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THEORIA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
EDITORIAL COMMENT		
NADINE GORDIMER	*by A. Woodward*	1
THE FESTIVAL	*by C. O. Gardner*	13
JOSEPH CONRAD'S POLISH SOUL	*by E. A. Bojarski*	41
CORRESPONDENCE *Othello*	*from W. R. Martin*	47
INDONESIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BEFORE INDEPENDENCE	*by J. P. Nieuwenhuysen*	50
DR HARRY OPPENHEIMER'S ADDRESS		58
THE INTERPRETATION OF BOOK SIX OF VERGIL'S *Aeneid*	*by T. F. Carney*	63
THE CHALLENGE TO OUR ACADEMIC HIGH SCHOOLS	*by W. H. O. Schmidt*	70

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The promised symposium on the Population Problem has been postponed till our next number.

In this number the emphasis falls by chance mainly upon our own country. We have two analyses of the work of South African writers, Nadine Gordimer and H. W. D. Manson, and a controversial down-to-earth lecture on what 'subjects' ought to be unavoidable in our academic high schools. There is also an article on Indonesia that is most relevant to Southern Africa, and to all the other parts of our storm-tossed continent.

But we are not confined to Africa; and the translation, for the first time into English from the Polish, of an interview with Joseph Conrad, the article on Vergil, and the letter on *Othello*, remind us that even at this moment of history when we seem slunk like a frightened tortoise under its shell, we belong to the great, free, open world of the spirit.

NADINE GORDIMER

by ANTHONY WOODWARD

'. . . But in nothing that I read could I find anything that approximated to my own life; to our life on a gold mine in South Africa. Our life was not regulated by the seasons and the elements of weather and emotions, like the life of peasants; nor was it expressed through movements in art, through music heard, through the exchange of ideas, like the life of Europeans shaped by great and ancient cities, so that they were Parisians or Londoners as identifiably as they were Pierre or James. Nor was it even anything like the life of Africa, the continent, as described in books about Africa; perhaps further from this than from any. What did the great rivers, the savage tribes, the jungles and the hunt for huge palm-eared elephants have to do with the sixty miles of Witwatersrand veld that was our Africa? The yellow ridged hills of sand, thrown up and patted down with the unlovely precision that marked them manufactured unmistakably as a sandcastle; the dams of chemical-tinted water, more waste matter brought above ground by man, that stood below them, bringing a false promise of a river—greenness, cool, peace of dipping fronds and birds—to your nose as you sat in the train. The wreckage of old motor car parts, rusting tins and burst shoes that littered the bald veld in between. The advertisement hoardings and the growing real-estate schemes, dusty, treeless, putting out barbed-wire fences on which the little brown mossies swung and pieces of cloth clung, like some forlorn file that recorded the passing of life in a crude fashion. The patches of towns, with their flat streets, tin-roofed houses and red-faced town hall, "Palace" or "Tivoli" showing year-old films from America. We had no lions and we had no art galleries, we heard no Bach and the oracle voice of the ancient Africa did not come to us, was drowned, perhaps, by the records singing of Tennessee in the Greek Cafés and the thump of the Mine stamp batteries which sounded in our ears as unnoticed as our blood.'[1]

This quotation is typical of the need any writer feels to register the quality of his environment in his own personal terms. Prose fiction is especially apt for the purpose and Nadine Gordimer has been performing the necessary, inevitable task in two novels and three volumes of short stories. Nor is she alone in this task; but

[1] *The Lying Days* by Nadine Gordimer. Published by Gollancz, 1953. Pages 96—97.

the fact that neither she nor any other South African fiction writer of this generation is of first-rate quality need not be surprising. Good writing is rare. What one must guard against, in the situation of modern South African fiction, is assuming a pride in the mere fact of having a local literary culture at all. Any modern society that grants its members literacy and some degree of leisure is going to produce a literature of sorts; given the necessary energy (not to be underrated, this, however!), the smallest talent, and the slightest encouragement, writing goes on. In itself it is merely a sociological fact. What is important is to know when real talent appears, and that can only be done by keeping continually in mind standards drawn from the best that has been done in the larger linguistic and literary culture from which the local culture derives. To write in South Africa, to write about South Africa, and to employ indigenous South African imagery has no virtue in itself. (Nor, of course, has the holding of sensitive and enlightened political opinions any *literary* virtue, in itself). Such a delusion, based on family loyalty rather than an intelligent tradition, only makes it more unlikely that a writer of first-rate ability will emerge.

The disconcerting thing about Nadine Gordimer is that she has many of the hall-marks of the potentially first-rate. One does, for instance, in reading her novels and short stories, get a genuinely vivid impression of the living texture of South African landscape and society: its dry heat, its dorps, its suburban homes, its noisy towns, its multi-racial tensions. An authentic feeling of *place* is built up in all her fiction; she has an eye and an ear which are both malicious and energetic, and to register the surface-texture of life with her degree of vitality is a genuinely impressive accomplishment. The following short extracts illustrate this:

> 'The smell of kippers browning in butter brought morning into the flat. The young ones lay late in bed on Sundays but the old master was about the bathroom already, stropping his razor with the slap! slop! slap! of a horse trotting smartly in the street below. "Lizabeth!" he bellowed. "Get my breakfast! Have it ready." His slippers slumped up and down the passage. He stood in the kitchen doorway, pinkly shaven, stomach protruding in his white bowling trousers: "Where's my breakfast?"
>
> Elizabeth carried into the dining room—that, closed against the morning, held last night's liver and cigar smell—the butter and sea scent of kipper, the orange juice, cold and bright in its glass, and the two large squares of brown toast. Out she went again, walking quietly in someone else's shoes, her sullen head in its blue knitted cap.'[1]

> 'The synagogue sent an elderly gentleman who dwindled from a big stomach, outlined with a watch chain, to thin legs that ended in neat, shabby brown shoes, supple with years of polishing. He wore glasses that made his brown eyes look very big. He had a small beard, and his face was pleasantly pink and planned in folds—a fold beneath each eye, another fold where the cheek

skirted the mouth, a fold where the jaw met the neck, a fold where the neck met the collar. There was even a small fold beneath the lobe of each ear, as if the large, useful-looking ears had sagged under their own weight and usefulness over the years.'[2]

Such acute sensuous registering is one of the most basic qualities of a novelist, and she shows enormous virtuosity in the business of creating a living, varied context for what she wants to say. Only a born writer could achieve the sparkle and tang of Nadine Gordimer at her best; whether she is in the last analysis a good writer is another matter. Often her stories are so dazzlingly authentic in their atmosphere of place, in particular, that it is possible to overlook the purpose to which all this skill is deployed.

The method she uses in constructing her short stories has become almost a stylised convention of modern writing in that genre. (It has been patented by *The New Yorker*, the home of a good many of Nadine Gordimer's stories). She takes a small incident—a maimed locust's attempt to leave the ground, a book left at night by a woman visitor in the sitting room of a friend's house, a bird killed by a young girl's carelessness—and, by a swift impressionistic technique, strongly reminiscent of Katherine Mansfield, builds up the revealing pattern of relationships between the symbolic incident and the human characters involved. The space of time covered is short, sometimes contiguous with the facts related, and such a method naturally calls for great condensation by the writer; each piece of description, each detail has to be loaded with suggestion and significance. There can be no 'marking time' in the short story. I have already said that one of her great gifts is precisely that of rendering the sensuous particularity of the moment; there are things to smell, touch and above all to see in her work. With such a gift the condensed sharpness of vision necessary to the short story would seem to be her natural medium. And so I think it is: her novels are inflated episodes, rather too suffused by the personality of the writer. That very gift of sensuous particularity, however, often becomes, even in her short stories, a kind of virtuoso display—an ultimately meaningless accretion of surface vitality to conceal a hollowness of content. After having been dazzled by the surface significance of her work, one finds, all too often, that its implications are banal, sentimental or melodramatic—often a mixture of all three.

I want to take, as an example, one story from *The Soft Voice of the Serpent* which I think is a good one, in many ways, but which has hints of her typical inadequacy. It is called *A Present for a Good Girl* and the context, briefly, is this: a broken-down, rather repulsive old woman comes into a smart jeweller's shop and asks for an expensive bag, which she wants to present to a beloved daughter for Christmas. She cannot pay for it, but one of the assistants, vaguely moved by the old woman's besotted love for her daughter, allows her to pay it off in instalments. The first two instalments

[2] *The Soft Voice of the Serpent* by Nadine Gordimer. Published by Gollancz, 1954. Page 107.

come; and, rather belatedly, the third; the fourth time the old woman comes in drunk and demands the bag, forgetting or ignoring the fact that she has not yet paid it off. There is a row brewing up, but the assistant manages to get rid of her and the shop has just returned to normal when a young blonde woman comes in with the old woman in tow, fiercely offers to pay for the bag, abuses the old woman, and then drags her away.

The opening paragraph of this story is as follows:

> 'On an afternoon in September a woman came into the jeweller's shop. The two assistants, whose bodies had contrived, as human bodies doggedly will, to adapt the straight, hard stretch of the glass showcases to a support, sagged, hips thrust forward, elbows leaning in upon their black crepe-de-Chine-covered stomachs, and looked at her without a flicker, waiting for her to go. For they could see that she did not belong there. No woman in a frayed and shapeless old Leghorn hat, carrying a bulging crash shopping bag decorated in church bazaar fashion with wool embroidery, and wearing stained old sandshoes and cheap thick pink stockings that concertinaed round her ankles, could belong in the jeweller's shop. They knew the kind; simple, a bit dazed, shortsighted, and had wandered in mistaking it for the chemist's two doors up. She would peer round stupidly, looking as if she had stumbled into Aladdin's cave, and when she saw the handsome canteens of cutlery, with their beautifully arranged knives spread like a flashing keyboard in their velvet beds, and the pretty little faces of the watches in their satin cases, and the cool, watery preening of the cut glass beneath its special light, she would mumble and shamble herself out again. So they stood, unmoved, waiting for her to go.'

That seems to me a good piece of writing. It is given actuality by being partly seen through the eyes of the two assistants ('they knew her kind') and yet the whole passage is controlled by the author's own ironic viewpoint. The rhythms are alive and varied: one long sentence, the second last, builds up a whole range of significant impressions, and then the final short, darting sentence gives point and angle to them. And, typically, the whole scene is rendered by means of significant detail—articles of clothing, things: that 'old Leghorn hat', 'the crash shopping-bag decorated in church bazaar fashion with wool embroidery'. This particular method of characterisation by things is, of course, typical of the satirist: it has been called 'the phenomenalist method', and it is very apt for defining people sharply and vividly in their social rôles. (You describe someone's furniture, clothes, etc., and your work of revelation is done.) It is a limited approach, but eminently successful when the writer is content to stick to the level of vivid two-dimensional satirical presentation. (Angus Wilson is a writer who has brought this method to perfection.) In dialogue this method also leads to a certain ironing out of the subtler sympathies: hence, (though this is an extreme case for Nadine Gordimer), the old woman in the story

talks in a caricature of cockney dialect; that puts her on the page before us, certainly, but it is a trick to which, in justice, she does not usually have to resort. Her dialogue, when she is only concerned to build up a swift, chatty atmosphere, is very authentic and natural in its rhythms. The shop assistants' talk among themselves in this story is an example; and that kind of authenticity is always possible for her, as one sees from the elaborate party scenes she loves to build up in her novels. (Like all satirists she loves a party, or any gathering where people are revealed in their all-too-assailable social rôles.) But if she has an ear as well as an eye to render revealingly the cut-and-thrust atmosphere of social chat, she is less pleasing when two people have anything serious to discuss. Such a discussion, about politics, perhaps, or love, is inclined to degenerate into a pretentious debate. Let me put it like this: the décor, the lighting of her fiction are so effective that one is sometimes dazzled into forgetting what dummies the actors are and how contrived the plot.

To return to the story: one might say, so far, that the physical atmosphere of the shop, with its tired, bitchy assistants, as well as the old woman's appearance and general ambience, is marvellously caught—though the latter not without a certain sadistic horror on the author's part: ('Like a beggar exhibiting valuable sores, she smiled on a mouth of gaps and teeth worn like splinters of driftwood.') Nonetheless that image is successful and on the whole relevant in that context, as its function is to register the fascinated horror of the vaguely sympathetic young shop assistant. A few pages further on, however, there is another image which is not functional, and is an example of the poetic exhibitionism that is one of the fatal flaws in Nadine Gordimer's writing. It occurs in this context:

> 'Silently the woman took a ten-shilling note from the flat stomach of her purse, and waited in silence while the receipt was made out. The moment she had the receipt in her possession, and was folding it away in the purse and the purse away in the crash bag, a mood of lighthearted talkativeness seized her. She opened up into confidential mateyness like a Japanese paper flower joyously pretending to be a flower instead of a bit of paper as it swells with water.' [3]

That image has no significant relationship with what one might feel to have been the quality of the old woman's pleasure. It stands out like a sore thumb. Its only purpose is to demonstrate the sensitive poetic inventions of the author; and it is a typical fault, though kept largely in abeyance in this story. It brings a kind of false lyrical afflatus to her writing, because she wants to step outside her admirable but limited range of sharp satirical observation to achieve a tone of pity, lyricism or profundity, for none of which she is adequately equipped. So, when the old woman is being abjectly shooed out of the shop, we have this:

'The broken brim of the hat hid her face as she felt her way out.

[3] Ibid., page 111.

