 1948.

[†] Charles Robequain, 'The Economic Development of French Indo-China', O.U.P., London and New York 1944. p. 269.

[‡] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Meridian Books, London 1946, pp. 279-299.

larly by the people of India, both by famine and death, and by vast unemployment. It may be said that a great part of the costs of transition to industrialism in Western Europe was paid for by India, China, and the other colonial countries, whose economy was dominated by the European powers."

Marx expected an imminent undermining of capitalism from a combination of increased social antagonisms, increased unemployment and its effect on real wages, and from an intensification of the economic crises. Irrespective of the motives which led to the formation of empires, irrespective of the motives of the prime movers in this process (the leading capitalist groups) in their imperialist policies, the fact remains that imperialist expansion was an important—though, of course, not an exclusive—factor which made for an improvement of the situation in the labour markets, which diminished social antagonisms, and either prevented the outbreak of economic crises altogether, or ameliorated their effects when they did break out, and made it easier to overcome them.

It was not merely a question of imperialist expansion; European capitalism also expanded outwardly into numerous countries which retained their political sovereignty, such as Japan, and into others which, despite the formal preservation of their political sovereignty, degenerated practically into a semi-colonial status. This was true of quite a number of countries in Eastern Europe and Asia.

And parallel with this tremendous expansion of European capitalism, which became the factory for the greater part of the Eurasian world in this period, went a great process of expansion in the United States too.

Although Luthy concedes that my presentation of the American 'deviation' is accurate, he had nevertheless just written that America was a country 'in whose development "imperialist expansion" had never played an important role, and on whose internal expansion the theory of

imperialism can be transposed only by sleight of hand.'

What was his object in writing this? Does he want to suggest that I applied the imperialist theory to America's expansion in her own continent? It looks to me as though once again his devotion to the impressive phrase has run away with him, and that the real matter at stake has got lost in the process. In the nineteenth century there was a tremendous outward expansion of capitalism, and it took place in several directions. The most important of these were the expansion of U.S. capitalism on its own continent, and the, partly imperialist expansion of the European Great Powers. The feature which these two expansions had in common was not imperialism, but the fact that they both had—though naturally not entirely similar—reactions on the labour market, real wages and the economic crises. In my book there is a long analysis showing in a concrete fashion just what these reactions were in the United States.

I have already stressed that Marx himself expressly pointed out that he was not analysing American capitalism. But I should like to say here very definitely that the marxist *method* was of very great assistance to me in my analysis of American capitalism.

The end of the expansion of U.S. capitalism on its own continent came approximately at the time of the First World War; and more or less at the same time as not only the imperialist expansion of Europe ceased, but also its outward expansion in general. This synchronism was—as I specifically stressed—not absolutely essential; but nevertheless it happens to be a historical fact. At the same time it is also a historical fact that with the end of this outward expansion, the nature of the economic crises in the subsequent decades of the twentieth century also changed.

My critic concedes:

'Sternberg is right in explaining emphatically to the reader that the depression of the years after 1929 differed profoundly, in dimension and

gravity, from all preceding depressions. It was not one of these 'cyclical crises' after which the evolution of the economy continues on its way. It was an actual turning-point. The chapter on 'The Never-Surmounted Crisis' should become the bedside reading of all those economists and experts who have begun again to preach a high-interest economy and who have not understood how terribly fragile are the bases on which the European economies continue to rest.'

Yes, the crisis of 1929 certainly was 'a turning point.' And it may be considered a matter of interest that I pointed this out more than a quarter of a century in advance of the event^a

In the forty years and more which have passed since the end of the First World War, capitalist development in the United States has continued to expand, whilst European capitalism—precisely because the expansion of the economic organisms of the metropolitan countries was so closely connected with Russia, Eastern Europe, Asia, and the colonial empires—has been heavily and profoundly hit.

Although the progressive factors in the United States economy are still considerable, the phenomenon of crisis has become far more serious for that economy to-day than it ever was in the period when it was still engaged in conquering its own continent.

Professor Gerhard Colm[†], another witness who can certainly not be decried as a marxist, writes:

'Whether or not we can maintain stability and high-level employment in a

peacetime economy that gives maximum play for individual responsibility has become a fateful question for Western civilization'.

Such a question could hardly have been raised at the time when U.S. capitalism was engaged in conquering its own continent. And—a point which must be emphasised once again—this great anxiety as to whether a crisis will come about, and if so whether it will be possible to overcome it without the advantage of a powerful process of outward expansion, is worrying a country which was hit far less by the two World Wars than Great Britain and the other countries of Western Europe.

But let us return to the period in which the First World War took place. My critic is in error when he contends that the First World War 'in Sternberg's and any other history centered about Europe', and that it is 'both the climax and the turning point'. It is therefore not surprising that in my book the analysis of the causes which led to the First World War is compressed into a few pages. The Anglo-German antagonism is given as the primary factor which led to the outbreak of the First World War.

My book 'Capitalism and Socialism on Trial', (p. 131) says:

'The distribution of imperial possessions as it existed before the First World War was no longer in accordance with the changed economic strengths of the various imperialist countries. When Great Britain was still the undisputed industrial leader of the world, the relationship had been more or less appropriate. But that meant going back to the seventies of the nineteenth century. In the first years of the twentieth century up to the First World War the relationship between imperial possessions and economic strength was completely lop-sided.

'Great Britain had lost her industrial predominance, even in Europe, to Germany, but this change in the relation of economic and industrial strength had found no reflection in the division of imperial possessions. Thus there was a dangerous hiatus between the new economic strengths of the big powers and the extent of their respective imperialist empires and spheres of influence. And this lack of proportion became worse rather than

^a In my book *Der Imperialismus*, which was published in Berlin in 1926, three years before the outbreak of the world economic crisis, the third chapter entitled 'The Economic Crisis in Imperialism' analyses the slowing down of capitalist expansion and asks: 'Will the crisis cycle which we must now expect, be of a similar nature to the crises experienced before the war, or will the quantitative differences be so great that we shall find ourselves in a new phase of the crisis cycle?' And after a detailed analysis the answer was given: 'We are now living in a period in which the intensification of the economic crisis goes hand in hand with the intensification of the political crisis.'

[†] Gerhard Colm, 'The American Economy in 1960', p.2, Washington 1952.

better, because whilst the world was already more or less completely divided up between the various colonial powers, Germany's industrial development proceeded at a greater rate than that of her rivals, with the result that the dangerous gap widened'.

This thesis of my book is, of course, not mine alone. For example, the Basel Resolution of the Socialist International described imperialism as the decisive danger of war. The First World War was not, of course, due to this one cause, a large number of other factors also operated, including for one the political structure of Germany at that time in which the feudal reactionary strata wielded a very strong political influence. However, it is very doubtful whether all these other factors together would have sufficed to bring about the First World War in the absence of this central Anglo-German antagonism.

It may be recalled that when Lenin dealt with the factors which led to the outbreak of the First World War, he repeatedly stressed the law of uneven development as between the various big capitalist industrial States, and in particular the fact that German development was proceeding at a greater rate than British—and in this he saw a decisive cause for the First World War.

My critic observes in this connection that my thesis agrees with that of the German '*Flottenverein*' (Patriotic Nationalist Naval Association), and he goes on to say:

'Sternberg is obviously the opposite of a Pan-Germanic sabre-rattler. It is not his fault if the marxist arguments tally with those of the German *Flottenverein*. It was not he who invented them. This concordance stands out against the entire tradition of German Socialism, and, to a large extent, explains its achievements as well as its failure. At bottom there is nothing surprising in the fact that in 1914 the German Social-Democratic Party unanimously voted the necessary war credits.'

These observations are as superficial as they are specious. As I have already pointed out, Lenin regarded the uneven developments of British and German capitalism respectively as one of the decisive factors

which led to the outbreak of the First World War, but this does not mean that he justified the action of German Social Democracy in voting for the war credits. On the contrary, he vigorously opposed it from the very beginning of the war.

When Marx analysed capitalism and its laws, and pointed out the inevitability of certain phenomena within the framework of the capitalist system, he did not thereby become a supporter of capitalism. The same thing applies to my attitude. When I say that the uneven rate of industrial development in the two great capitalist countries of that time, Great Britain and Germany, was the decisive factor which led to the First World War, I do not therefore, any more than Lenin, become a friend of German imperialism.

When Luthy now turns to the economic situation of the two big industrial States before the First World War he overlooks the decisive points. He writes: 'Nobody had ever said that Great Britain tried to set obstacles in the way of German economic expansion, not even within the limits of a British Empire devoted to the principle of free exchange. It was not until twenty years later, in a quite different context, that there began the period of the "Ottawa Agreements" and the "Empire Conferences".'

This sounds all very convincing, but it is a half-truth only. The truth is that before the First World War the financial and political power of Great Britain in her Empire was still so great that she did not need anything along the lines of the Ottawa Agreements to assist her. And therefore I wrote in my book (p. 126):

'Within the Empire, of course, Great Britain enjoyed a position of tremendous advantage against all competitors. For instance, in the final years before the First World War she exported goods to the value of £240 million to Empire countries, whereas Germany's exports in the same period to the same countries amounted to only a tenth of that figure.....Great Britain..... had to cope with vigorous German export drives, which, outside the British Empire, where condi-

tions were more or less equal for the two competitors, deprived her of very many markets'.

Luthy does not mention these figures, nor does he mention the important tendencies towards stagnation in the Great Britain of those days. He writes: 'The First World War broke out in the midst of general prosperity, in a period of constantly rising production and of increased total wages and wealth'. He thus ignores the essential fact which I expressly emphasise in my book, namely, that in certain important spheres the British economy of the day was stagnant; for example, the fact that the production of pig iron from 1905 to 1913 was not greater than it had been in the previous decade; and that the real wages of the British working class were no longer increasing—in contradiction to the tendency of half a century's development; namely, from 1850 to 1900.

In dealing with the series of factors which led to the First World War, we must—particularly to-day in the era of hydrogen bombs and inter-continental rockets—emphasise one thing in particular; namely, that at that time neither the politicians nor the Generals had any real idea of the sort of war they were leading their peoples into.

They based their judgements on the experience of the past; and throughout the nineteenth century there had been only relatively small wars, and certainly never wars whose effects were so powerful and profound that *they threatened the social structure itself*.

When statesmen face the prospect of war from such false premises then, of course, relatively unimportant causes are quite sufficient to lead to war, because all the parties involved feel quite sure that, whatever the upshot, they will at least survive—perhaps to fight another day. In other words, under such circumstances causes were sufficient to lead to war which

we to-day should not regard as so decisive, so vitally decisive as to justify even war.

It is significant that neither Germany and the Central Powers in general, nor the Entente Powers had made any preparations for a long war; and when at the outbreak of war the German Kaiser declared 'We shall be home again by Christmas', he was expressing the general view of the leaders not only on his own side but also in the camp of the Entente.

But it is important to recall that before that, one of the leading marxists of his day did not share such unwarranted optimism. A quarter of a century before the outbreak of the First World War, Friedrich Engels, the close friend and collaborator of Karl Marx, wrote an article* on the possibility of war between the great powers in which he said that if it came it 'would lock between fifteen and twenty million armed men in murderous combat, and devastate Europe as it has never been devastated before.....'

In commenting on this article I wrote in my book (p. 152):

'Engels realised much more clearly than all the Generals and their Governments, although they played the leading role in the world drama, that such a war would be a real turning point in world history. He also saw clearly that such a war would be what it subsequently became the fashion to call a 'total war'. He realised, too, that any comparison with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71 was totally misleading. He saw clearly that such a war would open up a new epoch in the history of the world... Engels' views on the character of the war, and on all the military and politico-military questions arising out of it, were almost prophetic.'

Living Marxism

In view of Luthy's criticism of my book 'Capitalism and Socialism on Trial' it was necessary for me to deal in some detail with the problems I had sought to analyse in that book, because the critic presented a distorted picture of my views.

But, of course, the object of my book was not merely to analyse the past, which it did, but to provide bricks for future

* Friedrich Engels, *Sozialismus in Deutschland*, published in *Die Neue Zeit*, Year 1891/2., Vol. I, pp. 580 et seq.

building. Luthy's criticism ends with the words: 'If marxist theory is to-day petrified, it is not because the theorists have grown lazy, but simply because its equipment has become utterly incapable of dealing with reality—it is a set of formulas and concepts devoid of content'.

There is no need for me to stress in any detail the fact that Luthy did not produce even the shadow of a proof for this contention.

In my book *'Marx und die Gegenwart'* (Marx and our Time) published in 1955, I gave a detailed analysis of the social organisms of the two world powers of to-day, the United States and the Soviet Union, on the basis of the marxist method; and after dealing at length with Europe, Asia, and the clash of the various social organisms, I wrote a final chapter entitled: 'Old and New Problems of Marxism'.

The last section of this chapter was entitled 'New Fields for Marxist Analysis'. This book has not yet appeared in English translation, and I will, therefore, quote certain passages from it here.

The work that Marx did in order to lay bare the tendencies of European capitalist development, now needs to be done, on the basis of the marxist method, for the laws of development of the Asiatic social organisms in the new world-historical epoch.

The attention of Europeans and Americans, both bourgeois and socialist, was too long primarily devoted to the question of how the Asiatic countries, when they were objects of colonial imperialism, affected profits, wages, crises and the labour markets in the metropolitan countries; and to-day, now that these Asiatic countries have become independent, to what extent this affects the metropolitan countries.

But this way of looking at the problem is becoming less and less adequate, because, having become independent of colonial imperialism, they are now developing along lines of their own and seeking to determine their own economic future, and their own social and economic structure. There are many indications that now

that they have awakened from the period in which they had no history of their own, the rate of their growth and development will be very much faster in the second half of the twentieth century than it was in the first.

In the hundred years following on the publication of the 'Communist Manifesto' the countries of the Asiatic continent hardly played any role at all in the industrial activities of the world. This period is already practically a thing of the past.

The analysis of these new social organisms is a necessary and most important task for Marxism. It offers Asiatic and European Socialists a fruitful field for joint productive labours on the basis of the marxist method.

When I speak of the marxist method, I naturally use the term in a very wide sense. A characteristic feature of the genius of the marxist system is the fact that both in its analysis of capitalism and in its forecast of its future development it was constantly under the necessity of creating a new language.

Marx, who was capable of foreseeing the end of capitalism at a time when it was still in its infancy, whilst at the same time scientifically analysing the decisive factors which would lead to this result, had to create a new language for his analysis, and he, therefore, did so.

But he did so for the purposes of his analysis of European capitalism, and not for the analysis of the new social organisms which are beginning to form in Asia. Therefore to take over Marx's language mechanically for this new analysis would mean to gloss over the new problems which are characteristic of the specifically Asian development of to-day, and are likely to be even more so in the future.

The stronger these political organisms become both socially and economically, the greater naturally will be the influence they exert on world economic developments. In the whole century since the publication of the 'Communist Manifesto', the clash of the capitalist system with the Asiatic coun-

tries could be presented primarily from the standpoint of the capitalist countries. It is quite possible that this will change radically in the second half of the twentieth century, and that the functional relationships between Asiatic States and the big capitalist industrial countries, which are themselves experiencing such far-reaching processes of transformation, will no longer be one-sided but mutual.

The field that marxist analysis has to embrace is tremendous, and so is the field on which it can prepare the way for socialist action. It need no longer limit itself, as it did in Marx's day, to the field of action of European Socialism; to-day the extent of its sphere of analysis is world historical; in addition to Europe there are the impelling forces of the U.S., Russian and Asiatic social organisms to analyse. Marx himself did not undertake this great task, but his methods provide the best tools with which to do the job. Marx helps us more than do the two men to whom he owed so much, Hegel and Ricardo and Marx helps us more than all those who came after him.

The decline of scientific sociological and economic thought—both in Europe and in the United States—expresses itself to-day in the fact that coordinated thinking, and this means thinking in world historical relations and magnitudes, is dying out more and more amongst its bourgeois exponents, leaving the field to be dominated by empiricism and partial analysis.

Bourgeois science no longer helps us to delimit the extent of the world historical problem, except perhaps with certain concrete data, but certainly not with any total analysis. Its failure in this respect can hardly be more clearly demonstrated than by the fact that a man of the calibre of Keynes never advanced beyond a certain partial analysis of capitalism, that he had nothing at all to say about the clash of capitalism with non-capitalist social organisms, and nothing to offer towards its analysis.

So when Marxism seeks to penetrate in-

to new fields it will have few allies to help it in its work or scientifically embracing the present day world historical epoch—world historic for the first time—and thus also decisively influencing it. And not only will it have very few allies but it will also have certain definite enemies; and one of the most important of these enemies will be the present-day Russian State, which presents itself to the whole world—and has done so with a good deal of success—as the legitimate heir of Karl Marx.

Soviet Russia Falsely Presented as a Socialist State

The Russian State intervenes continuously in the attempts to analyse it, and it does so in a clumsy and yet rather illuminating fashion. It declares that there is no problem at all to be solved. Russia is a socialist State, and Russia is bringing Socialism to all the countries it dominates. Beyond Russia and her sphere of influence capitalism still exists. In consequence Russia is *the* Socialist State, *the* fighter for the downfall of capitalism all over the world.

This story is made the more specious by the claim of Russia's leaders that they base themselves on Marx; though this is more apparent than real and in any case completely superficial. Marx defines capitalism as the system in which the means of production are in the hands of private capitalists, who may do what they like with them as with their own private property; and he points out that in contradiction to this state of affairs, under Socialism, Society, the State, owns the most important of the means of production.

From this the rulers of Russia argue: before the revolution the means of production were in the hands of private capitalists; now they are in the hands of the Russian State, which owns not only the old means of production but also all the new ones which have been created in the meantime. As the State owns the means of production therefore there is no capitalism in Russia, obviously not since there are no

private capitalists owning important means of production. Now as there is no capitalism in Russia, the argument proceeds, apparently with cogent logic, there is Socialism in Russia.

This whole argumentation stands and falls with the unspoken assumption that there are two alternatives in the world, Capitalism and Socialism, and no other possibilities. The suggestion is that this pair of antagonists between them embraces present-day world history, including the Russian Soviet State. If this assumption were true, then it would logically also be true that if a State were not capitalist it must therefore be socialist. But the assumption is not true.

There are more possibilities than just Capitalism and Socialism. For example other economic and social organisms existed in the period before the rise of the capitalist mode of production. There were other such organisms during the period in which capitalism began its victorious advance all over the world. And there are other social organisms to-day.

The fact that the Russian State is not a capitalist State means no more than that it is not a capitalist State; it does not tell us anything at all about what sort of State it really is. Only a concrete analysis of this state can give us a satisfactory answer to this question. Incidentally, the Russian leaders know this perfectly well.

During and in the period after the November Revolution the few capitalists who did exist in Russia at the time were deprived of the important means of production. If this fact alone had been sufficient to turn Russia into a socialist State then a decade after the November Revolution it would not have been necessary for Stalin to wage a great struggle around the question of whether it was possible to build up Socialism in one country alone; namely, in Russia. But by this very struggle the Russian leaders themselves plainly admitted that the possession of the important means of production by the State is by

no means sufficient to stamp a social organism as socialist.

Nevertheless, the Russian leaders are not alone in their contention that the Russian State to-day is a socialist State, just as they are not alone in the contention that the Russian State is 'a Marxist' State, and that the Russian State incorporates the 'marxist-socialist' principle as opposed to the capitalist principle.

Capitalist Apologists assist in the Process of Deception

Capitalist apologists all over the world say much the same thing with transparent motives and not inconsiderable success.

The present-day Russian State is a State in which political and personal liberties are suppressed; it is a police State which uses terrorist means to impose a distribution of the national product — which means that the overwhelming majority of the Russian workers and peasants are grossly exploited. Proper trade-union organizations are not allowed, and, similarly, there is no freedom of the press. Capitalist apologists support the rulers in the Kremlin in seeking to persuade the world that Russia is a socialist State. They do so because if their contention were accepted they could say to the millions of people who want to bring about a democratic socialist transformation of the industrial States now dominated by capitalism: 'Russia is a socialist State. Take a good look at it! There you can see the practical results of trying to introduce Socialism.'

Now as so far there has never been a socialist State anywhere in the world, as Socialism has never been victorious in any industrial country, such talk is not without its effect, quite naturally, if working people, and others interested in bringing about a socialist transformation of society could be persuaded that the result of their efforts, if successful, would inevitably be something along the lines of what we see to-day in Soviet Russia, they would lose their enthusiasm. In fact, given the choice between the Russian State and the present-

day capitalist State they would much prefer the latter. Thus certain otherwise very desperate interests have a very definite reason for presenting the present-day Soviet State as a 'Socialist', a 'Marxist' State. Capitalist apologists are eager to do so because it would compromise Socialism and undermine the effectiveness of the democratic socialist movement; whilst the present rulers of Soviet Russia are equally anxious to do so because it is a matter of tremendous importance to them that they should be able to deceive not only the masses of the Russian people but also the hundreds of millions of people in those countries which the rulers of Russia hope to bring under their sway concerning the real nature of Russian State.

Living, creative Marxism once had only the apologists of the bourgeoisie to deal with; to-day the situation is much more difficult: it has to cope with the hostile ideologies of two world powers; in short, there are certain very powerful and deeply-rooted political interests against it.

Marxism must defend itself against these hostile powers within a new world-political framework. In fact defence is not enough; it must go over to the attack. However, it will be able to do this only if its methods continue to be creative, only if it shows itself superior to all the other methods of our day in concrete analysis; and only if its methods are used as a basis for the preparation of political actions to change the future, and form and shape the coming phases of world historical development.

Karl Marx on the uneven rates of Agricultural and Industrial Development

For this purpose a thorough knowledge of the work of Karl Marx is necessary; and a mere knowledge of what was written about him over a century ago is by no means sufficient.

We have already pointed out that only a part of Marx's work appeared during his own lifetime. In addition, his close friend

and collaborator, Friedrich Engels, died in 1895 before the whole of Marx's literary remains could be edited and published. For example, one of Marx's most important works 'Theories of Surplus Value' was not prepared for publication and issued until shortly before the outbreak of the First World War — by Karl Kautsky in German.

Until quite recently this work was practically unknown in the Anglo Saxon countries, and it was published only a little while ago in translation there; in other words, more than a hundred years after its fundamental draft was written. This is an interesting point in relation to Luthy's observation about my own book: 'Sternberg's book, the English and the German editions of which have been available for some time now, has not aroused the great theoretical discussions that the publication of such a 'summum' would certainly have excited only a few decades ago in the socialist camp; it could no longer be other than a retrospective debate'.

That is very misleading. It frequently took not years but decades before Marx's books produced any important discussions at all. And, be it recalled, Rosa Luxemburg's great work 'The Accumulation of Capital' could not even manage a second edition during her own lifetime, and it was first translated into English only a few years ago. As we have already pointed out, it took over a century before 'Theories of Surplus Value' was made available to readers of English, whilst even Marx's 'Capital' did not appear in English during his own lifetime. This is not merely a matter of interest for marxists, it is a circumstance which leads to an impoverishment of thought in relation to economic and political questions; an impoverishment of thought which can be seen very clearly in relation to present-day and future fundamental developments in Asia.