> The whole shop was watching, each man from the pinnacle of his own self-triumph.'[4]

The work of pathos is done in the first sentence; but she cannot resist taking up an awkward, portentous stance in the following one. Again, at the end of this story, one notices a falsity of image and tone at the critical moment of the young girl's anger:

> ' "Tell me how much, and I'll pay it", the girl cut in violently. Under the pale spare skin of her neck, her heart flew up madly, as a bird dashing again and again at its cage. . . . Hot bright tears at the recollection of some recent angry scene fevered the girl's eyes. "*Tell me how much it is*", she whispered fiercely, crazily. She swallowed her tears. "She can't pay", she said, with a look of hopeless disgust at the old woman.'[5]

Here the drama, the tension does not lie in any realised relationship between the girl and the old woman, but in the surface excitability of the writing. It is a *coup de théâtre*, not a genuine revelation. So often her stories build up to a tense over-wrought, over-written climax, that seems to be purely an end in itself; and because it is strained it fails to illuminate life or character in any way, and only draws attention to the sentimental banality of the point made. Feeling is in excess of situation. (It is a habit that is growing on her; her latest collection, *Friday's Footprint*, is full of that kind of *falso virtuoso* dramatics.)

It may seem unfair to judge an author of three books of short stories on one story; but I have tried to generalise from the points made in this particular case, and chosen it because it seems to me to show her, in parts, at her best, and to contain as well, significant and typical lapses from that best. There are many worse stories than that one, there are a few better; *A Watcher of the Dead* is one I have in mind. It is about the way in which, in a non-practising Jewish household, a young girl reacts to the orthodox rite of an old man's coming, for one night, to watch over the dead body of her grandmother; she notices her mother's resentment at not being allowed to touch the body and realises that she has crept in during the night, when the old man has fallen asleep, to be alone with *her* mother. In its, as always, vividly real texture, in its slightly macabre comedy and in its control of tone it succeeds—almost entirely—in avoiding those elements of strain, lyrical posturing and melodrama which I have mentioned as being her besetting faults as a writer. It is notable how authentic in feeling her accounts of Jewish life are—this is especially true of a section describing the heroine's visit to the home of a young Jewish boy who is in love with her, in the novel *The Lying Days;* that section is also free of the pretentions and exhibitionism which mar that novel as a whole. And to it I now turn.

The story briefly is this: the heroine, Helen Burns, lives, discontented and clever, with her rather ordinary middle class family in a

[4]Ibid., page 117.
[5]Ibid., page 117—118.

mining town near Johannesburg. She yearns for a fuller life and deeper experience, and it comes, first, in the shape of a torrid and tremulous romance at the sea-side with a young man named Ludi Koch, and next, more completely, when she goes to the University in Johannesburg. There she has one tentative, transitory affair with a young man, Charles, met at a party; and finally, among the circle of intellectual Bohemians she has drifted into (and by whose cultivated freedom from bourgeois inhibitions she is much impressed), she meets her fate—the cliché is appropriate to the way in which the affair is described—in a young man called Paul. The concluding third of the novel is taken up with a description of his liberal sympathies as a social worker, Helen's participation in his activities, and regular detailed accounts of their life in bed together. She grows bored with him, however, (though it is not put as crudely as that) and finally goes off, alone to Durban where the other, more spiritual love of her life, Joel Aaron, is just leaving in a dedicated manner for Israel. She looks forward, at the conclusion of the book, to a yet fuller life, freed from the illusions she thinks she has outgrown.

If this seems an unsympathetic account, it is so because I find the sensibility revealed through the first person narrator to be so, for all her skill. But Nadine Gordimer is clever enough to realise that certain elements in her heroine's character do need apologising for, and so she inserts, in a concluding scene between Joel and Helen, this passage:

> 'You always set yourself such a terribly high standard, Helen, that's the trouble, You're such a snob, when it comes to emotion. Only the loftiest, the purest, will do for you. Sometimes I've thought that it is a kind of laziness, really. If you embrace something that seems to embody all this idealism, you feel you yourself have achieved the loftiest, the purest, the *most real*.'[6]

I was disconcerted when I came on this passage at the end of the book. It had seemed to me that the authoress was identified—to excess—with all the falseness and pretence of her heroine throughout the book; but I suddenly saw that she was acute enough to cover her own tracks by this interpolated objectivity at the end. It is, however, no more than a trick, an evasion. If this girl's development were seen with a true objectivity it should have been visible through the whole texture of the novel's development, and not just brought in to balance up the books at the end. As it stands, it is a device for having your cake and eating it; so that this ending does not, in fact, strike one as a genuine distancing and grasp, by the author, of the experience, but just as one more attitude struck; the concluding paragraphs do not convince one that the sensibility is any way modified.

I say all this because in criticising the book I am going to assume the responsibility of tone that the author has towards her material, though of course the first person technique is often a device for

[6] *The Lying Days* by Nadine Gordimer. Published by Gollancz, 1953. Page 16.

avoiding full objective grasp of an experience, and one especially dear to women authors writing novels about their spiritual and emotional development. The "I" of such books is pervasively scented with the approbation of the writer.

I now want to look more closely at a typical passage which occurs quite early on in the book:

> 'Farther up, a garage leaned heavily upon an old bare willow was open and spilled out onto the rough track tools, oilcans and the red, tender looking intestines of a tyre. The two Cluff boys with faces fierce with smears, pale khaki shorts hanging distractedly from the hips and their mother's thick knitted socks sunk into fat rims round their pale legs, were helping someone dismantle a motor-cycle. They gave each other technical instructions in terse gasps, as they struggled with the prostrate machine whose handlebars stuck up obstinately into the air.
>
> There was a smell of burning, and the faint intoxication of rotting oranges from the dustbins. I walked closer to the level line of fences, trailing the fingers of my left hand lightly across the corrugations so that they rose and fell in an arpeggio of movement. I thought of water. Of the sea—oh, the surprise, the lift of remembering that there was the sea, that it was there now, somewhere, belonging to last year's and next year's two weeks of holiday at Durban—the sea which did something the same to your fingers, threading the water through them . . . like the pages of a thick book falling away rapidly ripply back beneath your fingers to solidity.—The sea could not be believed in for long, here.'[7]

Before saying anything in criticism of this passage one must note that it has a dense 'particularity'. The scene is there, realised on the page, and that is an admirable thing. It also makes one realise the dominant symbolism that is being used in all the scenery of the book: an escape from sterile domestic dryness to the romantic sea experience. Yet particularity, though a supreme literary virtue, is not enough in itself; one must look further at the whole tone which governs it. There are, it seems to me, a couple of tell-tale details, even in that passage: for instance, 'the red, tender-looking intestines of a tyre'. Isn't this just a little perverse and self consciously 'different'? Even more so when she tells us how Helen trailed her fingers lightly across the corrugations of the fence so that they 'rose and fell in an arpeggio of movement'. The 'arpeggio' is a precious, self-assertive, touch, a piece of sensitive decoration. One notices too, how loose and incantatory the rhythms become when she describes the sea; it is an expressive but dangerous tone. These may seem small faults but I think they are pervasive; and I can best generalise them by saying that they exhibit a sensibility which is narcissistic, which is always striking impressive lyrical attitudes and indulging itself in its own skill. Take the passage that immediately follows:

> 'I sat down on a stone that had a secret cold of its own and began to pull off the scab on my knee. I had been saving that scab for

[7] Ibid., page 16.

days, resisting the compelling urge just to put the edge of my nail beneath it, just to test it. . . Now it was a tough little seal of dried blood, holding but not deeply attached to the new skin hidden beneath it. I did it very slowly, lifting it all round with my thumb-nail and then pinching the skin between my forefinger and thumb so that the edge of the scab showed up free of the skin, a sharp ridge. There was the feeling of it, ready to slough off, unnecessary on my knee; almost an itch. Then I lifted it off quick and clean and there was no tweak of some spot not quite healed, but only the pleasure of the break with the thin tissue that had held it on. Holding the scab carefully, I looked at the healed place. The new pink shiny pale skin seemed stuck like a satiny petal on the old; I felt it tenderly. Then I looked at the scab, held on the ball of my thumb, felt its tough papery uselessness, and the final deadness that had come upon it the moment it was no longer on my leg. Putting it between my front teeth, I bit it in half and looked at the two pieces. Then I took them on the end of my tongue and bit them again and again until they disappeared in my mouth.'[8]

One sees the function of this passage in the emotional symbolism of the heroine's development, and in its way it is well done; one really knows that scab by the end. But the implications are ultimately perverse and pretentious, because she is not seeing that narcissism of hers with true irony and objectivity through the book. One could even take the passage itself as a symbol of what she is doing throughout—pleasantly pulling off the scab of her feelings and tenderly stroking their petals. All too often she cannot resist drawing one's attention to her poetic perceptiveness by a portentous lyrical image, which continually blurs the outline of the genuinely sharp, clear observation she is capable of at her best. Here is another example taken from the passage in which the family are having a row about Helen's future:

'And then, with the inconsequence of daily life in the fluid of which are suspended all stresses, the jagged crystals of beauty, the small, sharp, rusted probes of love, the hate that glints and is gone like a coin in water, my mother said without a change of tone, "You won't forget about the lawn mover, will you? It's Charlie's day again tomorrow." '[9]

This kind of thing adds up to what the French call "*Littérature*"; I could cite hundreds of examples in which she changes tone, takes a deep breath, and launches into some distracting image, or portentous piece of self-analysis which in its elaboration might be Proust or Henry James, but whose content hardly warrants the verbal effort expended.

This self-indulgence in her writing is particularly clear in her attitude to others; leaving aside for the moment her description of Helen's love affairs (for which self-indulgence is a mild word), take this:

[8]Ibid., page 17.
[9]Ibid., pages 88—89.

'The rocks held the scallop of beach. Mrs Koch brought mending or a piece of knitting for one of the grandchildren; I had a book. We talked, but our words were tiny sounds lost in the space of the beach and the sea and the air; phrases torn fluttering rose to sound, sailed, fell to lost as the occasional birds lifted and dropped in the spaces of the air above the sea. We whispered in a great hall where our voices died away unechoed on the floor. We did not notice that we had stopped talking; Mrs Koch knitted without looking, a fine sweat cooling her brow, her eyes absently retaining a look of gentle attention, as if she had forgotten that she was not listening to someone. Easily, like a satisfied dog that is so used to the limits of its own garden that it turns at the open gate and automatically goes back up the same path down which it has just trotted, her mind quietly rounded on the beach and the questioning of the silence and went again to examine the small business of her daily life.

In silence I got up and wandered down towards the sea. The sand was coarser, yellower; then here, where the tide had smoothed and smoothed it, spreading one layer evenly and firmly down over another, it dazzled with its cleanness, and the hardness of it thudded through my heels to my ears like the beat of my own heart in the heat. A thin film of water spread out to my feet; the sea touched me.'[10]

It is hardly necessary to point out the incantatory inflation of that first paragraph—the catch-in-the-throat plangency of the whole tone ('phrases torn fluttering . . .'); or the smugness of the image used for old Mrs Koch when capped by 'in silence I got up and wandered towards the sea . . .'

This parade of sensibility to which one is being continually, monotonously submitted is, for all its air of special perceptive delicacy, the symptom of a certain vulgarity. It is the attitude of an *arriviste*, a gate-crasher into sensitivity. When one gets to the Johannesburg sections and Helen's full-blown love affair, the writing manifests, as well, a painful snobbery: cultural snobbery, at having broken free of all those dull people like her parents, who have not learned to listen to Bach by candlelight balancing plates of salami on their laps; and a sexual snobbery—as well as a sexual vulgarity—the latter having nothing to do with the fact that she describes sexual experience, but with the tone in which she describes it. Before embarking on Helen's torrid affair with Paul she wishes to make one aware that Helen's relationship with Joel Aaron, though not physical at its deepest level, is yet tinged with sexual overtones:

'We walked past the bitten-out rinds of water-melon, the egg-shells and torn paper, back to the car.

Something had stuck to my shoe—"Just a minute"—I held on to the door-handle of the car, balancing on one leg, laughing. "Here"—Joel snapped off a twig and prised at the mess on my heel. It fell away and it was a rubber contraceptive, perished and

[10]Ibid., pages 54—55.

dust-trodden, relic of some hurried encounter behind the trees, inconsequent and shabby testimony. But between us at that moment it was like a crude word, suddenly spoken aloud.'[11]

I do not think that the accusation of vulgarity has to be proved any further: a writer who resorts to that kind of titillating melodrama to gain her effect is self-condemned.

For a more ordinary 'women's-magazine-level' symptom of the same fault, take the passage that describes Helen's first encounter with Paul (and in fairness one must add that this kind of thing is genuinely unexpected after the accomplishment of the short stories, and even of the early childhood section of this novel):

'The Stranger, Paul the stranger. I have looked at that face as I shall never look upon another. There was a light in it for me that put something out; dazzled into black silence. So I shall never again answer with the vivid compulsion that made me watch the face of Paul, spelling it out feature by feature with my eyes, as if my finger traced it in the air and my lips moved about a name without sound.

So much has been written about the curious compelling fascination of the faces of some women, but I do not remember reading anywhere anything that would testify to the same innocent deadliness in the face of a man: a face such as Paul's. Yet just as they do in women, these faces exist in men. It is as if a chance disposition of features, pleasant and ordinary enough in themselves, creates a proportion that is a magic cipher of power. The owners of these faces have only to look.'[12]

What makes this relationship, so unpromisingly stated, even more distasteful, however, is the dreadful knowing air of sexual sophistication with which the encounters are described; a passage like this is redolent of what can only be called sexual snobbery:

'We could not postpone our need of each other for a more convenient place or a more socially acceptable time; we had not reduced love to the status of an appointment for tea. Although Paul was my first lover, and although, or perhaps because, I had been brought up in the world of the Mine where all human relationships were seen as social rather than personal, I had by some miracle grown up woman enough to recognise this proudly. I regretted nothing that I did with Paul, suffered none of the timid shames that sometimes come, despite reason and intellect, to women who have rejected the nurturing of a sterile gentility.'[13]

Nor can she resist telling one, in a passage describing their first love-making that there lying on the floor, was 'the sweater I had so often worn in our house at Atherton. Perhaps the last time I had it on was there'. Such a carefully casual detail gives a viciously complacent flick to this sexual liberation which she is describing throughout with the cheapest kind of rhetoric: a mixture of the

[11] Ibid., pages 145—146.
[12] Ibid., page 215.
[13] Ibid., page 237.

women's magazine stuff I quoted earlier, with a few hints of D. H. Lawrence pastiche to make it 'literary', ('the lordliness' of young male 'legs', 'loins', etc.) And it is just that; all too literary.

Having indulged this sensual day-dream for about a hundred pages the heroine leaves Paul; and is comforted by the remarks made to her by a knowing woman friend:

> '. . . I think you're one of those women who have great talent for loving a man, but he's not whole enough to have that love expended on him. It's too weighty for him . . . He isn't enough of a *central* personality to be able to accept the whole weight of a complete love: it's integration, love is, and that's the antithesis of Paul. You frighten him, I frighten him.'[14]

Leaving aside the stilted jargon of its expression, this diagnosis of the relationship is not denied by the heroine; and it is impossible to decide on its justice because the character of Paul is merely that of a sensual day-dream firmly tied to Helen's reactions to him.

In the final section of the book there is an attempt, as I said earlier, to see the development of Helen's personality in an objective light, by having Joel analyse her as being too snobbish in her yearning for ultimate emotional reality. It shows that the writer realises the need to make some judgement, but it really carries no weight, because the whole book has such a falsity of tone that I think one must assume that it was impossible for the author to achieve any genuine distancing or perspective. For this the technique is partially to blame; and the American critic, Yvor Winters, has diagnosed, in general terms, the dangers of that technique:

> 'It commonly involves the assumption, at the beginning of a story, of the state of feeling proper to the conclusion; then by means of revelation, detail by detail, the feeling is justified. In other words, the initial situations are befogged by unexplained feeling, and the feeling does not develop in clean relationship to the events. The result is usually a kind of diffuse lyricism.'[15]

'A diffuse lyricism'; that sums it up perfectly. And, moreover, it is not a fault only found in this book, in which case it might be unfair to judge it as I have done. That straining after the lyrical afflatus is precisely the quality which blurs the wonderfully sharp edge of her writing at its best, as it is to be found in a few short stories. She is a marvellous, vivacious observer with nothing very subtle or important to say, and with an ever-growing facility for saying it.

[14] Ibid., page 334.

[15] *In Defence of Reason* by Yvor Winters. Published by the University of Denver Press. Page 64.

*THE FESTIVAL**

by C. O. GARDNER

I

The Festival consists, essentially, of two simple stories, the first taking place three hundred years after the second, and in some ways similar to it. The main thing that is proclaimed and rejoiced in by the people in the later story—what, most simply, the festival *celebrates*—is the significance of the similarity between the two stories. I say the stories are simple because both of them have as their main features violent events and actions which lead to reactions and utterances that are not difficult to understand; and Mr Manson's writing—though it is unfashionably in verse—is never obscure. And the 'moral' which is brought out at the end of the play (for *The Festival* is something of a morality play) is disarmingly clear.

Yet, for all this, the play may well seem puzzling at a first reading (it is in fact, as I hope to suggest, all the more likely to be puzzling because we are able only to *read* it). It is indeed in many respects even a difficult play, for it calls upon the reader's imagination in a new and surprising way. But I think it is successful. And for these reasons I think it deserves a fairly close analysis: this is the least a critic can do for what he takes to be a piece of really original writing. Moreover—and especially because one of the startling features of the play is the way in which Mr Manson has worked towards the centre of his subject—I am going to take the play, on the whole, as I find it—scene by scene, step by step.

II

The play opens in mountainous country; and throughout we are not told where we are on the map or when the events portrayed might have taken place. The mild shock this may well produce in us is worth examining. Most modern plays place us firmly, from the first, in a recognisable modern setting (it used to be a drawing-room; nowadays it may be a garret or a backstreet); but it is perhaps significant that so many acclaimed modern plays fail to penetrate below the level of social criticism into 'criticism of life'. Shakespeare must have realized clearly that the possible advantages to be gained by

**The Festival, A Play by H. W. D. Manson* (A. A. Balkema).

explicit contemporaneity are completely outweighed by the pressures and temptations it imposes. Probably the tendency of modern dramatists to portray a contemporary scene stems, like many of their habits, from the novel, which has perhaps been the dominant literary genre in the last hundred years. (A novelist, of course, can spread himself more; usually only a more or less contemporary scene can provide him with as much subtle detail as he requires; but he has *time* to invest the world he evokes with rich meaning, to make it something quite different from what it is in some ways an imitation of.) A play of any value—because of its necessary concentration and its need to be *performed* at one go—will always be a long poem (even if it is not written in formal verse) rather than a short novel. What strikes one most about the indeterminateness of Mr Manson's setting is the way it has left him free to penetrate into what Wordsworth called 'the essential passions of the heart'.

III

On the scene at the beginning are a peasant and his wife. They are resting, but their minds are still reeling from the terrible thing they have seen—a rope bridge snapping. This event, brought vividly to life by the peasant's words, charges the play immediately with awe and terror:

Peasant: The bridge is gone, that's all—just gone . . . Rotten.
It must have been quite rotten . . .
Those great thick ropes . . . all rotten through.
Ai'ee, what a long way down to fall!
. . .
You know how I hate heights . . . that made me hesitate I think.
I looked down . . .
And there . . . below my feet
The bridge hung like a necklace loop
Across the chasm.
The troops of mules and horses, nose to tail, picked their way across . . .
It was hot and still.
Sometimes one would whinny . . . fearful . . .
Lord! how near my death I was
And did not know!
So still and hot . . .
If the bridles had not creaked and jingled,
I'd have heard the river roaring
Far below . . .

Peasant's Wife: Don't! Don't! My stomach heaves! . . .
The horror of it!
All those men and horses—falling
Through all that empty air!

Peasant: It was so hot and quiet and still . . .
Another second and I'd have stepped across.
Peasant's Wife (*clutching him*): No!
Peasant: Yes! I looked down to take the step and . . .
Tung! like a bow-shot—Gone!
Knotted ropes thicker than my fist snapped back
And flung up men and horses—bits of slatted plank
Above my head . . .!
And one step more . . .
Peasant's Wife: No!
Peasant: Did you see?
Peasant's Wife: God grant I shall not always see them! . . .
One man on his back
Clawed like a cat at the air.

These words imprint the catastrophe on our minds with a clarity and a precision that recent literature has not only rarely achieved but has even got out of the habit of attempting to achieve. It is hardly necessary to point out how delicately the lines

below my feet
The bridge hung like a necklace loop
Across the chasm

perform, as it were, the act of perception for us (we catch sight of the bridge, its lovely and precious loop, and then our eyes are swung across the chasm after it); or how exactly

Tung! like a bow-shot—Gone!

echoes the double impact—first on the senses, then on the mind—that such a happening brings about. But this is not, I think, a mere 'purple patch': both of the characters become involved in the description, and the aliveness of the rhythm remains completely relevant to their feelings of ever-renewed horror.

A merchant enters, grieving at his losses: 'Mules, horses . . . all my goods . . . My wife! All gone . . . all gone . . .'. It is a grim picture; but there is something potentially comic in the order in which the merchant enumerates his griefs. Then a bard comes in: he is good-humoured and lively, although he has seen and responded fully to the horror of the fall. He shows an immediate desire to find out the truth of things; he soon works out that the merchant's wife *wasn't* on the bridge when it broke. The bard's discovery—made, significantly, as a result of his precise perception of the scene of the fall—brings more consolation to the others than it does to the merchant.

Then there enter—a surprising thing for us, in our world of republics—a king and a queen. The king turns out to be the king of the country in which the play is set, and the others are 'poor strangers from the other side' of the chasm. He offers compensation to the merchant for his losses (for it is *his* side of the bridge that has broken); and the merchant promptly claims that his wife fell as well as his mules. The others are dumbfounded; but the merchant's wife, who has come in and has been watching quietly, realizes at

once that her husband's lie amounts to an act of murder in his mind and steps forward to prevent the peasant from contradicting him. From now on she is his cousin. The liveliness of his compatriots brings a swift and comic retribution upon the man who has chosen death:

Merchant's Wife (*to Merchant*): Come, cousin, sit . . .
(*to King*) Look how he suffers, Sir . . . he cannot speak
Queen: Poor thing.
King: How can my money comfort him?
Bard (*quickly*): It *cannot*, Sir?
Merchant: Oh! . . . no!
Bard: His suffering knows no bounds . . .
Peasant (*enjoying himself*): Can pennies or pounds bring back his wife?
Bard: Oh . . . she was beautiful . . .
Peasant: . . . Beautiful, Sir . . .
Merchant's Wife (*also enjoying herself*):
I thank you both on his poor wife's behalf . . .
(*to the King*) You see he cannot speak . . .
King: You make me feel ashamed. Good sir, he comforted.
I will not give you money . . .
Merchant: Oh! Oh . . . (*He groans in what sounds like real misery*)
Bard (*ironically*): . . . Be comforted . . .
King: I'll build a monument instead
There at the bridge's head
In honour of your wife . . .

We see plainly, within the fun, how much the merchant has exiled himself from.

Suddenly—but she has been prompted to it by her husband's behaviour—the merchant's wife remembers that it is the Festival day. All the foreigners, except the merchant, begin to sing and dance, to the astonishment and anger of the king. They explain to him that the festivity does honour to the dead:

Merchant's Wife: The bells all ring . . .
All grief and all despair
Are done away with for a day . . .
Peasant's Wife: And when evening at last comes soft
And the lamps are lit,
The people range themselves to sit
And watch a pageant or a play
Put on in honour of some man long dead.
Queen (*to King*): A patron saint, perhaps?
Bard: Oh no!
King: Some famous man?
Bard: Or infamous, Sir—we do not care.
Peasant: All are honoured equally on this day . . .
Peasant's Wife: . . . If they are dead . . .
King: How strange . . .
Bard: It is our custom, Sir.

King: Bur surely not a christian custom?
Bard: No, Sir, not christian,
On this day we do not judge, but honour the dead
In songs and stories.
King: Despite what wickedness and wrongs
They might have done?
Bard: For us, Sir, on this day
Sanctity and depravity
Begin as opposites and end in one;
For while we dance and play
And the urgent drum beats all day long,
They seem to fuse
And make one thing,
As man and muse
Become one thing
When he and she in perfect harmony
Make sweet sense
From life's disorder.
Peasant: (*chanting what is clearly a part of one of the ritual festival songs*):
Good and bad things
Happy and sad things . . .
Peasant's Wife: On this day . . .
All Together: And while we dance and play,
Make one thing and are indivisible.

What is celebrated is not so much the triumph of good (though that is there too) as the pattern into which the many forces in life mould themselves—not so much the *end* of life as its processes and its texture. Wordsworth in *The Prelude*, looking as always at life as it is acted out within himself, has a sense of something similar; and in him too it leads to religious exaltation:

How strange that all
The terrors, pains and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the end!
Thanks to the means which Nature deigned to employ . . .[1]

The religion of which the festival is the supreme expression is the poet's religion: the heresy is to misinterpret or falsify life's workings:

And ther-fore every gentil wight I preye,
For goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
Of evel entente, but that I moot reherce
Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
Or elles falsen som of my matere . . .[2]

The bard, then, is the priest. The dead are honoured 'in songs and

[1]The Prelude. Book I. Lines 344—351.
[2]Chaucer. *The Miller's Prologue*. Lines 63—7.

stories' and the joy of the festival is an aesthetic as well as a religious joy. The dead are understood sympathetically and put into their pattern; meaning is found in their lives, and put into their lives, by the very form of the story, of the dancing, of the drum beats. At the same time this particular meaning is made universal: everyone sees himself afresh:

Peasant's Wife: Life and death,
The last or the first breath . . .
All Together: All, all,
On this day
And while we dance and play,
Make one thing and are indivisible.

That unity which lies behind all things is brought out, and the perception of it gives freedom.

The king discovers that the bard has written a play that he hoped to have performed at the festival, and, on the insistence of the peasant and his wife and the merchant's wife, he politely commands the bard to tell the story of it. The bard explains, diffidently, that it is about Brandel, 'the Black Duke', a man from his own country, who exactly three hundred years earlier had travelled with a King Edmund and a Queen Isabel, ancestors of the royal pair who are on the stage; and Brandel had fallen into the chasm when the bridge broke. It is, as the king says, 'a strangely fitting story'.