In opposition to the bourgeois economists of the day, it was always a fundamental marxist belief that the capitalist mode of production had not always existed, that it

came into being only under certain definite historical circumstances, that in the course of its own development it more or less destroyed feudalism, and that at the same time it bore within itself the seeds of its own destruction.

Thus Marx was very well aware of the specifically historical character of the capitalist mode of production; and he was equally well aware that the historically based laws which had led to the rise of the capitalist mode of production in Europe need not necessarily prove valid for other continents, for example, Asia. He was also well aware that in the particular epoch in which capitalism made its triumphal advance in Europe and the United States, the social organisms in Asia were only superficially affected.

In other words, it was an obvious truth for Marxism that in their further development the Asiatic countries would not be slavishly obliged to repeat European and U.S. history, and that, in fact, they would go their own way. But, even more than this: over a century ago Marx drew attention to a tendency which is beginning to operate more and more in Asia to-day, and will continue to do so in the future.

In his 'Theories of Surplus Value' he discussed the different rates of development of agriculture and industry; and his conclusions may be summed up by saying that whereas in one period — a very long period in Europe and the United States — industry had developed much more quickly than agriculture, this was not inevitable; and that, on the contrary, the time would come when productivity in agriculture would develop more quickly than industrial productivity. Marx expected this to come about from the development of the chemical industry; to-day we would add the development of the production of agricultural machinery, and the increasing use of artificial irrigation.

The American magazine *Time*, whose publishers and editors can hardly come

under suspicion of having read even a line of Marx's works, nevertheless now confirm his prediction for the United States over a century after he made it, when it writes: 'From 1938 through to 1957, overall farm labour productivity rose at an annual average rate of 4.7 per cent (v. 2.2 per cent for the rest of the economy*).

This circumstance can be of great, even central, importance for the future development of the Asiatic countries. To sum up certain important conclusions of my own study: in Europe and in the United States it took about a century of industrial development before those particular industries which exercise a cardinal effect on the increase of productivity in agriculture came to maturity and effectiveness. But at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century this stage has been reached. The Asiatic countries therefore do not have to wait until they have slowly developed these industries themselves; they can, so to speak, take over the results which have already been achieved elsewhere.

In Europe there were centuries of industrial development, but only comparatively recently was there any material increase in the productivity of agriculture. But as far as the Asiatic countries are concerned the sequence may well be, probably will be, different. Further, there need not be a sequence at all; the development of the industrial process and the increase in the productivity of agriculture need not follow each other in any particular order or, indeed, at all; they can be made to synchronise.

For this reason alone, the further stages of Asiatic development are likely to be very different from those we have already experienced in Europe and the United States; and, in addition, entirely new relations may well develop between town and country in consequence. Marx has already provided us with the basic elements necessary for an analysis of this development; and they will — I firmly hope — soon be developed and applied in a practical fashion to this new problem.

* *Time Magazine*, New York, March 9th, 1959, p. 75.

II. The Theory of Karma and its Difficulties

1. Some Comments

By C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

I FEEL honoured by the request of the Editor to tender my observations on Dr. Rashbehari Das's article on Karma.

1. Dr. Rashbehari Das has very frankly and gracefully said at the very outset that although he has no love for this theory he does not believe that it can be conclusively disproved. This admission is very helpful.

2. The law of causality — that every event must have an effect — is accepted by Dr. Das. He should, I think, go further and not merely admit that every action must leave 'some' effect on the doer, but grant an equivalence between the cause and the effects.

3. That happiness follows virtue is not open to the objections pointed out by Dr. Das. Happiness is an inherent quality of virtue. The one flows automatically from the other. Dr. Das must admit that we should not define and limit happiness as physical pleasure. With great respect, I must say Dr. Das has not dealt with Kant's position correctly. It seems as if he has in his argument against Kant equated happiness with what it is not, viz. just physical and sensual pleasures.

4. The law, or as Dr. Das would prefer to call it, the theory of Karma assumes that souls take bodies in successive births and Karma works itself through such successive opportunities. Dr. Das's objection to the theory of transmigration is that the passage of the soul from one body to another demands the possibility of the soul existing by itself during the interval between life in one body and its lodgement in another. This is not a valid objection.

We begin with the concept that the soul

is a reality apart from the body. If this is not accepted, all morality, all responsibility is wiped out. It is presumed that Dr. Das will not stand for the negation of the soul altogether. If the reality of the soul is granted, we must grant also that the laws of motion and time do not apply to the movements of the soul and the objection based on the absence of any reliable testimony about spirits existing apart from bodies loses its force. We cannot apply the physical laws of space, time and motion to the spiritual substance.

5. The law of Karma is an explanation for what we see; it puts things in understandable order. It does satisfy our sense of justice. But if Dr. Das denies the 'basic assumption of inherent justice' as not founded on fact, the foundation for the theory of Karma is not thereby destroyed — for it rests firmly on the law of causality and on the theory of re-birth, justice apart.

6. Dr. Rashbehari Das appears to hold that the theory of Karma leaves no room for Divine Grace and concludes that therefore the theory is anti-religious. Repentance and consequent Divine Grace are not negated by the law of Karma. Repentance is as much an act as any bodily motion and a very great act too if it is sincere and not merely a ceremony. It is not only the motions of the body that are acts, but all our thoughts and movements of the mind. Indeed these latter are more relevant to the theory of Karma. Repentance has its effects and Grace follows according to the law of Karma. This is as acceptable to any theist's religious sense as it is consistent with the Law of Karma.

7. Dr. Das objects to the theory of Karma because it would make us hard-hearted and unsympathetic. This does not appear to be an objection on good foundation. An enlightened man is expected to pity even where the suffering is self-induced. It depends on the moral and emotional discipline we go through

whether we sympathise and pity as we should, or whether we are cruel and hard-hearted. On the other hand Dr. Das should see that the law makes for tolerance of other people's sins, that it minimises our resentment when any wrong is done to us, a very desirable consequence as Dr. Das must admit.

The Theory of Karma and its Difficulties

2. Reply

By R. DAS

I AM grateful to the Editors that they placed my article on 'Karma' in the hands of Shri Rajagopalachari, and I am very grateful to Rajaji that he not only took the trouble of reading my article but also that he recorded his valuable reactions to it. I wish I had not been asked by the Editors to say anything in reply to his remarks. I have a very high regard for Rajaji's age, wisdom and intelligence. It would be more becoming of me, even at this age (I am on the wrong side of sixty), to try to understand and inwardly digest the lessons of his words than to make an awkward attempt to controvert him. There is, however, I hope, no harm in trying to state some of my difficulties, which proceed, no doubt, from lack of understanding or from misunderstanding.

My first difficulty is in regard to the supposed equivalence between the cause and the effect. In a purely mechanical case, there may be some equivalence, but in many other cases, it is difficult to discover any such equivalence between the cause and the effect. What equivalence is there between a small spark and the huge explosion which results from it? I can discover no parity between the idea in the mind of a philosopher (or the movement of his brain-cells accompanying the idea) and the vast revolutions wrought in many

countries in consequence of the idea.

It is contended by Rajaji that 'happiness is an inherent quality of virtue'. Is it really so? Does happiness form any part of the meaning of virtue? In that case, the judgement 'the virtuous are happy' would be purely analytical, but, I believe Kant clearly recognised this judgement to be synthetic, i.e., happiness to be no part of the meaning of virtue. Kant *demand*s, no doubt, that the virtuous should be happy but nowhere does he assert, as far as I know, that the virtuous are happy. I did not exactly identify happiness with 'just physical and sensual pleasure' but I certainly implied that happiness belonged to the sensuous side of our being. However, in doing so, I merely followed Kant, who understands by happiness 'the total satisfaction of one's needs and inclinations' (Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 23). Our needs and inclinations according to Kant, belong to the sensuous side of our being and not the rational side. If Kant, in any sense, integrated happiness with virtue, as Rajaji seems to have done, he (Kant) would not have argued so vigorously against happiness being a standard of moral judgement. Kant clearly says 'making a man happy is quite different from making him good' (*Ibid*, p. 90).

Rajaji says that unless we accept that 'the

soul is a reality apart from the body, all morality, all responsibility will be wiped out'. Is it really so? We may easily grant that the self is different from the body, but are we bound to accept that the self exists 'apart from the body'? It may not be easy to understand, or conceive, the relation between the self and the body, but certainly it does not conduce to clarity of thought to suppose that the self and the body are merely externally related. I confess we have no very clear conception of the self. We can still somehow think of it as the animating principle of the body, but apart from the body I seem quite unable to frame any tenable idea of the self. I hope I shall be excused if I refrain from entering into any subtle metaphysical argument here.

Apart from the question of justice, the law of Karma, according to Rajaji, rests firmly on the law of causality and the theory of re-birth. I know that there is a vast number of people, who have no faith in re-birth and I don't myself think there is any compelling reason to believe in it. As for the law of causality, I do not at all see how it can support the theory of Karma. The law of causality is a law of the phenomenal or visible world, where two events may be clearly connected in space and time. One spatio-temporal event is the cause of another spatio-temporal event. Both the cause and the effect must occupy the same plane of existence. The theory of Karma supposes that a good moral act can produce happiness, which depends on

many material conditions. In other words, it supposes that a spiritual act can influence material facts. We may have faith in such influence but it is neither demanded nor warranted by the mere law of causality.

It seems clear to me that the theory of Karma leaves no room for divine grace. But Rajaji informs us that 'Repentance and consequent Divine Grace are not negated by the law of Karma' (*italics mine*), because 'repentance is an act and it has its effects, and grace follows according to the law of Karma'. However, I still fail to see why what follows as a mere consequence of any human act should be called, or be attributed to, divine grace. According to my humble understanding, what is obtained at the expense of something done by me is certainly what I should get as a matter of right and not on account of any divine grace for which I need be grateful.

As regards the point I tried to make that the theory of Karma tends to make us hard-hearted and relatively unsympathetic, I can only repeat what I have already said. We naturally sympathise more with the man who is innocent and suffers unjustly than with one who has brought about his suffering by his own misdeed. I believe this is a simple psychological fact. The theory of Karma, which tries to make out that all the sufferings of a man are due to his past misdeeds and are in that sense quite justified, should, if taken seriously, have the effect of weakening our sympathy towards such sufferings.

BOOK REVIEWS

Education for Democracy

IN a country where every college principal or vice-principal claims to be an educationist and is accepted as such by society, it is refreshing to find the Rector of one of its oldest universities warning the reader that his is "essentially a layman's work".^{*} Professor Parikh also states that his purpose is 'to initiate a discussion and not to furnish answers to any of the issues involved'. There is a considerable possibility that this Newtonian modesty of the author will be mistaken for lack of confidence in the solutions he does suggest. That would be unfortunate for Indian universities, for some of the issues he formulates in this book are of vital significance not only for university education but also for the success of the democratic experiment in India.