But before the bard can begin, the peasant, overcome by enthusiasm, tells the version of the story that *he* knows: Brandel is seen as a dastardly villain. The bard objects to this, and tells the king and queen that it is merely a popular cheapening of the tale and of the character of the hero. Still, the peasant speaks with imaginative gusto, and he seems at certain points in his story to be close enough to the truth for the bard to be able to join in. For example, the latter takes the opportunity of suggesting the terrifying significance of the ravine between the two countries:

Bard: In that poor Queen's mind, ma'am
The way in front was as it is now—broken
Suddenly and horribly
By this rocky gash and roaring stream.
The possible ways across,
Pebbly fords in the valleys below
Where the water is slow
And a horse can go through
Belly-deep only;
And the ways higher up this mountain side
Over glacier slopes that slide from the summit
Into scree, moraine,
Ice and mud ponds
From which this river gathers weight
Of frost-cold water and fury,
Were guarded.
No way through there, above or below,
Except Duke Brandel's bridge—

Brandel's bridge was a leap of the imagination (he built it, we are told, 'for fun'), a thread of life across a gap filled with a wild danger; and it is hinted that this gash had its place too 'in that poor Queen's mind'. And the peasant himself manages to conjure up the frightfulness of Brandel's fall:

Peasant: Now Black Brandel ran back to the bridge . . .
(The Queen was safe on the other side)
And as the black brute swayed across . . .
She saw his bloody hands and knew . . .
Queen: What did she do?
Peasant: With her husband's heavy sword
She cut the ropes that held the bridge . . .
Right through!
King: . . . And Brandel?
Peasant: . . . Fell far, my Lord.

Those two terrible words become part of the feeling in the play: they exist as a reminder and a warning.

The queen finds that the peasant's story has an authentic ring. Thus the bard's duty to tell the true tale, to proclaim the correct pattern of things with becoming ceremony, is made all the more clear: the poet is spurred on by the ignorance of those around him.

But the king and queen resent the bard's belief that he alone knows the truth. The power he claims represents a challenge to their own. Besides, and more important, it is clear that *his* tale will be less to the credit of their ancestors (with whom they instinctively identify themselves) than the peasant's has been. The queen speaks scornfully to the bard, yet she is fascinated by him, and asks him about his 'trade':

Queen: And do these notes say what is true?
Bard: They do not say anything . . .
Queen: Nothing?
Bard: Intimations only
And yet I would not part with them for the world;
Lying curled and asleep somewhere in this scroll
Is the whole truth, ma'am—
I *know* it!
Queen: About what?
Bard: What happened . . .
Queen: Here?
Bard: Yes.
Queen: Long ago?
Bard: Yes.
Queen (*sarcastically*): The dead spoke to you, then?
Bard: Sometimes I've heard scraps and bits
Of snarling, tangled, angry speech,
Or soft low whispers in my ear . . .
Sometimes . . .
Queen (*half ironically*): Really? How remarkable . . .

Bard (*unaware of the irony*): I heard a sigh once—
Clear and quiet—
As light as if someone had stirred in sleep beside me—
That close!
Queen (*half believing him*): Uncanny!
Bard: No, voices only . . .
King: Indeed—just voices, eh?

The king is merely boorish; but the interchange between the bard and the queen is delicately complex. The bard speaks with passionate conviction. He is magnificent, self-absorbed, uncritical (there is more than a touch of Shakespeare's Owen Glendower in him): his imagination mediates quite simply between the ordinary world and some other world. The queen, with the commonsense of womanhood, detects the element of unreality in his pronouncements; yet (one suspects) she is a little dishonest: she will not consider surrendering herself to what she half-feels to be genuinely impressive in the bard.

The bard goes on to speak more fully about his vision. He gives a suggestion of the passionate and tragic exchanges of the play-within-a-play which is to spring from him in Act II:

Bard: All their voices were so very sad . . .
Such lingering, anxious, tender words sometimes they spoke,
Like lovers in the dark—
Parting perhaps . . .
Oh! And then so suddenly spiteful sometimes—terrible!
As if their words were bright, sharp spikes
They were stabbing at each other . . . in the dark.

And he hints at the way in which this new play will unfold:

Queen: And did it make sense?
Bard: None at all, a closed door to me
Until one day
I heard them all, speaking together
For a minute—or more.
Queen: Distinctly? You heard them?
Bard: Those three sad voices plainly.

IV

The next scene—in which everyone is preparing to sleep in the forest—opens with a vivid picture of the country across the ravine:

Peasant: Oh yes, ma'am, on the reverse slopes
There's still some sun, I'd say.
Queen: Shining on what, I wonder?
Peasant: There's water there, Ma'am;
A lake like a long fish asleep in the valley—
Silver at midday—grey on a grey day, of course.
Sometimes it gleams like a gold-fish—I've seen it—
Copper red, at dawn or dusk . . .

But clear and pale and numbing-cold as ice
If you climb down to it.
It's silver-banked with fine, fine sand
And the shallow water starts almost white
Then slips down quick as a slide into blue,
Through blue, blue, blue,
Into quiet still black in the centre—like ink,
Not a stir.
There's oak and chestnut too, much like this ma'am,
Growing all round it.

Queen: In sunlight! Brrr . . . (*she shivers*) It's cold here—quite dark.

This fish-like lake, glorious and noble, almost heraldic, stands as a backdrop to what we are to see. It suggests the magnificent imaginative and chivalric vitality which the festival is an expression of; the queen's country is cold and dark in comparison. Yet the peasant brings the lake to life for the queen: it is as if life and a tendency towards death are brought together . . .

The peasant reminds the king and queen of the bard's importance by comparing him to Brandel himself. But the royal pair will not accept him. The queen has ignored the notes of his play that the bard has lent her, though she is perturbed that he should be angry with her. The king, confronted again by the bard's seriousness, bursts out astonishingly:

King: Have you considered that she might find you arrogant, sir;
Overweening, vain and bumptious,
And the thought of your discomfort may please her?

Bard (*to the Queen astonished*): Do you think I'm arrogant?

Queen (*embarrassed*): Don't be ridiculous.

Bard: But you do! You do think so. Is that why you mock me?

King: She can mock for pure fun if she pleases,
For she is a Queen, as I am a King.

Bard: I see . . .

King: You can make a King do anything can't you
On dog-eared bits of paper—
Well, a King can do anything in real life too—
Just like you—for fun!
Give me your notes
Your notes, I said, Sir!
(*The King throws the notes in the fire*)
There! Look how your mean libel burns!

It is hideously convincing. The king's violence comes from that childish and cowardly spite which is found more often in everyday life than most people realize or would care to admit. His power and his 'fun' are a travesty of the poet's; he is himself 'overweening, vain and bumptious'. Yet the audience is not called upon to condemn the king completely, for we have participated quite as fully in his bewilderment at the bard as in the bard's ecstasy.

The queen and the peasant are horrified; but, pressed on by rage

and shame, the king strikes the bard and has his soldiers (who are at hand) truss him up and throw him into some nearby saplings. But before this is done, the bard has described the almost physical power he has gained over the king:

Bard: Look what I have made you say, Sir.
King: What?
Bard: And do. Are you my slave?
Can I make you show your smallness
To that one woman
You would most wish to have it hidden from?

The point is made as straightforwardly as it might be made in a fairy-tale; but it is not unconvincing. And the Bard has also explained what will happen during the night:

Bard: Sir, you have not done *me* any injury
But the dead I served as a scribe
Must feel quite differently . . .
You've stripped their story of human comment
And guaranteed it will be thought of forever
As disconnected acts—nearly all dishonourable—
But facts all the same,
Which any callow fool can fiddle with.
You've cut their tongues out, Sir!
King: I said be brief.
Isabel, the fellow's mad!
Bard (*passionately disturbed*):
They have not a tongue among them now
To tell their tale with any decorum!
King: The dead are dust—dry dust.
Bard: Air, only air . . . but they know despair . . .
They are not beasts, Sir,
But suffering things
Accustomed to the solace of speech;
I warn you solemnly—
Dumbness will be intolerable for them!
They'll snatch your tongue
And bickering for it, one by one,
Will make it spit up what they must say—
For they are in torment
And they must speak out!
King (*in a mock-kindly voice*):
Tell me, mad man, the thought intrigues me,
Will I begin to rave and gibber—
(*he flicks his fingers*) Like that—in a flash?
In three distinct voices?
Bard: They will speak.
King: But this is fascinating; tell me, when?
Peasant's Wife: To-night!

The bard's power is not merely a power of words. He can (to contradict Auden's statement[3]) make things *happen*; through his

[3] 'For poetry makes nothing happen' (*In memory of W. B. Yeats.*).

skill, airy nothings will be given habitations and names. And the king, for all his scepticism, will be weighed down by the truth.

The idea amuses and annoys the king; but the queen is quiet and in some awe of it.

V

The past comes upon us gradually. The bard comes upon his meaning—or rather, meaning comes upon him, and upon the other characters, and upon us—in slow stages. *The Festival* pictures the very working of the imagination, the gradual laying bare of 'the life of things'.

At the beginning of Act II Scene i, the bard is lying trussed up—his *body* is completely confined—among the saplings, at the back of the stage (and he remains there throughout the scene); and the king and queen are asleep under the roof of a woodcutter's shack. It is night. On to the stage—as if into the dreams of the sleeping king and queen—limps Robert, Duke of Brandel, dressed in black, maimed from his terrible fall; he is (as the stage directions tell us) 'the same man who played the part of the bard in the scene before'.

Brandel comes upon the king, who wakes up, afraid, taking him for Robert the Bard. When he realizes that it is a ghost who is speaking to him, the king protests that he is alive; but Brandel contradicts him:

King: . . . Look I am living!
Brandel (*indulgently*): Are you?
King: Look! (*he slaps his face and limbs*) Alive!
Brandel (*his patience gone and suddenly angry*):
God almighty, man! What sort of worm are you?
Who dead as I am
Done, dug in, rotted for ten generations,
Cannot look a fellow ghost in the eye
Or socket he uses to see with?
Has your spirit even no dignity at all?
Must it squirm still? Pretend
You, unlike me,
Have not felt the worm turn in the foul flesh?
And cried that all you were—or could be—
Has come to carrion?
If only for that last miserable unreality,
I know you are my Edmund!—dead Edmund.
King: I'm not! I'm not! I'm alive—I swear . . .
(*His last word dies rather dismally on his lips—as if there were some doubt in his mind*)
Brandel (*calmly*): Better be dead,
For if you are that living Edmund
A dead man hides inside your head
And you and he are one!

(*A sudden change comes over the King. His voice changes, his manner changes, and his attitude to Brandel changes; he speaks, in fact, with the voice of the* dead *King Edmund who exists so strongly in the living Edmund's consciousness that it looks to the audience as if there are two men in his body*)

The king has already, in the previous scene, taken the part of his ancestor. But it is also the *death* within him—his lack of generosity and of kingliness—which forces him to succumb and to become Edmund I. Still, it is through this transformation that he plays his unwilling part in the festival of life and death.

In the dialogue between Brandel and Edmund I, the old story begins to take shape. Immediately it becomes clear that Brandel acted bravely and that he was betrayed by the king and in some way also by the queen. His actions were heroic:

Brandel: . . . I dare not even look at her
Lest I forgive what no man should . . .
King (*angrily*): Should do, should do! It's always that with you
Isn't it, Brandel—what you *should* do?
Brandel (*bleakly*):
Ay, what else can you do but what you should do?
What have you but one short life?
But given it again,
I would do—what I did do.
And you would give a thousand lives
To do what you did not do, Edmund.
King: Would I?
Brandel: You betrayed me once before—
Would you do that again?
King: I could *not* cut
My world away from beneath my feet . . . for nothing . . .
Brandel: Nothing?
King: *What* for then?
Brandel: So that she could be—a Queen . . .
King: A Queen? Her? Ha! Ha! Ha!

The fall from the bridge, we see, is at the very centre of the battle of souls fought out so long ago. The king is clearly an ignoble person, but he is not unintelligent; and these words of his have some power. Brandel's magnificent gesture (whatever exactly it was) seems to the king to have been partly inspired by a bleak fanaticism, a self-righteous dedication to abstract things, which may have limited the generosity of what he did. We are of course reminded of the bard with his wonderful and earnest cocksureness. And the coming-together of the two Roberts is significant in other ways: the poet is (it suddenly strikes us as inevitable) the equivalent, on a different level of experience, of the noble hero and adventurer.

Brandel died so that Isabel could become a queen. But, we learn, she refused his challenge, came back to a husband she despised, and

lived out her life with him in horror; and now they 'mew and cry out in the night',

each to the other
Complaining how close to each other and forever
They must lie.

And Brandel is in despair: his death achieved nothing; even the words which he shouted to Isabel as he fell were not heard:

Brandel: As I fell . . .
King (*incredulous*): You spoke? Said what?
Brandel: I tried to . . .
King: What? Not comfort her?
Brandel (*rather taken aback*): . . . I meant some comfort . . .
But rock and iron-hard water
Hit sense and breath from me first . . .
King (*with a touch of disbelief but also genuine admiration in his voice*):
Oh, you are crazy! CRAZY!
Brandel (*firmly and didactically*):
She would never have learned from you . . .
King (*bellowing*): What she *should* do?
(*more calmly*) And you could tell her with words, could you?
Brandel: She *saw* me, falling,
Make it plain—that mankind *can* do what it should do . . .