The problem of General Education has to be considered in the context of our resolve to create in an ever-increasing measure the material and cultural conditions for the growth of freedom in this country. We have embarked on our industrial revolution and plan to telescope into a few decades a process which extended over a century and a half in the West; and we are keen on accomplishing this task with the aid of mid-twentieth century, atomic technology. Now modern technology no doubt opens up, for the first time in human history, a prospect of making economic security and leisure for self-development a common condition for all instead of the privilege of a few. At the same time, however, it poses serious threats to the func-

tioning of free institutions and to the very integrity of the individual. These threats assume ominous proportions in a society that has not had the liberating experience of a renaissance like the one which preceded the industrial revolution in the West. Such a renaissance in India would have swept away the debris of our other-worldly, authoritarian and caste-ridden culture, and would have also acted as a guarantee against the abuse of the tremendous power that modern technology places in the hands of the state. The exigencies of militant nationalism prevented the flowering into a country-wide cultural revolution of the embryonic beginnings made, for example, in Maharashtra by men like Agarkar under the impact of the West. As a result, while economically we are in the twentieth century, spiritually we have not yet outgrown a *weltanschauung* characteristic of a pre-industrial and pre-scientific society. It is against this background that the reorganization of our education has to be considered.

If modern technology is to rejuvenate our culture instead of buttressing its authoritarian foundations, its adoption has to be accompanied by a large-scale, deliberate effort to create 'a rational, discriminating and responsible body of citizens inspired by the ideals of freedom and democracy'. This is all the more necessary and urgent, for we have to reconcile the needs of 'economic development in a democratic setting' with those of 'political stability in a situation full of disruptive forces and tendencies.' To help in the creation of such a citizenry is one of the major responsibilities—indeed, as Ortega y Gasset emphasizes, the primary responsibility—of a university.

^{*}GENERAL EDUCATION AND INDIAN UNIVERSITIES by G. D. Parikh (Asia Publishing House, Bombay pp. 203, Rs. 10.50).

Parikh formulates the problems implied in the acceptance of this responsibility.

Three major questions on which clear thinking is essential in this connection are: the nature and scope of General Education; the problem of curriculum construction and of developing teaching and evaluation methods in conformity with the objectives of General Education; and, finally, the distinguishing features of the Indian situation in relation to General Education. Of these, the first is perhaps the most important today in our country. For on the meaning we put in the concept of General Education will depend the answers we devise to the second question in the Indian context. And it is precisely here that loose thinking, if not rank ignorance, prevails even at the highest levels of our university life, vulgarizing the noblest of ideas and defeating the best of proposals, irrespective of whether they come from local teachers, foreign experts, the Union Ministry of Education or the University Grants Commission. Parikh's discussion (chapter III) of What General Education stands for is, therefore, timely and valuable. It is remarkable for its clarity of thought, persuasiveness of argument, breadth of outlook and the secular, humanist concern for values that informs the whole. This chapter may well be brought out as a separate pamphlet for wider circulation.

General Education is not liberal education in the usual sense of the word, for unlike the latter it seeks to embrace the whole body of students, not merely those who are going to constitute the ruling class. It does not accept the antithesis between liberal and technical education, for such antithesis is based on 'the two disastrous antitheses, namely, that between mind and body, and that between thought and action,' originating in the ancient Greek society characterized by the slavery of the multitude to the minority of free men. As a corollary, General Education rejects the distinction between 'liberal' and 'illiberal' subjects, and this rejection has important implications for curriculum construction.

Nor is General Education opposed to specialization, as many teachers in this country seem to believe. Indeed, General Education would help rather than obstruct meaningful and purposive specialization by providing to specialization 'the milieu in which alone it can develop its fullest potentialities'. What General Education seeks to prevent is not specialization but the emergence of Ortega's 'new barbarian'—the blinkered expert who is incapable of appreciating the basic unity and human significance of knowledge in different fields. The anti-specialization fallacy regarding the role of General Education is rooted in the failure to recognize the mutually helpful interaction of synthesis and analysis in the progress of knowledge.

The intellectual and social content of General Education is, therefore, in no way inferior to that of specialized research, the arrogance of one-track specialists notwithstanding. But, granting this, the really difficult problem is that of curriculum construction and of evolving suitable teaching and evaluation techniques. Parikh discusses this problem (chapters IV and V) and suggests some tentative but well thought-out solutions. However, as he himself points out, a satisfactory solution can only emerge out of continued experimentation by teachers who understand the significance of General Education. At present this condition is not satisfied in our university life, which is remarkable for 'the absence of any significant intellectual and moral factors... demanding such a curricular reform.' In the present reviewer's opinion, the first stage in the movement of General Education in India will, therefore, have to be an intensive programme of teacher-reorientation—for educating the educators, as Karl Marx put it in a different context nearly a century ago.

The other chapters of the book give a brief, comparative review of the American and British experiments in General Education, a report on the work of the two Study Teams sent abroad by the Union Government in 1956 and 1957, and a dis-

cussion of the specific difficulties that we have to face in introducing General Education in India. The discussion is throughout cautious and well-informed, without any attempt at scoring a point.

The only short-coming, apart from a few printing errors, that one can discover in the book is the impression it gives at one stage of the author's desire to find ancient roots for modern ideas. For example, while discussing the Indian tradition, he states, "the catholicity of ancient Indians made female education *quite common*." (p.121; italics added). Despite a Gargi or a Maitreyi, this simply is not true unless 'ancient' is taken to mean a period about which no historical evidence is available. Manusmriti was composed before 500 A.D., and not being a statutory law passed by the government, it represented practices that were already prevalent, not those which were enjoined *de novo* on the people. An examination of the frequency with which women scholars' names appear in the Upanishads would also show that female education in the sense meant here was more an exception than a rule. Nor is there any need to insist on continuity with the past in everything, however, satisfying it may be to discover it. After all, Satyakāma Jābāla had no parentage to boast of.

A similar objection may be raised to Parikh's criticism of Macaulay's failure to integrate Western Education with the ancient Hindu tradition and the Saracenic tradition of learning. What is possible today would not have been so a hundred years ago. Indeed, but for the shock that Macaulay gave, such integration would perhaps be impossible even today.

These objections are, however, irrelevant to the theme of the book and do not detract from its worth. It would rank with the Harvard Committee's Report on *General Education in a Free Society*. That is no mean achievement for a 'layman'.

A. B. SHAH

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHERS AT WORK:
The Philosophic Scene in the United States. Edited by Sidney Hook. Criterion Books, New York 1956. pp 512, \$ 7.50.

IN his brief Introduction Dr. Sidney Hook says: 'To this day William James is almost the only great American figure known abroad' If American philosophy had been neglected till nearly the early decades of this century, the reasons are not far to seek. For one thing, when the 'histories' of philosophy were first written in the 19th century, the universities in Germany were considered to be the greatest seats of philosophical scholarship; German philosophy and professors enjoyed undisputed prestige. What, therefore, we got then was a German's-eye-view of the world. For another thing, the philosophers in America had not yet evolved any characteristic world-view of their own. 'The resurrection of Hegel in England and America after his burial in Germany', as James once said, is one of the most interesting episodes in the history of philosophy. That, however, is a different story. As a matter of fact, before William James and C. S. Peirce we don't come across any American philosopher either of international reputation or of real eminence. If Peirce was not known abroad, the Americans ought to hold themselves responsible; for all practical purposes, Peirce remained undiscovered in his own country till about thirty years ago when his works were collected and edited. And if James is the only great American Philosopher known abroad it is perhaps because no thinker of his calibre has appeared after him.

American philosophy has been enriched by two factors. Not only the American students and teachers visited Europe and studied in her universities, but students and teachers from Europe, nurtured in entirely different traditions, migrated to the States in large numbers. Among the more well-known who went to America in recent past to make it their home are Max Black, Rudolf Carnap, Ernst Cassirer, Curt John Ducasse, Abraham Kaplan, Ernest Nagel

and Hans Reichenbach. Dr. Hook rightly observes: 'American philosophy is no parochial affair but an integral part of the Continental, and especially the English tradition in philosophy.'

Those who identify unintelligibility and obscurity with profundity would prefer to maintain a pretentious aloofness to the philosophic scene in the United States; they would regard American analysts and positivists as heartless philistines. Philosophy in America and Britain has oscillated today from idealism and transcendentalism to secularism, naturalism and positivism. Peirce, James and the revival of the 'English tradition' are the real causes of this change. People no more turn to metaphysics to get 'comfort' as McTaggart once said, nor are they inclined to agree with Bosanquet, for example, who said that 'the intrinsic connexion of reality and value becomes here transparent to us' when we 'experience the positive quality of the Absolute.' Philosophy is no longer considered to be the queen of the sciences, at least in those two countries. It is 'a specialized science itself. . . . And to be sure, no longer can he who runs read philosophy.' To put it bluntly, the Americans have ceased to take interest in that kind of philosophy in which the serious intent is muffled by vagueness and rhetoric. They are skeptical about him who is obsessed with *Weltanschauung* and *Kulturphilosophie*. This distrust, however, has often been misinterpreted by many. Dr. Hook deserves our thanks for having edited this small though remarkable volume; it will eminently dispel quite a few misgivings about contemporary American philosophy.

Divided into three sections, there are in all thirty-one essays. The sections are: 'Logic and Scientific Method,' 'Metaphysics and Theory of Knowledge,' and 'Ethics and Social Philosophy.' Most of the essays had been published earlier. The three essays not published before are *Some Suggestions Concerning Metaphysics of Logic* by C.I. Lewis, *Naturalism and First Principles* by Sidney Hook and *The New Outlook* by

Paul Weiss. The result may not be a virtual encyclopaedia of contemporary American philosophic thought' as the 'blurb' says, but surely a reliable guide to the philosophic scene in America.

Some of the authors in the First Section are Max Black (*Definition, Presupposition and Assertion*), Rudolf Carnap (*Meaning and Synonymy in Natural Language*), C.I. Lewis, W.V. Quine (*Logical Truth*), and C.L. Stevenson (*Persuasive Definitions*). In Section Two the authors included are Blanshard (*The Nature of Mind*), James Collins (*God as a Function in Modern Systems of Philosophy*), C.J. Ducasse, Charles Hartshorne, the editor himself and Paul Weiss. In Section Three the contributors include Everett W. Hall (*Mill's Proof of Utility*), Horace M. Kallen (*Of Humanistic Sources of Democracy*), Abraham Kaplan (*Obscenity as an Esthetic Category*), Charles Morris (*The Science of Man and Unified Science*), F.S.C. Northrop and T.V. Smith.

Alice Ambrose wants to justify inductive inference and at last returns to the 'common-sense position'. The purpose of Carnap's paper is 'to defend the thesis that the analysis of intension for a natural language is a scientific procedure, methodologically just as sound as the analysis of extension.' Nelson Goodman's essay entitled *The Revision of Philosophy* is a brilliant assessment of Carnap's *Aufbau*. Quine also deals with Carnap's views. Evidently, Carnap dominates the First Section.

Some of the essays are of a technical nature meant for serious students while some others could be easily understood by educated laymen. Speaking generally, the first two sections may be said to have been meant for the initiated, while the third, dealing with 'matters of public interest like education and law', is meant for the cultured laymen. What characterizes all the essays is their lucidity. A few of them could surely be included in the prose anthologies meant to be used as text-books by undergraduates of the Indian universities.

Ernest Nagel's *Mechanistic Explanation*

and *Organismic Biology* would prove to be extremely refreshing to many non-philosophers. In our country we still continue to draw analogies between living bodies and such organizations like state, nation etc. Nagel's essay would be a genuine corrective. William R. Dennes's *Conflict* and Kallen's essay on *Democracy* are illuminating.

But there are sentences like: 'wherever mind is present, there the pursuit of ends is present. Wherever that pursuit is wholly absent, mind is absent. And when mind is present, it is present precisely in the degree to which ends are in control.' (p. 184) Or, 'mind is a set of processes distinguished from others through their control by an immanent end. At its lowest levels and its highest its character is veiled from us. At one extreme it dwindles into mere life, which is incipient mind. At the other extreme it vanishes in the clouds: it does not yet appear what we shall be. Mind as it exists in ourselves is on an intermediate level. It has achieved consciousness, but this consciousness is restlessly transforming itself under the spell of a secret end...' (p. 192) And so on. They are strongly reminiscent of the style of the English neo-Hegelians.

Stace concludes by saying that 'from the standpoint of time, God is in relation to the world. He is omnipresent in it. But from the standpoint of the eternal, which is the inner view of the divine moment, God had no relations either within Himself or with other beings, or with the world.' They could very well have been said by a Vedantist.

What Weiss says is almost prophetic. 'It is time for the new spirit to pervade our lives. We must become at once more bold and humble, more catholic and cautious, freer and more disciplined than before. For too long a time prejudice has been allowed to narrow our perspectives; for too long a time impatience has made us receptive to ideals and values inappropriate to our full being and the world. We need a new viable systematic philosophy, which unlike those

of the past, is alert to the advances in modern logic and science, metaphysics and theology, history and the arts, and thus can be more abreast of the world in which we live.' (p. 306)

While examining obscenity as an esthetic category Kaplan is anxious to avoid moral issues. Yet he admits that 'the moral content of art... is nothing less than the affirmation of life, a great yea-saying to the human condition.' (p. 415) Pornography, the obscenity of the perverse, the pornography of violence stand not for Eros, but Thanatos. *The Science of Man and Unified Science* by Charles Morris, though brief, is an extremely interesting essay. It may be said to be a fine specimen of the American variety of 'philosophical anthropology.' Northrop's scholarly contribution, *Ethical Relativism in the Light of Recent Legal Science*, should draw the attention of anybody who expects 'an easy solution of the problem of the cultural relativity of ethical values.' This single essay should convince the critics that American philosophers can and do think boldly as well as acutely.

Wilmon H. Sheldon's—not to be confused with William H. Sheldon, author of *The Varieties of Human Physique*, *The Varieties of Temperament* etc.—defence of Hedonism is highly readable.

If, however, one seeks the names of thinkers like Cassirer or Husserl or Kierkegaard, for example, one is disappointed. Cassirer, for all that we know about him, was a great thinker who made America his home and inspired many a young man and woman. Marvin Farber of the University of Buffalo has done a great deal to acquaint the English-knowing people with the thoughts of Husserl. And who could deny Lowrie's devotion to the exposition of Kierkegaard? The American thinkers working on these philosophers, for example, have not been included. That is why I hesitate to call this volume an 'encyclopedia'. But Dr. Hook's efforts adequately convey the impression that 'the continent of Europe is the land of the hedgehog while the English-speaking world is the home of the

philosophical fox', to quote Morton White.

The Biographical Notes at the end and Jeanyee Wong's jacket design make the volume fascinating and attractive.

A.M. GHOSE

IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY—By John W. Bennett, Herbert Passin and Robert K. McKnight. Pp. 369. Price: \$7.50 Published by The University of Minnesota. Sponsored by Committee of Cross-cultural Education, Social Science Research Council.

IT is always interesting to study the character of a nation specially when that nation becomes a great one; and the best way to judge a nation is to study the character and behaviour of its people. It is the intellectuals who govern the country and mould its people. To-day the intellectuals of all countries, both Eastern and Western, are facing an ideological crisis; it is more so in the East, because most of the Asiatic countries have got their independence after World War II. The burning question of the day is, will parliamentary democracy succeed in Asia? The new Asian democracy is now being threatened by communist totalitarianism under the leadership of China. The success of democracy in Asia depends on the experiments of those countries which have accepted the challenge of the day.

Japan is perhaps the only country in Asia which maintained her independence for a long time and became a very powerful nation in the world until the second World War. Educated Japanese have been faced with a basic ideological problem to-day. Their country is going through a modernization programme and they have to choose between democracy and autocracy; individualism and collectivism; West and Orient. The choice depends on the intellectuals of Japan of today and tomorrow.

The authors of 'In Search of Identity' reported upon a cross-disciplinary study of the *Amerika-ryugakusei*—those who study in America—in the historical context of the modernization of Japanese society and Japan's cultural relations with the United

States; they describe and portray the experiences of the individual Japanese student in the American campus and back in Japan; and they analyse the adjustment of the Japanese students to different cultural environments. The authors have attempted here to look upon as a whole—the student's place in history, his social roles, and his personal experiences and outlook. The authors interviewed many Japanese students who were studying at various American universities; the authors have recorded the individual experiences of the past and present Japanese students and have tried to find out the identity of Japan. No other nation in history in such a short period has accomplished so much, starting from a feudal base has quickly transformed into a highly industrial society with modern institutions and a high level of public education. To understand modern Japan it is necessary to know her history.

Prior to 1192 Japan had social, political and cultural intercourse with China. In 1192 Yoritomo, head of the Minamoto family established the Shogunate (military 'camp' government) at Kamakura to mark the beginning of 600 years of feudal government. During the Muromachi period (1338-1573) the Westerners for the first time arrived in Japan—first as traders and then followed by Jesuit missionaries led by St. Francis Xavier. Ieyasu Tokugawa founded the Tokugawa Shogunate by the end of the 16th century, and Japan was ruled by Tokugawas until the Imperial regime was restored in 1868. The Tokugawas closed Japan's doors to the Western world except for a few Dutchmen who introduced Western science in its primitive form. In the 16th century the military, religious, political and cultural phases of Japan's life were greatly influenced by the influx of Westerners. Japan's isolation was eventually broken in 1853 by Commodore Matthew C. Perry of the United States and this led to the conclusion of treaties of peace and friendship with the United States, Great Britain, Tsarist Russia and the Netherlands in 1854. The eventual downfall of the feudalistic

system was brought about in 1867 and Emperor Meiji (1852-1912) was restored in full sovereignty. This is known as Meiji Restoration. The history of modern Japan began in 1868. Commenting on the achievement of Japan, H. G. Wells said, 'With astonishing energy and intelligence they set themselves to bring their culture and organisation up to the level of the European powers. Never in all the history of mankind did a nation make such a stride as Japan then did.' Meiji period is the important era of modern Japan. As early as 1870 selected students were sent to the United States, England and France to study literature and science, and to Germany to study medicine.

In Japan, students who had been to Tokyo's Imperial University were the most privileged people; virtually they controlled all the key posts of the government. The students of other universities had very limited opportunity. Students who were educated in America but did not go to the Japanese universities had no chance to get any good position in Japan; they had to try their luck with foreign organisations or were satisfied with minor positions. The result was that most of the foreign-qualified students after their return to Japan became frustrated and were critical of Japan's narrow nationalistic outlook; and their potentiality was lost to Japan. This was the picture before World War II. Many students wanted to return to America where they could profitably use their learning and experience. Many returnees became pro-American and they revolted against Japanese nationalism and became more liberal. During the inter-war period the Japanese undergraduates can be classified as (1) those who because of financial or academic difficulties could not attend good universities in Japan; (2) those who, for ideological reasons, were cut off from education in Japan, or culturally alienated; and (3) those with strong Western orientations derived from their familial or social environment. Many of the second group students adopted Western political ideologies and became socialist and thereby became potentially

dangerous radical elements. The authors further tell us that the graduate students were more critical of American values. They record from their observation that, 'While they respected American progress and power they felt that the pursuit of efficiency had pushed other values into the background. Americans were strident, had too little depth and repose, they sacrificed aesthetic values and a sense of the tragic for the mundane and temporal pleasure of material well-being'.

Many Japanese students found it difficult to adjust themselves in America and 'girl friends' were a great help in their adjustment to American life. Perhaps this is true in most cases of foreign students in Europe and America. Many Japanese students psychologically found themselves 'small' and were unable to make friends with American girls and as a result the American girl, in reaction, tended to see the Japanese male as rather diffident and ineffectual, not as a possible romantic partner. But this was not true in the case of Japanese women students. All of a sudden they found themselves free and equal to men; and they easily made friends with American students and in fact most Japanese women students preferred to have American boy friends.

We find from the data given by the authors that the influx of Japanese students in America is steadily increasing from 1950 onward. 'Professors, businessmen, women, young people—all ached to go abroad to get away from the harshness of post-war life in Japan, to see the outside world once again, to re-establish contact with developments in their own fields, to find new ideas and inspiration and to test their ideas and Japan against the rest of the world.' Once again America became very popular to Japanese students, because she is 'the country that is playing such a leading role in the world today, the country with power and responsibility to decide the future of mankind.' We find from the authors' record that many students who went to America with such ideas were disappointed and

shocked to find racial discrimination and the existence of McCarthyism and McCar-ranism. They became more critical of American liberalism and of Western democracy. American policy to re-arm Japan and to have American military bases in Japan shocked many American-educated Japanese. The Japanese who before the World War II were pro-American have now become more critical of American policy. Today the table has turned in Japan; the conservatives have become pro-American and the socialist and the idealists have become more critical of American political institutions. The paternal behaviour of many Americans have also alienated many sensitive Japanese students.

Japan is the only country in Asia which was not subjugated by any Western Power. Before World War II the American-educated Japanese could not take the leadership of Japan, and as a result they were unable to promote liberalism in Japan. In India and in other colonial countries social, political and economic leaderships were held by Western-educated people and they imported Western liberalism and democracy in their respective countries.

The authors of *'In Search of Identity'* recorded their observations firstly by examining the experiences of 21 male and 2 female post-war students, over a period of one year at a mid-Western university; and this was supported by questionnaires and tests, of 17 male and 5 female students at another university; and secondly by interviewing some forty male and ten female Japanese who had their previous education in America and at present are in Japan. The persons selected for this interview were mostly from Japanese Who's Who of 1913 and 1936. Out of 1,294 Japanese students in America in 1953-54 only 45 students, i.e. roughly 3.5%, were interviewed and their behaviour and reactions were observed. Therefore, it appears that the sample study is not very extensive specially when the authors tried to find the identity of the Japanese élite and the trend of modern Japan. Again, the Japanese élite who were

educated in Europe (and are now in Europe) are completely excluded from the scope of the authors' research; and we have no means to know their behaviour and reactions to democracy and liberalism as practised in Europe. What type of questionnaires were sent to the Japanese students are not known to the readers. It would have been most useful to add a set of questionnaires in the appendix. Though Japan was not made a colony, perhaps for the first time in her long history she was occupied by foreign powers, and this had a psychological effect on Japanese students who were and are in America and as a result they suffer from inferiority complex. They had to meet many criticisms for their inter-war activities in America. It is difficult to say how far the post-war Japanese students could get over their handicaps to reply to the questionnaires which were put to them by the present authors. There are now 500 American students studying at various Japanese universities and they have more first-hand knowledge about Japanese élite and the trend of modern Japan; it would be interesting if the authors were to record the experiences of those American students.

The authors have dealt with many aspects of the Japanese student's life and recorded their reactions to modern America. This book can properly be called 'The Experience of Japanese Students in America'. No doubt every student of history, sociology, anthropology and politics, and those who are interested in modern Japan will find this book very useful even though one may not fully agree with the findings of the authors. It is hoped that a cheap edition of this book will soon be available in India for a larger section of readers, otherwise it will be read only by the privileged few.

SACHIN K. ROY

LAND WITHOUT JUSTICE: An Autobiography of his youth by Milovan Djilas. Jovanovich. (Harcourt, Brace and Co. New York. \$5.75. Also Methuen, London 25s.)

IN 'The New Class' Djilas had quoted with scorn 'Tito's "unforgettable" words:

"A good textbook is more valuable than any novel". He now presents his own faith: 'Each man bears within himself, unaware, the imprint of the lives of those he has loved.' This book is a record of the people Djilas knew, who shared his childhood and his schooldays. They compose a portrait of his country, Montenegro, the 'land without recourse', as Njegos called it, when, as Prince Bishop from 1830-1851, he tried to impose some unity and order on its untamed people. 'The story of a family may be the portrait in miniature of a land.' The development of Djilas from a wild peasant child to a university student, is set against the slow emergence of his country from mediaeval barbarism to the beginnings of civilisation.