The contrast between the coward and the idealist comes out very powerfully in these lines. Brandel is admirable (and he is vividly created, undeniable for all our Prufrock-like nervousness about heroic sentiments). Yet our view of him must be in some ways similar to the king's: does not Brandel's profound and astonishing humanity become, in the end, somewhat inhuman? Again we have a vivid suggestion of the drop (this fall takes place, in the *words* of the play, again and again): the chasm has defeated Brandel's imaginativeness after all; the sweetness of his impulse is cruelly annihilated.

One by one, the facts and feelings of the old story are suggested or hinted at. The king tells Brandel that he thought—and that the queen hoped—that Brandel would wish to marry her. But Brandel explains (what the king already knows) that the law of their land forbade even the first peer of the realm to consort with queens: 'She and I have known that from childhood'. All that he could offer her was his 'undying loyalty', 'to death if need be'. Brandel abides by what he believes to be right, with complete fidelity; but again—the question is implied—is such a law, and such fidelity to it, somewhat unnatural? The king thinks so; so did Isabel, whose ghost (the king tells us) hates Brandel.

Brandel (*suddenly getting angry*): Hates me! But why?
King: How can you be so utterly . . . inhuman!
Brandel: Haven't I been honourable?
King: Oh, Brandel . . .

Brandel: Haven't I?
King: Scrupulously honourable . . .
Brandel: And didn't she—deliberately—refuse to become a Queen?
Wasn't my country ruined forever
Because she would not be?
Did I die for nothing? fall for nothing?

We begin to become aware of the precise nature of the clash of personalities which took place, three hundred years earlier, between Brandel and Queen Isabel. Since then, she has suffered from remorse, and to Brandel all seems a waste:

What is the use of all man's pain and suffering?

He says to the king, as the latter falls asleep:

You have no guts,
I have no heart, apparently,
And she, poor misery, has no honour
And must be equally indifferent to us both . . .
But—why does that still anger me?

He has begun to understand what happened; but nothing is properly explained or in its place: he is still angry.

And then the queen—it is Isabel II—awakes. She too at first takes Brandel for the bard; but she has been dreaming the things that we have seen and is horrified when the figure before her points to the bard lying inert in the saplings:

Brandel: Yes, it is me!
Queen: Brandel! No! Oh no! no!
Brandel: Yes, poor Brandel.
Queen: No, I'm dreaming! Go away, go away!
Brandel: I cannot . . .
That young man there who moans and turns
In a river of sleep
Has summoned me.
He shivers and cries in the dawn-cold air
And dreams . . .
Of Kings and Queens . . .
Sometimes his dreams of them have come so near the truth
That some ghost-figure stirs in death
And mumbles half-alive a line—or less,
Betraying some trick or mannerism of speech
Which gives the poet power over him.
If he achieves it so unerringly
That his words *are* what we have said
What can we dead men do then, pray,
But act our real parts in his play?

Brandel's speech describes not only the benevolent power that the bard has over him but the exciting hold the play may well begin to have upon the audience. The bard suffers and dreams, but the boldness of his dream accomplishes an unexpected truth. It is interesting to consider that it is its unashamed dreaming—and the meaningfulness, the *accuracy* of it— which gives *The Festival* its power and

makes it so remarkable in the midst of our post-war crop of *tranches de vie*. The combination of easy movement and formality in the last lines of the passage quoted above makes us realize that the bard's struggle 'in the dawn-cold air' has been successful but also that it is through a magical *ordering* of reality that poetic success is achieved.

The queen tells Brandel that she is alive, for all his insistence that she is just like the dead queen; and she orders him to go. For a moment it looks as if the queen will manage to resist the bard's power (and Brandel cannot understand and master her as he could the king). But as Brandel limps away

grotesquely—
Slowly down into the dark—like a twisted toad

the queen takes pity on his deformity and (though Brandel has by now bravely begged her to let him go) by an act of imaginative generosity she becomes the dead Isabel. It is significant that the woman has been moved by the man's wounds.

Isabel I (as the king has warned us) is bitter and disconsolate. Brandel, on the other hand, shows that the picture we gained of him in his conversation with the king was an incomplete one:

Brandel: Tell me what happened . . .
Queen (*flatly*): When?
Brandel: After I fell, Isabel. Tell me.
How did the hours and days go by?
Queen: Like a winter night,
Long and never-ending, Brandel . . .
Brandel: Oh, that we both know, Isabel . . .
Tell me of the summertime . . .
Were some summers sweet? . . .
Were you burnt nut-brown? Oh Isabel!
Did you ride through wheat fields ever—
Trampling them down?
(It's wrong, I know, but did you ever?)
And were they golden-bright?
Was there light and air all round?
Oh, you laughed and laughed!
Or did you sigh
To see the high wheat rippling round you in the wind?
The sweet West wind!

Brandel's values are clearly based upon an alert appreciation of living, not upon any pious rejection. But his enthusiasm still gets no response from Isabel:

Isabel: My sunlit years were as dull as death!
Dull! Dull!
What is life but waiting for death?

This bitterness soon becomes anger, as it was bound to:

Isabel: Let me hear *you*
With your few years of experience of it
Tell me what was so wonderful in life.
I saw it all out

Till horrible senility
Made a dribbling fool of me.
Everything's clean cut for *you* . . .
And we, who cannot see it clearly,
Are inferior, aren't we?
(*Brandel does not answer*)
Aren't we?
Yet given your conviction, anyone—
Anyone, low or high
Even he or I
Could be a hero too . . .
And live in Elysium!

Brandel (*with a blaze of temper*):
Be silent, woman, you disgrace yourself to speak like that!

Queen (*pleased to have angered him*):
Listen to him! Listen to him! *Still* the same!
Disgrace myself? . . . Disgrace . . . a word . . .
But you can't even bear to *hear* it—can you?

Brandel: Not from you. A Queen must not . . .

Queen: Disgrace herself?
But I did, didn't I?

Brandel: You didn't even try to be . . .

Queen: A Queen? For whose sake? Yours? Ha! Ha!

Brandel: There are some things that are bigger than ourselves . . .

Queen: Listen to the slave speak! I am a Queen.

Brandel: No, you are not, but you could have been.

Queen: I did not *want* to be!

The queen's plight is ironic and very sad. She has ended up with a disgust at life; yet in her disagreement with Brandel she clearly meant to be—indeed she clearly was—a representative of warm and vulnerable *life* against his 'conviction', what seemed to be his abstract delight in being a hero.

Disgrace myself? . . . Disgrace . . . a word . . .

The faint memory of Falstaff's contempt for Hotspur is not irrelevant. Brandel seems to be noble, and he despises those who cannot make his pace; but in reality, she says, his heroics and his enthusiasm are cheap, and he is a slave to his own ideas. *She* is a queen—mistress of herself, and wife to a king (for the moment she forgets that these two implied assertions have to be qualified), though not the queen that Brandel had imagined in his mind. In Brandel, on the other hand, we detect an awe and a humility, a passionate dedication to the right order of things—or to the right order as he conceives it. The dialogue is fierce and pregnant.

Brandel tells Isabel that he spoke to her as he fell. She is horrified and impressed, but tries to sneer at the gesture. Brandel's manly sincerity comes back to her:

Queen: Doesn't every common little hero know that sort of trick?

Brandel: Trick?

Queen: Suspending knowledge or belief in death
For a second or so!

Brandel (*passionately*): You must not say that!
You may have been on the brink of death,
So near, perhaps, your foot may have dislodged a stone . . .
And seen it fall.
But stepping *backwards* from the brink
You cannot say:
'I think it's nothing at all to fall',
Or afterwards, 'I *could* have jumped . . .'
Jump or don't jump! Know you did or did not!
Don't say it's nothing . . .
For I know it is not!

Queen: You know everything, don't you, Brandel?

Brandel: Everything about falling, Isabel,
From beginning to end!

And Isabel is overcome by remorse and grief. Her distress answers Brandel's; and the new closeness they feel helps them to plumb their enmity more deeply and more honestly. Isabel speaks now not from any false pride or self-will but from the bitterness of experience:

Queen: . . . And I wept all night . . .
And in the morning . . . everything was exactly the same . . .
Despite what you had done.
Nothing happened . . . no-one came . . .
I realized I was alone . . . with what?
A notion!
How far you fell the day before . . .!
For what?
For nothing, Brandel . . .
I heard myself laugh that out loud . . .
For nothing! Nothing!

Brandel: Don't, Isabel.

Queen (*laughing and crying hysterically now*):
It seemed so silly!
All alone with a notion
On that bare, high mountainside . . .

Brandel knows everything about falling, but he doesn't know everything about not falling. We suddenly see that Isabel's feelings are perhaps as deep and as right as Brandel's. The grief, the feeling of extraordinary usualness, the need to apprehend a thing physically before it has any meaning—all this comes across forcefully. And it becomes clear that Brandel has not only failed to take into account a part (and an important part) of human nature but that he has perhaps evaded something by falling. There is in her a sort of imaginativeness that he lacks:

Queen: Oh, you don't know despair!

Brandel: Don't I?

Queen: No!—Or what it is
Not to feel
Or care
That the one you loved the day before was dead!

For Isabel, despair is not so much a lack of hope ('hope' hasn't much meaning for her) as a lack of lively feeling.

Brandel has worked out what Isabel's rôle as queen ought to be, but he has not seen that it has not become something real for her. 'Why try to make me what I'm not?' she asks;

Why should I be your pet Queen,
And believe implicitly what you believe?

Brandel is somewhat cowed. He begins to realize that he and Isabel 'live in different worlds': the very voyaging onwards which he constantly desires for himself is to her the imposition of a theory upon the reality she knows so intimately. Brandel states what the difference between them is, and says that he now need feel no more grief. But Isabel loves Brandel, and he loves her, and each must therefore feel that the other has betrayed their love. The queen's anger flashes out deeply, terrifyingly; she strikes him:

Queen: Don't glower at me—you are a fraud!
Ha, Ha, you are!
A mere, smug, posturing fraud.
Brandel (*in an agonized voice*): Don't!
Queen: Ha! does it hurt? . . . Vanity! . . . Vanity!
Mere mock-vanity, Brandel. You are not even angry!
Oh you feeble mock-valiant fraud!

In her hysterical grief and her desire to justify herself, she becomes meanly dishonest (we are reminded of Edmund II's brutal treatment of the bard). Suddenly, for a moment, Brandel grabs her by the throat.

Then—throughout the scene, the falling and rising emotions are convincingly acted out—there is a sort of reconciliation: both are ashamed. As they stand a few feet apart, facing each other, the gulf between them becomes almost tangible—and of course the deep gulf has been there from the beginning of the play. Now, significantly and ironically, it is the queen who invites, Brandel who will not move:

Queen (*stretching her hand imploringly across* [*the distance between them*]):
Oh, Brandel—try—for my sake—
Reach your hand across . . . and I will hold you!
Brandel (*not moving a muscle*):
I cannot. There is no bridge now, not a rope or strand left . . .
One cannot walk on air.
Queen: No, Brandel?
Brandel: No. So I must go, Isabel . . .

It was Brandel who cut the ropes, and fell. He has now made a new assessment of that action; he quietly asks Isabel to forgive him.

But at this moment *she* comes to sympathize with *him*. In a sense they both leap across the chasm:

Brandel: But forgive me one thing first.
Queen: What? What, Brandel?—Anything!
Brandel: Isabel, I did not know how mad I was before . . .
Queen: Mad?
Brandel: Or how cold-heartedly I tried to force you . . .
Queen: Force me?
Brandel: . . . To be a thing like me . . .
We believe or we don't.
I thought that I could make you see.
Queen: But I should have been . . . !
Brandel: A Queen? Should you?

They are getting to the bottom of themselves and of their conflict. Brandel brings out his confession—places his past before himself and before Isabel—with passionate lucidity:

I tried to buy, with sheer conviction as my cash,
What no man must,
Your conscience, Isabel.

We can feel both his contempt for what was vulgar and bullying in his action and his humility as he realizes that it is something very central in her—indeed it is Isabel herself—that he has tried to possess. At the same time, these lines have a formality, a finality, which suggests the pattern of meaning and understanding that is being woven.

At the next words one part of the pattern is completed:

Brandel: Then be free, be free, I beg you
Of guilt and misery on my behalf . . .
But try to see . . .
Queen: What?
Brandel: Why I did that.
I am . . . (*he pauses, looking for the word*) . . . a man . . .
A lost man . . .
But all men are lost, Isabel, in a way,
Because they cannot make a thing
That *really* lives—
Unless it is inside their heads . . . and that's only half-alive.
Forgive me that then, if you can, and be done.
Queen: I accept and forgive you, Brandel.
What else could any poor woman do?
But please—accept me too.
Brandel: Of course.
Queen: I am a woman.
Brandel (*solemnly*): I accept that . . .

These lines illustrate well the complete simplicity (so much having gone before of course) with which Manson is able to tackle this profound conflict. In fact the profundity of the conflict, and its universality, are brought out by the simple words (their significance

pointed by the alert rhythm): 'men'—'lost'; 'make', 'lives'—'heads', 'half-alive'; 'poor woman'—'do'.

Isabel is a woman, rooted in actuality, in what she has felt. She has a real honesty, yet it is partly that fixed and unenterprising attachment to the facts of one's immediate condition which can perhaps also be a sort of *dis*honesty. She is down-to-earth, a believer in full *living*, frail: in one of her aspects she is a curiously modern figure. Brandel, on the other hand, it is quite possible to imagine as having flourished a full three hundred years ago (the suggestion I am bringing out is one which I think the play's time-structure does contain): he is a hero, willing to limit his life, to cut it away, for something that he sees as noble (there is a touch of Don Quixote in him). He is, too, magnificently masculine, in his virtues and in his faults. And of course he is a poet—the bard—astonished at the paradox that his work leads him to deny the very values he is struggling for: his actions on behalf of *life* (as he conceives it) are not themselves life-giving; what is imagined doesn't enrich but wars with reality. He is trapped in the same way as the poet Yeats, meditating upon his past creations, described himself as being trapped:

> And this brought forth a dream and soon enough
> This dream itself had all my thought and love.[4]

Brandel is even a priest, celibate, trying to spread grace abroad—to change people spiritually by virtue of the sacrifice he performs.

Brandel is all these things: man, hero, poet, priest. In him the richness of manliness is gathered. And yet he is a lost man: both his struggle with reality and his struggle with the woman who complements him and stands against him have failed. Brandel's despair and Isabel's despair, embodied as they are, affect us all. And perhaps they may affect *us*, his first readers and audiences, in a special way; for in the end *The Festival* is a profoundly contemporary play. The antinomies which we confront in it are precisely those which are thrust with unusual force upon many sensitive people to-day. May not a dedication (perhaps an even heroic dedication) to a fullness of living seem incompatible with any superimposed ideas or beliefs about 'what a good life *should* be'—especially when these beliefs may sometimes call for a sacrifice of some part of one's living? Can concepts and duties be made fully human? What is generosity? Can one be both 'responsible' and fully alive? It is not unimportant that, again, the great poet of our age, W. B. Yeats, has dealt in his very different way with some of these 'contraries':

> Although the summer sunlight gild
> Cloudy leafage of the sky,
> Or wintry moonlight sink the field
> In storm-scattered intricacy,
> I cannot look thereon,
> Responsibility so weighs me down.[5]

[4] *The Circus Animal's Desertion.*
[5] *Vacillation.*

Can the mind, with all its aspirations, and the body, with its rich demands, ever be one? And can a man and a woman ever really understand each other?

VI

I have made these formulations of some of the things that are thrown out by the emotional clash at the core of the play, not because the play ends or reaches its most important climax at this point, but because my fairly detailed analysis has gone on long enough. I shall deal with the remainder of the play—the second half of it—comparatively briefly.

At the end of the scene I have been describing (Act II Scene i), we find that Brandel and Isabel have, by their generous acceptance of each other, placed themselves more firmly than ever in the benevolent grips of the trussed-up bard. Now it is the queen who encourages Brandel and describes what is happening:

> If his insight or sympathy and skill
> Like unsubstantial fingers
> Can strum across our throat chords still,
> After all these years,
> We may for once
> Speak with the clarity and courage of angels,
> And come together,
> And lie forever together in the dark—at rest.

The interchange between two ghosts which we have seen turns out to be only the prologue to what might almost be called the play proper. We are whirled back through time to the same scene three hundred years earlier.

The Festival is never undramatic (the dialogue is always human and 'felt', never merely polemical as the dialogue in Shaw or Sartre often is); but the play becomes more and more *physically* dramatic. We work our way towards Brandel's act itself; and as we move the exact outline of the scene, and the precise circumstances surrounding the breaking of the bridge, become clear. And our involvement becomes at every moment fuller as the poet leads us back through the play's conflicting emotions on a spiral path which pierces deeper and deeper into these emotions and ever closer to the action which has both crystallized them and perpetuated them.

Yet at the same time, at the beginning of Act II Scene ii, Brandel and Isabel *choose consciously* to go through everything again:

King: If we start it all again from here, how will it end
Or begin again? You know as well as I do. What for?
From here we will be hunted,
Hounded through this forest—as we were before,
Live out all that agony of fear,
Do all and say all we did before,
Betray each other and ourselves again. What for?
Have you forgotten the pain of it, Isabel?

Queen: None of it. Not one second or instant of it.
I would rather have it all
Than be dead again before my time.
King (*to Brandel*): And you? Who have such a few hours left?
Brandel (*stirred by the Queen's answer*):
Let life beat on I say—beat on . . .

They are willing to accept, to take responsibility for what they have done. And they do not only (as in the previous scene) state clearly what their actions were; they live through them again. Thus they free themselves from remorse and anger and anxiety; what they did is given meaning, fitted into its pattern. They come to understand themselves and each other; strands of imaginative sympathy are thrown across the chasm between them; and, when in the next scene the bridge finally breaks and we see (or almost see) Brandel's actual fall, a spiritual bridge is there for the first time. The bard's story, which is something real and before our eyes, brings about, enacts, the very unifying which the festival proclaims.

But there is nothing mechanical and simple about the solution, the 'rest', which Brandel and Isabel achieve. They live out the important moments of their lives fully and accurately: the dance of exorcism contains all the sadness and bitterness of reality.

VII

And so we move into the old story itself. We are plunged into the intensity of a summer day. We see Edmund and Isabel, vigorously alive, manacled together, fleeing from Edmund's inflamed subjects. It becomes clear that Isabel had been due to be crowned Queen of the country across the ravine, but that—completely against the advice of her devoted first peer of the realm, Brandel—she has run away, and become the wife of Edmund, whom she despises. It is significant that Edmund has allowed some soldiers to fetter the two of them together, and that he is afraid to cut off his arm in order to free himself from her (for she has become too exhausted to run any further). Yet, for all this, Edmund commands at least a pitying sympathy from the audience.

Brandel enters. He breaks the chain which joins them together (the action is symbolic), and says that he has come to take Isabel back. He is willing to take the cringing Edmund too. His demand is imperious, but he explains it by describing very vividly what has happened to their realm since she has left:

Imagine it, Isabel, in your mind's eye . . .
A day of confusion . . .
As if the earth were crumbling underfoot.
Ordinary men and women
Walked up and down the streets all night
Distractedly and nervously asking,
'What will become of us?' They well might ask . . .

(*Brandel rounds angrily on the Queen*)
You knew how things stood! Didn't we tell you?
Why did you leave them—and us—alone?
What power had we, the old nobility, for independent action?
Didn't we ourselves deliberately limit it—?
Agree—that our power stemmed only from the Queen?

He calls frankly upon her sympathy. He describes how there has been an insurrection in their land; for a while all tradition and order were annihilated. Isabel's action proved destructive:

Brandel: The up-start nobility saw their chance all right
And rose up against me, saying . . .
Queen: No!
Brandel: Yes, they elected . . .
Queen: A King? Oh, no!
Brandel (*bitterly*): A King! Ay, Isabel . . . a new thing—
Liberty too—new liberty—
To do whatever you like to do—
(*ironically*) Freedom for all!
Queen: Freedom!
Brandel (*bitterly*): Liberty!
On that cry the scum of the city
Rose up and burned down
All that was lovely and old in the town . . . (he pauses)
It is best not to ask or ever discover
What deeds your countrymen did that day . . .
We who saw . . . oh, Isabel!
They burned our poor horses—alive in the streets.
Queen (*horrified and perplexed*): But why? . . . why?
Brandel (*bitterly*): Only the old nobility love horses.
Queen: . . . Not true . . . !
Brandel (*soberly*): It is true! . . . men you knew,
Grooms who tended them, and lovingly gave them names
Like Mirabell, Blue Prince, Lucky Boy, Lucifer,
Rammed burning brands into their eyes.

It is a startling and convincing account (one notices, for example, the destructiveness conveyed in 'Rose *up* and burned *down*); the values that Brandel is devoted to are made freshly concrete. And his promise to the loyal peasants, who have since overthrown the revolutionaries, that Isabel will come back and be queen again does not seem unreasonable.

The queen is deeply moved; yet she cannot accept Brandel's deciding for her. We are back at the central conflict. A brief and lively interchange takes place (but now almost every word has the weight of the play behind it). And then Brandel and Isabel formulate their attitudes with a new and magnificent clarity, in a passage which, for all its length, I am going to quote. The way in which it gives further flesh to what has gone before (especially in the imagery—

again we come upon the mountain, the wheat fields. the chasm) needs no comment:

Brandel: No, you look at me with eyes that see my mind
As some grand rock or mountain
And hear my words as if they were steep screes
That slither away into a senseless mist,
Or soar like cliffs
And hide themselves in rolling fog—unreal—all quite unreal.
But look at me honestly, look.
It's true that part of me looks down on mankind,
Yet try to see what I see, Isabel, from where I stand.
The man in the valley sees his farm,
He cannot see so falsely
Nor can he see as far
As I who look down on his valley.
The quince in the hedge is yellow to-day
Which a month ago was green.
The rutted lanes are denser now,
Maybe the wheat fields are bronzer-gold,
And here and there more scarlet-headed poppies show
Than a week ago.
A little back from where I watch him
His orchard trees once stood like spectres in the snow
Though now they spread their shade
Of lusty leaf and apple, red above his head.
He hears his own hives murmur.
To me the whole sweet valley hums.
I cannot live in such simplicity,
But am I false? Thoughts and theories only, Isabel?

King: She does not want to be a Queen or sit on any mountain top.
Isn't that obvious? Can't you see—or won't you?

Queen: Leave him, Edmund.
Oh, Brandel—if I could be . . . But look honestly at me.
Can't you see? You know what I mean don't you?
Don't flatter me. I'm quite in earnest.

Brandel: What do you expect me to see —?
A meanness or infirmity of spirit branded there forever on you
By one poor act of desperation and despair?

Queen: Oh, Brandel, you are tireless . . . but listen . . .
Let me speak quite plainly just this once.
Confidence and courage are mostly the ability
To believe what we feel.
Aren't we, in some measure, limited by what we *can* feel—
Or sustain as feeling until the act that makes it fact is done?
What if the sense to feel *is* faint?
Can you conceive that?—small?

Hush, hush, hush—now listen . . .
You say to me 'be Queen!' I say 'I cannot',
So we are, or have been in the past,
Like two who stare across a crevasse at each other.
You say 'jump' . . .

Brandel (*confidently*): . . . You can!

Queen: *You* know that, not I . . .

Brandel (*imploringly*): Trust me!

Queen: I do.
Yet I am telling you: do not trust me.
In that, at least, I can be honest. Don't ask me to. I'll fail.
Leave me, Brandel. Can't you see?

King (*to Brandel*): Are you blind or only brutal? Leave her!

Queen: Oh, Edmund, please . . . (*turning to Brandel*)
If I were only more vainglorious, Brandel,
I could perhaps on the strength of that vice leap—
And heart-in-throat arrive—
Some sort of Queen on the other side.

Brandel: You would be! You would be a real Queen!

Queen: You are incurable.

Finally Isabel says grudgingly that she will go with Brandel; and the three of them set off for the gorge . . .

VIII

Act II Scene iii is a scene of action—actions crisply performed and actions cleanly described. It is in some ways like a scene from Hemingway; but the articulateness achieved in the previous scenes bestows upon the terse speeches of this scene a significance that Hemingway seldom manages to embody.

We are on a rocky promontory just above Brandel's bridge; and we see Brandel, Isabel and Edmund in their crisis. They are being chased, and they find that there are soldiers on the bridge. Edmund is terrified and stupidly vicious; when Brandel and Isabel are forced to leave him (for his ankle is broken) and make a dash for the bridge, he betrays them, ripping off his royal robes in order to do so. Isabel we see urgent and sensible. Brandel's cutting and fall (described at the end of the scene by a group of soldiers) turns out to be even braver and more honourable—and more wasted—than we could have suspected.

IX

It is the Festival of Death and Life; and the brief third act completes the relationship—the pattern of significances set up—between the dead people we have been seeing and the living people through whose mouths they spoke. We find ourselves back at the wood-

cutter's shack, in the early morning. All except the three main actors (the bard, Isabel II and Edmund II) are awake, and in fact eating breakfast; and they discuss what has been brought to life during the night.

The merchant, sceptical as always, offers a chic psychological explanation of what has happened. He says that the king and queen have spoken as they did because it was

all in their heads—
Their hidden selves—the trash in them—that's all—coming out,
As in vino veritas;

and Brandel is to him nothing more than a personification of their guilt. But the others believe, beyond this, that something real has happened, and that the king and queen will wake up quite changed, having burned away their old selves just as Brandel and the first Isabel burned away their remorse. The peasant and his wife believe that the three people from the past have been 'actually and in the body—one with the dead', whereas the merchant's wife believes that they were

as near being other bodies
As men and women can possibly be;

but all three believe firmly in what the mind and the imagination can do.

The king and the queen awake, joyful, relieved, repentant, changed. The king frees the frozen bard and asks for his forgiveness, and he and his wife stand in shame before the others. But to their surprise they are congratulated. The bard had done his work well —the play, the ritual, and Brandel's part were his—but the king and queen have played their parts fully too:

Bard (*getting up stiffly*): Oh, oh, you must not be ashamed . . .
Peasant's Wife (*laughing happily*): Ha! Ha! Ha!
King (*piteously*): Don't mock me, mother . . .
Bard: She's not *mocking* you! How were we, mother? How was it?
Peasant's Wife: Wonderful!
Bard: Were we true?
Peasant's Wife: Perfect! Perfect!—as if they were you!
Bard: Ah, that's a good sign . . . and the voices?
Merchant's Wife: Clear.
Bard (*to merchant's wife*): Did you hear every word?
Merchant's Wife: Every syllable!
(*at this the King hides his head in shame*)
Bard (*suddenly seeing this*):
Oh, no, no, no, Sir. There is no shame in it—
Honour only—for you and for me.
Peasant's Wife (*to the King*): You were the best of all . . .
King (*astonished*): I was?
Merchant's Wife: The dead love you most . . .
Peasant: Surely, surely . . .