Djilas grew up in a savage tribal society where sudden death and extreme hardship were accounted normal. Blood feuds were a sacred duty and the lust of vengeance was the sweetest joy a man could know. Centuries of bitter struggle with the Moslem Turks had produced a hatred that no vengeance could allay. He recounts his grandmother's memories: 'How many murders, massacres, decapitations, plundering raids and smouldering ruins!' His aunt Stanojka has trembled ever since the stormy night when she went out alone to bring back the head of her father, slaughtered by the war lord and thrown in a field. The brutality recalls the world of Chekhov's peasantry: Uncle Lazar 'beat both his wife and children, in fits of fury, which took even him by surprise. The next day he feared the wife he had beaten yesterday: Would she be good and tender? His sons did not remain in his debt. When they grew up, they beat him.'

The fanatical pride of the chiefs and their clans would submit to no ruler. But the Great War brought defeat and the shame of an Austrian occupation. Subsequently their fierce independence turned them into bandits and guerillas, bitterly opposed to the union of Montenegro with Serbia and Croatia. Finally, Tito's Partisans were not so remote from the legendary

heroes who had opposed authority through the centuries, instinctive outlaws, like Djilas' uncle Marko who defied the Turks 'killing, looting and burning for twenty six years.'

Where violence is the law, endurance and ferocity count for more than reason and understanding. Djilas emerges as a generous humane witness, deploring the futility of obstinate rage, yet even he cannot shake off the admiration of his race for brute strength and manliness: Bosko Boskovic, a rebel-hunter and police thug, lower than a beast by Djilas' own account, who humbled the Poljani and Rovcani with wanton atrocity, is nevertheless presented with a sneaking sympathy. He dies a hero: 'Suddenly everything was forgotten... There remained only his heroism and glorious name, which personified the heart and soul of the clan.' To avenge his death, the Montenegrins descended on the defenceless Moslem villages in a massacre which shrank from no depravity.

That was in 1924. The same year Djilas left his village to enter high school in Berane. The rest of the book is calmer, a portrait gallery more than anything else, briefly recalling the figures of the following years—the town merchants, his great aunt (and her mud hut which he shared), the headmaster and teachers, the eccentric Russian émigrés, local poets, his fellow pupils, and the girls he longed for. These sketches show his gifts as a writer (his first ambition)—the eye for significant detail, and a compulsive interest in people as individuals, their pathos and idiosyncrasies. Even the most foolish, like Linski, an absurd unhappy poet, are redeemed by his sympathy.

He feels for the uprooted: 'men belonging to one age who were irrevocably disappearing in another different age'—like the 'derelict' officers of the 1912 war who saw themselves superseded by the 'colourless and unpersonable servants' of the 1918 regime. Heroism yields to beaurocracy. What place is there now for the colourful personalities of Father Aleksa, drunken

irreligious and philosophic, or Uncle Teofil, whose pride and dogged creativity started life anew at 45? For Todor Dulovic, a hunted outlaw enduring frostbite and starvation for a lost cause, carrying a poem wrapped in newspaper in which King Nikola reproaches those who have deserted him? Djilas regrets the passing of the old traditions—the *guslars* and folk tales—and dislikes the spread of profanity. The fate of his old mathematics teacher Mijovic, 'thrown out on the street, hungry and in rags, with his wife and children,' because of fascist leanings, moves him to condemn a system which crushes a man with impersonal discrimination. Through all his recollection swells a deep love for his people, 'simple, heroic, poor and honourable as they are'; it is as though he were seeking the soul of his country in all these lost souls.

But though shot through with excitement and descriptions of startling clarity, the book as a whole lacks the continuity of interest which a novel achieves by pursuing its characters at greater length. A figure is no sooner fixed in our minds than Djilas has passed on to the next. The effect is a patchwork of vivid memories: sharp portraits and bright incidents flashlight a turbulent past that is otherwise lost in darkness and confusion. Djilas writes little of himself—what we learn is brief and incidental. Yet his is the only portrait that remains. Through his living presence the book achieves coherence. We sense a man of charity and understanding, with a passionate desire for justice and happiness. An insistent note of disappointment and regret betrays the idealist, nostalgic still for the 'unreal' dreams of his youth. His upbringing had taught him that struggle is the only reality, yet even as a child the mountains had symbolised his longing for purity and release. In the light of his courage and sincerity we can forgive the homely reflections with which he is all too prone to sum up a chapter: their very unself-consciousness endears the author. 'I placed myself on the side of beauty'—and we believe him.

DAVID MCCUTCHION

THE PREHISTORIC BACKGROUND OF INDIAN CULTURE by D. H. Gordon, sponsored by Bhulabhai Memorial Institute. Sole Distributors: N. M. Tripati (Private), Ltd., Bombay; Price Rs. 20/-

INDIAN culture is a very enigmatic thing. So many complex factors have contributed to its make-up, that it is now difficult to define. Some years ago, and even now the so-called Orthodox Scholars, if asked to explain the origin of Indian Culture would begin with the Rig Veda! The new school formed principally by anthropologists (which includes archaeologists) has a much broader and wider outlook. They have in view not only the origins of the seers who composed the Vedas, but all others, like the primitives of Orissa, whose early ancestors might have been responsible for the stone tools found in several parts of India. Col. Gordon is one of such scholars, who attempts in this book a review of such tangible evidence of the existence of men in the dim past. Anthropologists designate assemblages of evidences, such as stone tools, pottery, rock-painting etc. as 'Cultures'. In the absence of writing, deductions are then made about these artifact-makers' social, economic and religious condition.

Col. Gordon does not go into these questions, but is content to examine these 'assemblages' from a chronological point of view. Much of this was known to the specialist from Col. Gordon's writings spread over the last 30 years, whereas the layman would not be much interested in it. However, the publications of the Colonel's views in book form should be welcomed by college teachers and others who may not have an easy access to the journals. Secondly, it has the advantage of giving a succinct and connected account of the development of the Stone Age and later cultures before we have the earliest historical account from the 6th century B.C. onwards.

One, however, wonders why a brief description of our earliest Stone Age Cultures, *viz.* the Soanian and Handaxe Cul-

tures is left out. The Colonel perhaps thought that these were far removed from us, and hence have nothing to do with us!

The chapter on the Rock Shelter is the best. So far, no scholar, Indian or foreign, has had the opportunity which the Colonel had for making such a deep study of these rock paintings and engravings. The chapters which may interest most readers who are anxious to know the origin of the Aryans are very clumsily entitled 'The Dark Age Stone and Copper Cultures and the Threshold of History and the Coming of Iron'. For an average reader these are full of such technical details as to frighten him away. But these present the situation admirably well. Only the reader must be warned against the habit of lower dating. The C. 14 dates¹ for Nevasa, Navdatoli and Kotdiji (3106 $\pm$ 122, 3503 $\pm$ 128 to 3294 $\pm$ 125, 3925 $\pm$ 134 to 4421 $\pm$ 141) seem to be fairly accurate, in spite of the fears expressed against it (C.14 dating) due to continuous atomic explosions. Against the background of the destruction of the Indus Civilization by the Aryans, and the probable Iranian connection suggested by the pottery from Navdatoli-Maheswar on the Narmada, these dates now indicate a well-marked movement of people from Iran who might be Aryans. Of course, all this new work will mean a revision of the book, but that is inevitable in a book based only on archaeological evidence.

H. D. SANKALIA

SOTTO VOCE: by 'Vighneswara' (N. Raghunathan (B. G. Paul & Co. 4, Francis Joseph Street, Madras 1; Pages 352 Price Ordinary Edition Rs. 4/- Library edn. Rs. 5/-).)

VIGHNESWARA is the quaint pen-name under which a brilliant and seasoned leader-writer (since retired) on *The Hindu* had been contributing the 'Sotto

Voce' column to the 'Swatantra' and 'Swarajya' weeklies edited by Khasa Subba Rau. The reserves of mother wit and mature scholarship and the resources of irony and sarcasm which could not be fully used up in the generally staid editorials of the sober daily had found a free outlet in the unfettered columns of the personal weekly. The present volume sub-titled, 'The Coming of Freedom', covering a period of three years, partly before and partly after Freedom, is the first in the series of publications planned. As the reader rambles over this engaging collection of witty, pungent and scintillating snapshots of life by a columnist, the like of whom it would be difficult to find in this country, he is sure to feel that all writing in journals need not be necessarily journalistic.

In the thirteen years that he flourished his sharpened pen (from 1946 onwards) 'Vighneswara' left few aspects of contemporary life untouched and not many of his victims escaped unscathed. It is also true that he touched little that he did not adorn, thought there might be much that he had distorted. When we see eminent (in fields other than writing or reviewing) reviewers taking his views rather too seriously and extolling him for his judgment and wisdom, we feel that by a strange irony of fate he is praised just for the wrong reasons. When the barbed wit is mistaken for mellowed wisdom it is not surprising that the stylist is ignored for the satirist who is so easily elevated to the level of a serious moralist. It is just as well to remember that this vitriolic columnist has more prejudices than views and more allergies than enthusiasms.

Though 'Vighneswara' proclaims to uphold our 'national traditions' and respect our 'native impulses', reflecting 'the immortal longings and the endless promise of a great people' his temperamental jottings are at best faintly nostalgic of a way of life that is gone beyond recall and at worst frankly revivalist, often retrograde. When he regrets the neglect of village choultries and the decay of temples as of the study of Sanskrit, few will care to quarrel with

¹ Elizabeth K. Ralph, "University of Pennsylvania Radiocarbon Dates III" in *American Journal of Science-Radiocarbon Supplement*, Vol. I, 1959, p. 45-58.

him. But many will demur when he bemoans the legislative enactment on the abolition of untouchability—to him a form of sadism—and temple-entry by Harijans, which he dubs as another expression of a morbid mentality. In the Hindu Law reform which enjoins monogamy and permits divorce he sees a gaderene glissade. Egalitarianism, especially of the sexes, is anathema to him. He goes into raptures over the village midwife, the barber-woman—he frowns at starched nurses and sepulchral hospital wards—forgetting that she can indeed be barbarous, as we know to the cost of many young mothers' lives. He thinks well of Ananda Coomaraswami more for having defended the Brahminical caste-system—seen from the safe distance of the Boston Museum—than for giving the world an authentic interpretation of Indian art. He indulges his prejudices, personal and social, at every step, but takes care to wrap them up in what looks, on the surface, like Hindu logic.

Even fairly innocuous objects are made the pet targets of 'Vighneswara's' barbed shafts. Easy tolerance, in religion or social life, is to him a hated thing. Eclecticism is his *bete noire*. The 'rootless cosmopolitans' give him the creeps. Latitudinarians, in general, he would have us avoid like the plague. There are not many aspects of modern life—democracy, socialism, planned economy and the rest—which he can contemplate without losing his peace of mind. He must pour out vials of ridicule on Western medicine and sing the praises of Ayurveda—strictly in theory, of course—to keep in step with the Sanatanists, pure and undefiled.

It is when he turns his fancy from the turmoils of the livelong day to the tranquil realms beyond controversy that Vighneswara shines best as the 'rasika' in him is seen to advantage. Holding forth on the lost art of the Harikatha, he is as eloquent and sounds as convincing as when he tries to describe the genius of Thyagaraja or depict the virtuosity of 'Tiger' Varadachariar. He is at his inspired best in the

lyrical vignettes of his home life and the vivid cameos of the worthies of yesterday he had known and admired. There is a rare subtlety in his comprehension and a naturalness in his exposition.