King: Love *me*?
Peasant's Wife (*conversationally to the others*):
Wouldn't you say so?
Peasant: Any day!
Merchant's Wife: Did you notice how clearly his voice came out?

The king, humbled by his guilt, has opened himself before reality; and imaginativeness has come upon him—as it came upon Wordsworth—as a sort of grace, flowing from a freely-given revelation. Religious and moral awareness—it is clearly implied—comes from an ability to imagine deeply. The king and queen have given life to the dead; but the king recognizes that he and his wife have *received* life from them:

The dead have been generous
And warned us, Isabel.
I beat the bard and burned his book,
Dead Edmund let him die on the bridge . . .
. . . it was myself I saw.

The king is told that now he has been spoken to by the dead he will do great deeds.

And so the vision that has been engendered is seen as passing into everyday living and back into the festival itself:

Bard: . . . And happy the land,
That has such a man for King.
Peasant: For out of sweetness comes strength—so they say . . .
Peasant's Wife: And out of strength comes confidence . . .
Merchant's Wife: And out of confidence . . .
Peasant (*laughing*): Comes joy and song!
King (*overwhelmed by their generosity and faith in him*): Oh, Isabel!
Queen: Edmund!
Peasant's Wife (*to the Queen*): Ay! Does your heart lift high?
Dance then!

The whole play is a comedy; and the festival ends with dancing and boisterous fun. And the background to the scene is painted in by the king and queen:

Peasant's Wife: And so we must sing . . .
Merchant's Wife: . . . Of everything that's beautiful and lovely!
Peasant (*to Bard*): Bang out a tune, boy!
Queen: Oh, Edmund, look . . .
King: What?
Queen: . . . All the valley . . .
King: Ah, beautiful! Ay, Isabel, it is—still . . .
Green and rolling
Hill on hill . . .
Peasant (*to Bard*): Take up your mandolin, sing! Sing a song for them!
Queen: . . . Oh lovely! But look down now—the sun—
Spills on the green grass . . .
King: . . . And floods the trees in a lime-green light—
Look up!

Queen (*looking up directly above his head*): Oh, as through water—
wavery . . .
King: *Lovely*! A green sun!

It is a green play, a play about the powerful forces of life and a natural piety towards them. Everybody dances, except the bard, who is 'too busy playing'—and the merchant.

The merchant is not deeply touched by the festival. He will not dance; his wife will not forgive him (she *cannot*, of course, since he hasn't repented of anything); he is miserable about the future. The merchant complains bitterly of his lot, and gibes at their festivity. But the replies that his bitter comments elicit make it quite clear that the festival is no sentimental indulgence; the mirth of the others takes vivid account of the sadness of living. Greenness itself, they know, will fail:

Merchant: All of you will still be happy—to-morrow.
King: Will we?
(*he points to the peasant*)
He is old . . . and she . . .
Peasant's Wife: Old too . . .
Peasant: . . . And another winter or two will do for us . . .
Days tip, touch, snow down about us like falling leaves
And are lost.
Peasant's Wife: What when suddenly one day we look up
And the tree of life is bare?

And happiness in life is not easily or miraculously won: the king will not be truly forgiven until his new imaginativeness is completely translated into his thinking and acting:

King: . . . Merchant, all things are not miraculously cured
Just because we want them to be.
Nor is a wish to be loved enough—
Or proof that we will be . . .
Kings cannot ask that anymore than merchants may.

But what is all-important—especially after the triumph of the festival—is gaiety:

Peasant: Let the spirit at least be gay
Or that will die before it's day . . .

Gaiety is an acquiescing in life's mysterious processes and an acceptance of the patterns that have been discerned. It might perhaps be objected that 'life' is too vague a thing to be the subject of a festival, and of a play. And certainly 'life' is a word that has to bear a heavy burden. But this play, written so passionately and so sharply, gives 'life', and the festival, a precise and exciting meaning.

JOSEPH CONRAD'S POLISH SOUL

by EDMUND A. BOJARSKI

It was in either February or March of 1914 that Joseph Conrad granted in London[1] what was probably his first interview with a 'foreign' pressman[2] to a young Pole studying history and beginning a journalistic career in England, Marian Babrowski.[3] The interview, arranged through the good offices of a mutual friend, Joseph Retinger,[4] was reported in the April 18th,[5] 1914 issue (Number 16) of *Tygodnik Illustrowany* (*Illustrated Weekly*) of Warsaw, but has never appeared in English.

This 'extraordinarily significant document' has, in fact, been available to non-Polish-reading Conradians only in Jean-Aubry's summary, originally written in French on the basis of a translation from Polish of a document he was himself unable to read.[6] In view of the additional light it casts upon the importance of the Polish influence on Joseph Conrad's life and work, Marian Babrowski's article, *Rozmowa z J. Conradem* (*A Conversation With J. Conrad*) seems eminently worthy of preservation in the English language for consideration by the student of Conrad without access to the original.

Babrowski's record of this interview opens with a motto taken from Novalis[7] which reads, 'It is certain my conviction gains infinitely the moment another soul will believe in it.' The complete text of the article is as follows:

'I had to wait a long time for an interview with the greatest writer in England today, and it is probably due only to my nationality that I was at all able to get to see our compatriot, whose name is on the lips of all of literary England.

'One beautiful London afternoon when the sun's golden rays pierced the dirty gray film which enshrouds the City's houses, I went to one of the busiest sections of the Strand near the Thames to meet a friend of Conrad's, the only Pole in England who knows the writer intimately. He opened the conversation with, "You're in luck. This will be the first general interview ever granted by Conrad. French and American journalists have written and are still writing about Conrad, but they have never even seen him in person, much less had an interview with him."

' "I am inexpressibly fortunate that you have made this available to me. Surely, I am not mistaken in assuming that the fact that I am a Pole influenced Conrad toward accepting your proposition?"

' "Undoubtedly."

'The door opened. In it stood a beautifully built man in the old fashioned cloak which represents in England, as does a cape at home, *extérieur* non-philistine. The features, sculptured by the winds and waves of the seas, were extraordinarily masculine. The "border" elements of the physiognomy[8] struck the eye immediately. The glance was that of the sea wolf. The eyes had peered into the depths of the soul of the earth, into the depths of the sea. For the sea is the soul of the earth! And if man rose from dust and to dust shall return, then the earth could have risen only from the sea and will again some day disappear into the sea. Conrad wrote that Maupassant was among those of whom it is said, "*Nous autres que séduit la terre.*" It can almost be said of Conrad, "*Ceux que séduit la mer.*"

'A wedge-shaped, close-cropped, grizzled little beard, and the left hand already racked with pain, but the figure as a whole was reminiscent, as you people there on the continent say, of a stout oak battered by storms. There were short moments of introduction. "I'm a bit late, aren't I? But it was difficult for me to tear myself away. They are establishing some new weekly—a couple of friends—we got to talking . . ." The purest Polish. Not even a trace of accent.

' "So you want to know something of my life? Mmmm! I have nothing to hide. I am telling and will tell everything. Except for various follies and personal mischief about which the journalists are so eager to hear. Well, then, except for some murder or imprisonment . . . as Baudelaire says . . ." Conrad laughed heartily.

' "I left Poland in the seventeenth year of my life. My secret idea was to go to sea, to join the English merchant marine. So, straight out of the fifth form at Saint Anne's gymnasium in Cracow. After the death of my father, a tutor had prepared me. At last I obtained, by entreaty, permission from my uncle-guardian. He let me go, but to France, to Marseilles. I dreamt of England, but did not know a word of English. My uncle would have told me to study English for at least a year. And I didn't want to. My soul was drawn to the sea. I travelled through Vienna and Zurich. In Pfafikon[9] I stopped over a day with Okusza-Orzechowski.[10] You probably know that he was the agent of the National Government[11] in Constantinople. After 1863 he settled in Switzerland. So, it was there that for the last time for many, many years I said goodbye to my mother tongue.

' "They made fun of me at Okusza's house. 'You want to be a seaman! Have you got a knife in your pocket?' I had not. I didn't know about that. Later, *vous savez, c'est vrai à chaque matelot son couteau!* Ha! Ha! Ha! Well, the next day through Lyons to Marseilles. There I met Chodzko, the son of Ignacy Chodzko,[12] who was a seaman himself and introduced me to sailors. I joined the French merchant marine. It went well.

' "I enjoyed myself and lived merrily. Oh, it's true, I even transported war contraband, arms for the Carlists to the shores of Spain.

'*Voilà un polonais qui sait faire ce métier*,' the Frenchmen used to say. Life passed colourfully and happliy, but it was necessary to look around for a trade. Only an Englishman can be a real seaman. I came to London. 'You'll have to pay for your training,' my friends in Marseilles warned. So, I paid. And before long I left London for the Sea of Azov in a grain ship.[13] Passing through Constantinople, I saw the tents of the Russian armies in San Stefano.[14] A strange feeling. Thus, my father . . . Ah, I was young, so everything was interesting, the sea called . . ." Conrad fell silent.

'I understood that Jozef Konrad Korzeniowski, whose father . . . was speaking to me. I understood that in the soul of this *expatrié* Pole, secret forces were at work, that in his soul he is ours, ours, ours! *Impatrié!*

'A grave silence fell for a few moments. I had the impression that the depths were settling after a storm at sea, that the churning waves were abating, and somewhere, from faraway shores, perhaps even from the steppes of the borderlands, a sea lantern was casting powerful gleams into the distance.

' "Please ask questions," Conrad broke the silence sharply.

'Questions? Just try to ask questions at a time like that!

' "I can't. I don't want to ply you with commonplace questions like a young journalist. I would like to speak as one Pole to another. I would like to hear from you many beautiful, hard, word-commandments. I would like to discover in the English writer the immortality of Poland."

' "The immortality of Poland? You—we? Who doubts this? The English critics—indeed, I am truly an English writer—speaking of my work, always add that there is in me something incomprehensible, unfathomable, impalpable. Only you can grasp this impalpability, comprehend this incomprehendibility. This is Polishness. Polishness which I took to my work through Mickiewicz[15] and Sowacki.[16] My father used to read *Pan Tadeusz*[17] aloud to me and used to have me read it aloud, too. Not once, not twice. I preferred *Konrad Wallenrod*[18] and *Grazyna.*[19] Later I preferred Sowacki. Do you know why Sowacki? *Il est l'âme de toute la Pologne, lui.*

' "Among the others, . . . oh, yes, . . . old gray Pol,[20] with moustaches drooping like white bushes, used to visit my father. I remember him well . . .

' "The more recent literature I do not know. I am ashamed, and confess with humility that I am not familiar with it. As a seaman, I had to work hard. Now illness plagues me when I write. Two months a year lost. Seventy thousand words is no joke. And I write slowly, very slowly. And now again, three fourths of a novel[21] completed, and I haven't yet got a title for it. So!

'Again a break. Conrad's entire unsteady body shivered. His cigarette went out. "What the devil's the matter with this cigarette? . . . Because, you see," he continued after a while, "strictly speaking, I am a seaman. *C'est mon métier.* I look at the sea as the place of

my work.[22] Here, on land, I cannot delight myself with the sea. A man sees the sea only on board ship, where you cannot see the land. I can't look at the sea from the shore, wonder at it *d'une manière littéraire*. It is mine. Indeed, I belong to the last of the romantics, don't I?"

' "Excuse me, Sir, but do you know Mickiewicz's *Crimean Sonnets*? Did you find in them some element of your own creativity?"

' "No. You know, absolutely not. Mickiewicz had before him a stormy lake. You see the ocean only on the way to Singapore or Australia. But it is true, and this will probably surprise you, that I, a Pole, became a seaman, the captain of a ship. Exactly. An insignificant lad from the borderlands, from a rundown region, from some place called Poland, became, without patronage, a captain in the English merchant navy. Do you understand me, Sir? I would like to experience once more that moment in Singapore when, for the first time, they turned to me as the captain of a ship! A German ship! Ha! Ha! A German ship was forced to recognize me as a captain. Do you understand, Sir! The Prussians recognize us, confer honours upon us . . .[24]

' "Toward the Prussians I have a reasoned hatred because of their exterminative politics and because of their scorn for us. The least antipathetic to me is Austria. Indeed, it is strange, something very interesting, but I have a sympathy for the dynasty. As a child, I was even supposed to be going to enter the marine cadet school at Pola."[25]

' "The vice-admiral of the Austrian merchant navy is a Pole", interjected my friend. Conrad's eyes lit up. "So, surely that is everything now. Why don't you ask? Why don't you ask questions?"

' "Good. Now I'll start the questioning. Do you like the translations of your work into Polish, Sir?"

' "Oh, no. Not only because I was never asked for permission to translate, but also because they translate my work into Polish so poorly. It causes me real pain to read a work written in English in my native tongue. After all, I know Polish and French very well, and the Polish translations are so careless, so unfaithful to the substance. As much as the French translations are faultless, the Polish ones always irritate me. Here is, for example, this fragment in a Lwow daily. Awful, simply awful! Even 'Malayan' is translated as 'little Negro' . . ."

' "Are you not thinking of visiting Poland, Sir?[26] There is among us a movement nowadays in the direction of direct intercourse with the geniuses of the West. Not long ago E. Verhaeren[27] gave a lecture in Warsaw . . ."