For sheer compactness of expression and a queer beauty and grandeur of style, that varies from the whimsicality of Lamb to the rhythm and regal harmony of Milton, he is hard to beat. Vighneswara, like Sir Thomas Browne, Elia, R.L.S., and other difficult models of English prose, is an inconveniently, even irritatingly, allusive writer. Latin tags, Greek legends, Tamil proverbs, and Sanskrit dictums, not to speak of the wise saws and modern instances of English literature, all come tumbling down like the limpid waters of a mountain brook. He is scholarly without being scholastic. He does not fight shy of quoting, but his quotes are invariably short and generally hidden. 'Who is Quintilian?' is a brilliant piece in defence of the habit of quoting. 'There is an unlaboured felicity about the perfect quotation, an unbought grace. It elevates the familiar, takes the swelling emotion at the flood-tide, clinches the argument, gives you a sense of completion (assuredly not surfeit) no less satisfying than original and authentic creation'. There is the quotable quote, the columnist at his most felicitous, 'Vighneswara' at his best.

'Vighneswara' the stylist would require a separate—and longish essay all to himself. He scatters his largesse with a prodigality which has delighted those steeped in the classics of the East and the West as much as it has confused others less familiar with the English masters. 'CHITRAGUPTA'

OEDIPUS AND JOB IN WEST AFRICAN RELIGION: Meyer Fortes (Cambridge University Press, pp. 81. s 10-6).

PROFESSOR MEYER FORTES' small book on West African religion covers a good ground. Presented in clear prose, it makes interesting reading. One is pleasantly surprised at the rather vast background against which the religion and ritual beliefs

of a West African tribe are treated. The resemblance between the Oedipus — Job and Tale religion is well demonstrated.

However, one fears that Professor Fortes has overdone the case of social structure. That religion is extrapolation of familiar situations was brought out much better in the *Future of an Illusion* by Freud. But to say that the Tallensi 'worship their ancestors because ancestry, and more particularly parenthood, is the critical and irreducible determinant of their whole social structure' is a little too much. If 'not fear ignorance moral bonds of the filio-parental relationship are the springs of Tale ancestor-worship how do others worship their ancestors? Ancestor worship with a belief in their capacity to do good or bad to the living kinsmen is a common enough phenomenon. From where do the ancestors derive their peculiar power over the Tallensi? The author will doubtless reply, Social Structure of the Tallensi. But the Tale father is not a tyrant, for although on page 28, he says 'the image emerges of the father as a task-master and minor despot,' on the previous page, he says 'Tale fathers are normally kindhearted towards their young children, who are still in a stage of complete dependence on their parents.' How can minor despots of Tale fathers give rise to and support the kind of ancestor worship they have? There is no doubt that the psycho-analytic Oedipal situation — the repressed hatred of growing sons for aging fathers helps Tale men to invest their ancestors with all the boundless power for good or evil. If this be so, it is interesting to read that 'what ancestor-worship provides is an institutionalized scheme of beliefs and practices by means of which men can accept some kind of responsibility for what happens to them and yet feel free of blame for failure to control the vicissitudes of life.' It would be wonderful for mental hygiene if an institution created and maintained by hatred can also have cathartic purpose in such a big measure.

VATSALA RAO

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THE SECRET OF LUCA by Ignazio Silone
(Jonathan Cape 15sh).

The Secret Of Luca by Ignazio Silone, bears many resemblances to current Italian fiction of village life which is a popular theme among the more prominent Italian writers to-day. The story is somewhat more unusual, and the tension reminiscent of a detective story, so that one's interest is sustained throughout.

Two totally different types of people return to their native village on the same day. One is Luca Sabatini, released after serving an unjust prison sentence, and the other, Andrea Cipriani, a local political leader, who has made good. The reception they receive from the villagers is equally different. While a great reception is prepared for Andrea, Luca is greeted with a conspiracy of cold, silent fear. Yet Andrea himself is far more interested in discovering the reason for Luca's silence, which sent him to prison forty years ago, than in the local adulation. Through all the subsequent silence, suspicion and deliberate misunderstanding, Luca himself remains serene and unruffled, relatively unconcerned with the sensation his presence is causing, reconciled to any vicissitudes in the twilight of his existence.

Andrea, however, proceeds to investigate the matter with a thoroughness and tenacity of a hired detective, for Luca himself is the least cooperative of people. The clues lead Andrea from one village personality to the next, and finally, even beyond that, with the result that he arouses general hostility. The obstacles he encounters — from scared villager to callous bureaucrat — one after another, are rather like the 'red herrings' of the *roman policier*, and the general attitude of 'let sleeping dogs lie' is small help to him.

In between are casual and vivid glimpses of village life and its typical characters. Though many of them are only briefly etched, their totality makes a very convincing and complete picture. One recalls that Silone himself comes from a village in the Abruzzi mountains, which perhaps explains his sure and authoritative description of village ethics and their natural reactions. The fear of the unknown and the person who is different and who thus, defies in some subtle way the traditional conceptions of village life, arouses deep suspicion in the bucolic mind, and in this he strikes a note of universality. The quixotic gesture of Luca, however, in a land known for its impetuosity, might seem on the whole unlikely, till one recalls that he is a very different type of person anyway, and hence justifies the writer's approach.

As a picture of contemporary malaise, *The Secret of Luca* no less than any other of the neo-Realist school, paints a depressing, if documentarily effective picture, but compassion rather than any other sentiment predominates. The accent is on humanity and politics is woven in only as a thin, somewhat irrelevant thread. It is an absorbing book which engages the reader's sympathy from the start.

Sometimes, the questioning of established ethics is reminiscent of the other intellectual Italian writers of the school — but here, there is a *Christ*, to which the story bears occasional resemblances. The characters involved however are peasants, simple folk, not intellectuals basically, except perhaps for Andrea, and so the complexities of thought and reaction are less sophisticated and metaphysical, more in keeping with the different type of people involved.

KOBITA SARKAR

OUR REVIEWERS

S. K. Ray is a Barrister-at-Law at Calcutta. He was in England for a number of years.

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"**Chitragupta**" is the pen-name of a Madras journalist, who prefers to remain anonymous.

Vatsala Rao is research fellow in the Sociology Section of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona.

Kobita Sarkar is a free lance writer and a frequent reviewer to *Quest*.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,

Two articles in the current issue of *Quest* are thought-provoking: R. Das's 'A Critique of Karma-vada' and Rajagopalachari's 'The Province of Religion'—the one for its refreshing directness and frankness of approach, the other for the way it circles round and round and never reaches the point.

Indeed the province of religion grows in ever widening circles; it decides everything for man. It appears to imply this: let him but leave himself a plaything in its hands and all will be well. He will have no discontent that will make him restless, for it will firmly tell him that he has been preordained to be where he is; he cannot do much about it. Of course, the prospects are not so bleak—no case is hopeless, for he can have plenty of hopes for a life beyond. Let him have faith and he will have all the good things he wants—in the other world. It may not state things explicitly like this; in fact, it tries to avoid being explicit.

Religion may not unfold all this in its precepts; it may not in fact even seem to concern itself with these things; but in practice this is what it has amounted to. Men mouth its precepts for their convenience, and adopt and continue its practices for their immediate benefits. The 'pious man' will tell his less fortunate friends of the transitoriness of worldly goods, of the evils of the materialistic outlook, and then will hasten to gather more of them.

This is rather more truly 'the province of religion' as we have seen it at work. It is better to be practical and consider what really obtains as religion rather than take up the ideal as enshrined in great books or as interpreted for their own ends by its clever preceptors. However noble its professed ideals may be, in practice its effect has been, more often than not, to keep the greater part of mankind in dread of themselves, of their own thoughts and feelings, to replace reason by faith, to disable intelligence and destroy courage.

At the highest level there is the example of the medieval theories of cosmology being bolstered up by authority, temporal and spiritual, or of a large class of men being denied the privilege of reading certain holy books and being threatened with the severest ordeals in case of transgression;

and at the lower level there is a large area over which the mind is made unable or unwilling to think by religious ideas inculcated in the formative years of life. Everywhere it has worked thus—no less so in our country, where it was subtler and hence surer.

Religion would talk of eternal truths, and yet, among other things, would burn Bruno and imprison Galileo for daring to point out with reason certain false ideas; it would talk of universal love and charity, and yet would keep millions of peoples for centuries in a permanent state of degradation, would call them 'untouchables' and despise them for what they could not help—their birth—and would force them to believe in their own luckless inferiority and give them no hope except in a life hereafter, would talk of tolerance and yet would damn every honest critic of it (who cannot brook its inconsistencies and is not afraid to hide his convictions) eternally and harm him in his temporal life, would talk of detachment from worldliness and yet its most ardent votaries—the virtuous and pious—would stop at nothing to enrich themselves at the cost of any number of other people. It is easy to dismiss all this by saying that the hypocrisies of its votaries should not be visited upon religion. But, unfortunately, in practice its influence has been more often than not to encourage and foster these hypocrisies.

To make religion as practiced the guiding spirit of state policy would be most dangerous; it would bring back in its entirety to our country the dangers we have barely overcome—the inequality of men, the superiority of the high-born and the 'pious', the damning of men because of their birth, the dividing of men into intolerant groups.

A secular state does not act less morally because it has refused to import religious considerations into its policies; in fact, if by 'moral' we mean, as we should, such values as do not affront the dignity or endanger the individuality of man, then the record of the secular state has been far more commendable than that of the religious state, past or present. If only man will not quote divine scripture or sanction in all his petty affairs, he himself would be all the better and God will not be any the worse.

'SANJAYA'

CONTRIBUTORS

SIGMUND FREUD. Born: 1856; died 1939

BISHNU DEY, the eminent Bengali poet and critic, is a frequent contributor to QUEST.

S. Y. KRISHNASWAMY, Retired from the Indian Civil Service in 1957: was in charge of post-war planning in the Madras Government, and later, of food production in the Government of India. Author of *Rural Problems in Madras*, *Food Production in India* and *Kalyani's Husband* (a novel). He has contributed articles on music, art and literary criticism to various periodicals, and a collection of his short stories is soon to be published.

P. J. CHAUDHURY was lecturer in Physics in Santiniketan and is now head of the department of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta. Author of *Studies in Contemporary Aesthetics*, *The Philosophy of Science*.

ANIRUDDHA GUPTA: Lecturer in History at the University of Gauhati (Assam). He is engaged at present in research work on the development of democratic institutions in Nepal. His latest article, "Politics and Elections in Nepal", was published in the April issue of *Political Quarterly*.

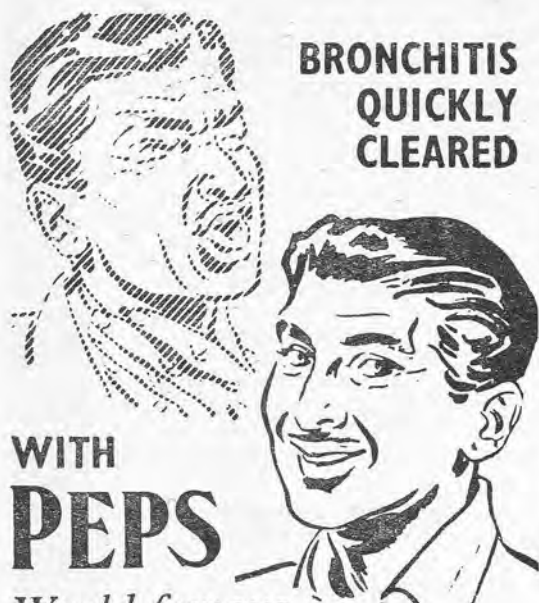
G. V. VISWANATH is a young member of the Indian Administrative Service who writes on literary subjects.

C. L. NAHAL is a lecturer in English Literature in a Delhi College whose articles and short stories have been published in various Indian periodicals. Currently on a study tour in England sponsored by the British Council.

FRITZ STERNBERG is a scholar of international reputation and a recognised authority on Marxist economics and historiography. His book under discussion (*Capitalism and Socialism on Trial*) has been translated into the Japanese and Yugo-Slav languages besides all the principal languages of Western Europe. *Marx and Our Time* (1955) forms a sort of sequel to this book.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI has been introduced before to our readers, but really needs no introduction.

R. DAS was introduced in our last number.



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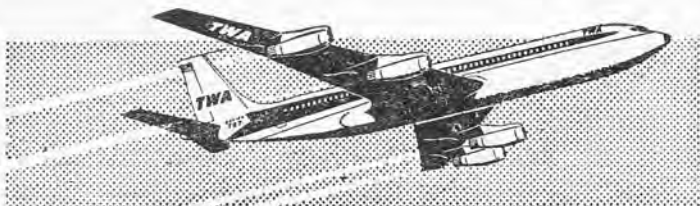
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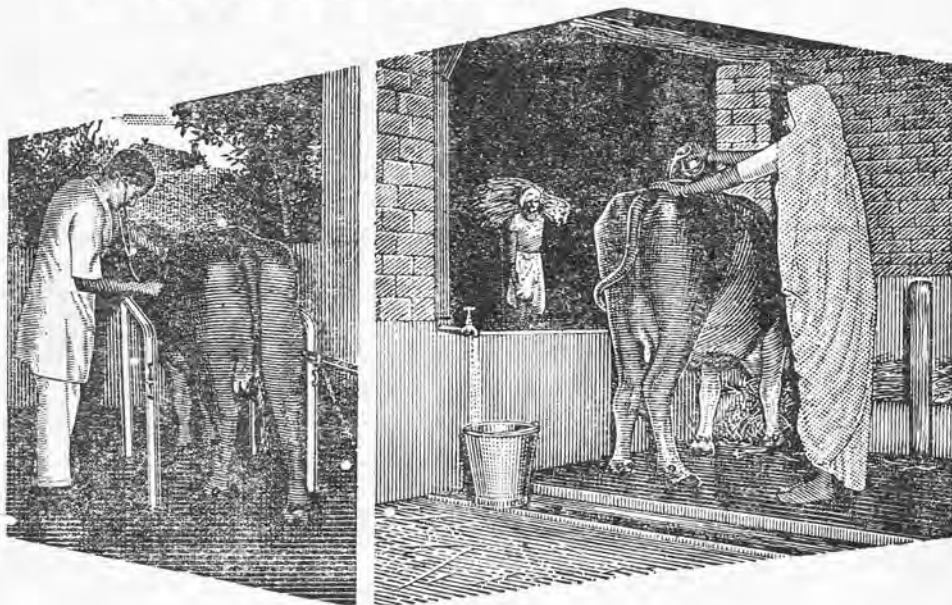
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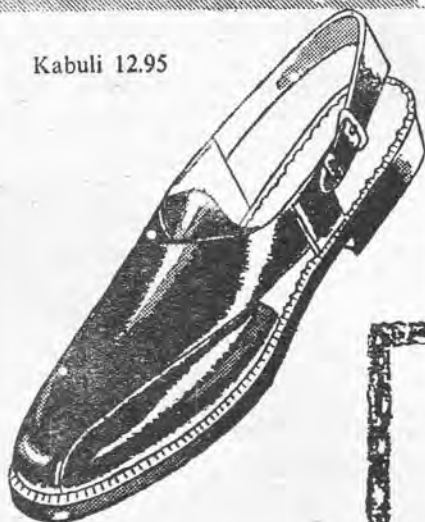
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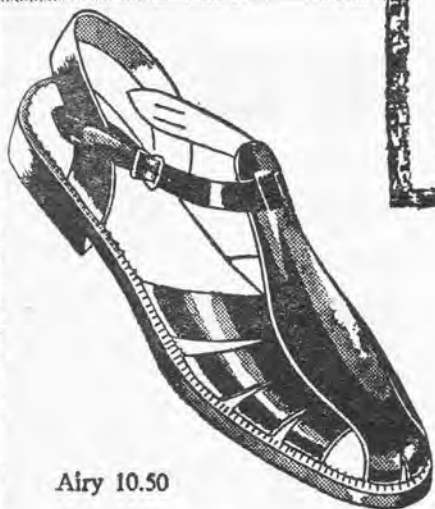
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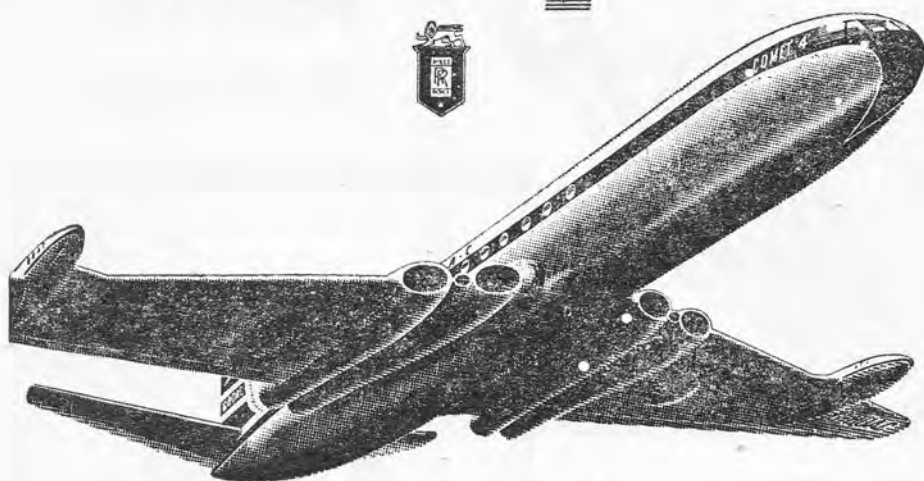


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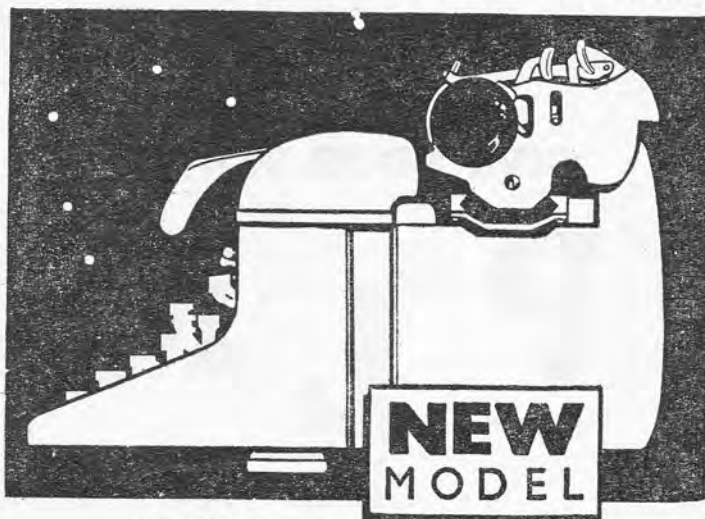
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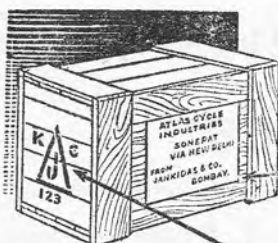


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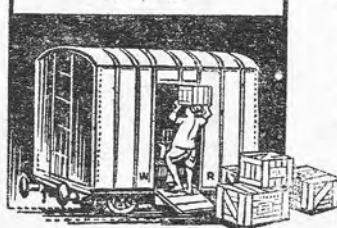
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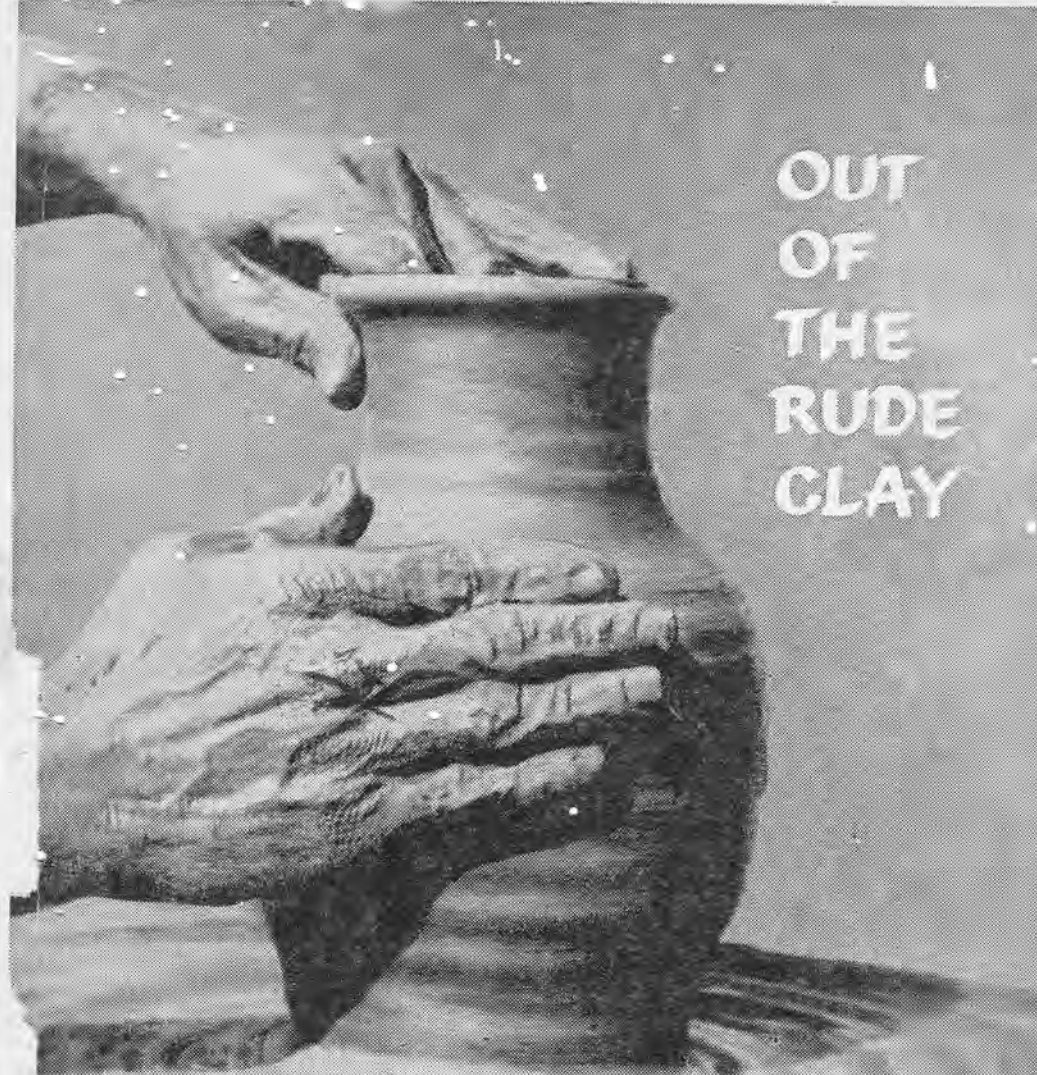
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Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER and MELVIN J. LASKY

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