' "I have been in Poland twice. Were it not for this illness, gout, I would go willingly. Why, that's the fatherland. It is true that one never meets the same person for the second time on earth, but something draws one toward Poland. Only once during my wander-

ings did I meet a Polish seaman, from Warsaw, in the Sailors' Home in the port of London. He came to me in the evening and was to sail at dawn the next day. We shook hands. They complained about him, that he was dull, sluggish at sea. I never saw him again."

'The silence of sadness fell again.

' "I'm going to ask you, Sir, for a few more words. Would you not want, Sir, to tell us, compatriots, something as one of us to his own? I know that people of great talent can, in one word, in one sentence, say much. I don't know whether I have expressed that clearly . . ."

' "Oh, yes, I grasp what you mean. Great words. I am to speak great words. I am not a great man, or a prophet. There burns in me, however, your immortal fire. It is a small, insignificant, *lueur* only, but it exists, persists. When I begin to think of the present political situation, *c'est affreux!* I cannot think often of Poland because it is bad, bitter, painful! I could not live. The English have words they use in parting, 'Good luck!' I cannot say this to you. But in spite of everything, in spite of the lurking ruin, we live. Two personal things fill me with pride: that I, a Pole, am a captain in the English merchant navy, and that I don't write badly in English." '

NOTES

[1]Rather than in January at Capel House in Kent, as Conrad's friend, Gerard Jean-Aubry, has it in his *The Sea Dreamer:* A *Definitive Biography of Joseph Conrad*, London, 1957, p. 262. Conrad was living at Capel House at the time, but was evidently in London for a visit. The actual physical location of the interview cannot be determined from the text.

[2]Maria Babrowska, who was the wife of the young interviewer but who was not present at the interview, states in her *Szkice o Conradzie* (*Sketches On Conrad*), Warsaw, 1959, p. 14, that Conrad did, however, have previous experience with pressmen as early as December, 1896, when Arthur Mee, a reporter for the *Western Mail* of Cardiff, interviewed him while the novelist was spending the Christmas holidays in Cardiff at the home of his closest Polish friend in England, Jozef Spiridion Kliszewski. The interview was published on January 1st, 1897, and was discussed in detail by W. Chwalik in *Joseph Conrad w Walii* (*Joseph Conrad in Wales*), *Ruch Literacki* (*Literary Activity*), Warsaw, 1932.

[3]Not to be confused with the Marian Babrowshi who was later a popular editor of the *Illustrowany Kurier Godzienny* (*Illustrated Daily Courier*) in Warsaw.

[4]Retinger, who met Conrad through Matthew Arnold and whose friendship with Conrad was to last until the novelist's death, does not mention this interview in his own writings on Conrad.

[5]Instead of on April 8th, as Jean-Aubry dates it.

[6]Babrowska notes, however, that this interview has previously been mentioned twice by scholars writing in the Polish language. The first mention was by Jozef Ujejski in his *O Konradzie Korzeniowskim* (*About Konrad Korzeniowski*), Warsaw, 1936, and the second by Tymon Terlecki in *Conrad w kulturze Polskiej* (*Conrad in Polish Culture*), *Conrad Zywy* (*The Living Conrad*), a series of essays by emigrant Poles, edited by Wit Tarnawski, London, 1957. *Conrad Zywy*, conveniently appendixed with an English summary of the book, is probably the best synthesis of Polish scholarship on Conrad available today.

[7]The pseudonym of Friedrich Leopold, Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772—1801), German poet and novelist and one of the pioneers of the Romantic movement.

[8]A reference to Conrad's Slavic features, especially common to the Polish-Russian border steppe.

[9]A village twelve miles from Zurich on the north end of Lake Pfafikon.

[10]Nothing further is known of this man. He is not listed in the reference works available, but was obviously a fairly close friend of Conrad's family, and an investigation of his record and documents may be of value in unearthing additional facts concerning Conrad's background and boyhood.

[11]The Congress of Vienna had established Cracow and a small surrounding territory as a free city republic, dividing the rest of the country among Russia, Prussia and Austria and calling it Congress Poland.

[12]Victor Chodzko, son of Ignacy Chodzko (1794—1861), classical writer and political representative of the conservative nobility. The young Chodzko evidently made little impression, while another seaman patron arranged for by Conrad's uncle before Conrad's arrival in Marseilles, Baptistin Solary, appears often in Conrad's literary work.

[13]Jocelyn Baines' well documented account in *Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography*, London, 1959, pp. 60—63 indicates that here again he confused the timing of events as he often did in personal reminiscences. His first visit to Constantinople was aboard the *Mavis*, which eventually took him to London.

[14]A village in European Turkey where the treaty ending the Russo-Turkish war was signed on March 3rd, 1878.

[15]Adam Mickiewicz (1798—1855), Poland's greatest Romantic poet.

[16]Juljusz Sowacki (1809—1849), Polish poet and dramatist.

[17]Mickiewicz's masterpiece, an epic poem published in 1834.

[18]Mickiewicz's narrative poem describing the battles of the knights of the Teutonic order against the Lithuanians, published in 1828.

[19]Another Mickiewicz poem.

[20]Wincenty Pol (1807—1872), Polish author, geographer and minor poet who later emigrated from Poland.

[21]Probably *Victory*, which was completed at the end of June, 1914. Baines, *loc. cit.*, p. 394.

[22]Conrad's last actual sea duty was on board the *Adowa* on January 17th, 1894. His last actual attempt to get back to sea was in Glasgow on November 9th, 1898. *Ibid.*, pp. 133 and 214.

[23]A collection of sonnets published in 1825 after a visit to the Crimea.

[24]Babrowski here points out in a footnote how near Conrad stands at this point in the interview to his published description of the painful, beautiful scene on a German battleship.

[25]Also previously described in *A Personal Record.*

[26]It is unknown whether there had as yet been any discussion of Conrad's impending trip to Poland with the Retinger family, which began on July 25th.

CORRESPONDENCE

OTHELLO

Dear Sirs,

Although I think I am on Miss van Heyningen's side against Miss Rappoport, she has overstated the case for Othello. I most potently believe that Othello's 'nature is noble, innocent, modest and free', but not that 'Shakespeare is at pains to show that he is hardly to blame, if at all'. What Shakespeare shows, is that a man can be as noble as Othello, and yet have a flaw that can cause the destruction of himself and others.

Othello's flaw is that, although he is a Venetian General and Governor, he is not a Venetian. We are reminded of this again and again, and its importance can be shown in one very simple, but I hope sufficient way. He is a man of heroic proportions, towering above the Venetians, but he lacks the judicial temper, and in important crises does not observe the judicial procedures, which are distinctively Venetian. The play gives us a sequence of trial scenes, and suggests that this temper and these procedures are an indispensable basis of an ordered, civilized life.

For this reading, the first 50 lines of 1, iii are very important. Disturbing reports have reached the Venetian Senate, but the Senators keep their heads and weigh the evidence. When the Turks are reported to be making for Rhodes, a Senator says,

> "This cannot be,
> By no assay of reason; 'tis a pageant
> To keep us in false gaze," (1, iii, 17–19)

He proceeds to give his reasons. A messenger arrives with news that confirms his conclusion: the Turkish objective is not Rhodes after all, but Cyprus. His reasoning is apparently sound and his conclusion absolutely correct, but neither of these is as significant as the fact that his conclusion isn't accepted and acted upon until it has been proved correct. Two messengers arrive during this scene, and before it opens at least two Senators, besides the Duke, have received letters. The Venetians know that decisions must be based on information and reasoning: they cultivate the latter, and make it their business to acquire the former.

Immediately after the Senate has dealt with this affair, it is called on to hear the charges against Othello. After hearing Brabantio's accusations, the Duke turns to Othello, and what he says is of the utmost importance for the play:

> 'What in your own part can you say to this?' (1, iii, 74)

Othello has, of course, a great deal to say, and is able to clear himself. This scene presents us with a model of judicial procedure. The Venetian Senate, representing Venice in more ways than one, understands the rules of evidence, and conducts its affairs with a thoroughness and caution that might remind one of scientific method and Francis Bacon.

When Othello, in Cyprus, is faced with the case of the drunken brawl, his behaviour is most significant. He seems to observe the Venetian pattern. He does turn to Cassio, but his question,

> 'How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?' (2, iii, 184)

is different from the Duke's in that it presupposes at least some guilt; but then again, Cassio was obviously drunk and, in some degree, blamable. A more striking deviation from the Venetian model comes after Iago's long circumstantial account of what happened, (2, iii, 216–242). Othello does not give Cassio the opportunity of clearing himself of Iago's insinuations: he promptly dismisses him from his service. Even this omission is partly obscured by the fact that Othello's decision is, on the evidence before him, the right one, but he has not got to the whole truth, and he has not probed very thoroughly. His own words warn us to look for his shortcoming as a judge in this scene:

> 'My blood begins my safer guides to rule,
> And passion, having my best judgement collied,
> Assays to lead the way.' (2, iii, 201–203)

There is a second, parallel series of situations with a similar emphasis. Othello's first words in the play—'Tis better as it is'—approve Iago's 'restraint' in not jerking Brabantio under the ribs. Then, soon after,

> 'Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them' (1, ii, 59)

again shows us Othello maintaining Venetian order. Even in Cyprus, in the Roderigo brawl, he is the arbiter ('Hold, for your lives', 2, iii, 161), but here his intervention sounds a little flurried; it has none of the easy and majestic assurance of the earlier one. When he says,

> 'And he that is approved in this offence,
> Though he had twinned with me, both at a birth,
> Shall lose me,' (2, iii, 207–209)

he is echoing, somewhat histrionically, the cool statement of the Duke:

> 'the bloody book of law
> You shall yourself read in the bitter letter
> After your own sense, yea, though our proper son
> Stood in your action.' (1, iii, 67–70)

Othello is still holding up for himself the Venetian model, but is already departing from it.

Each of the two series of situations is brought to its own tragic climax. The second, minor sequence ends when Othello connives

at the murder of Cassio, and enters to applaud the deed. We remember 'Keep up your bright swords', and see the difference.

The first, major sequence has, of course, its climax in the murder of Desdemona. Othello sees himself as a minister of Justice, and we are constantly reminded that this proceeding is a mockery of what we saw in the Duke's council-chamber: 'It is the cause'; 'balmy breath, that dost almost persuade / Justice to break her sword'; 'perjury'; 'confess'; 'deny each article with oath'. When Desdemona says, 'Send for the man, and ask him', the chain of episodes jangles along its whole length back to the Duke's question, 'What in your own part can you say to this?' With the handkerchief, 'the ocular proof' (3, iii, 362), Iago has succeeded in keeping Othello 'in false gaze'.

It is not until Lodovico, the Venetian, takes command of the situation that we see Venetian procedure resumed. He collects evidence:

> 'Here is a letter,
> Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo,
> And here another,' (5, ii, 310–312)

and, 'Now here's another discontented paper.' (5, ii, 316)

He carries us back to all the Venetian letters and messengers in 1, iii.

A formal Venetian trial is to be held for Othello:

> 'You shall close prisoner rest,
> Till that the nature of your fault be known
> To the Venetian state.' (5, ii, 337–339)

Even Iago must be taken through a formal process:

> 'To you, lord governor,
> Remains the censure of this hellish villain,
> The time, the place, the torture.' (5, ii, 369–371)

These are almost the last words in the play, and they tell us that after Othello's terrible lapse, Venetian order has been restored.

All this points the irony of Othello's last speech. In referring to the service he has done Venice and in recalling how he smote a Turk who 'Beat a Venetian and traduced the state' (V, ii, 356), Othello is pathetically eager to emphasize his loyalty to Venice—he wants very much to see himself as a true Venetian. But in stabbing himself as he stabbed the Turk there is a terrible appropriateness, because he too has denied what Venice stands for. We feel the pity of it, but we cannot excuse Othello.

Yours truly,

W. R. MARTIN,
University of Stellenbosch.

INDONESIA'S CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

by J. P. NIEUWENHUYSEN

Does one have to seek to justify a topic such as the above? If we are to believe Allan Nevins in *The Gateway to History*, no excuse need be provided by those attempting to explain the past. 'History', he writes, 'is the sextant and compass of states which, tossed by wind and current, would be lost in confusion if they could not fix their position. It enables communities to grasp their relationship with the past, and to chart on general lines their immediate forward course.'[1] At the same time, a warning note can be sounded, as H. S. Deighton has done quite admirably in the first edition of the new periodical *Race*,[2] where he writes: 'In the consideration of acute contemporary problems—such as those of race relations—'history' is often drawn upon as though it were a bank containing a large deposit of finally ascertained fact. But there are very real limits to the extent to which history can be referred to in respect of any particular study, and there are very real dangers in attempting to exceed those limits'.

Be that as it may, this study[3] is offered in the hope that it may be of interest in as far as it attempts to summarise important events in a colonial territory at a period when the world's interest is at fever-pitch concerning such areas: the period just before Independence. I hope (mainly) that the occurrences recounted here may present an illuminating picture of a pattern of events different from those in a number of territories such as (say) the 'homogeneous' territories under British rule (e.g. Nigeria). The colonial policies of the Indonesian's erstwhile rulers are also offered as a basis for comparison with those of the Belgians in the Congo,[4] which country's unhappy plight is being watched with anxiety by all.

Dutch Attitudes and Policies:

The first obvious contrast which Indonesia presents when compared with most other ex-colonial countries is that it is not a single geographical entity. We label Indonesia a country in the face of the fact that it is composed of about 3,000, islands which, fringing along the equator, stretch from the southernmost tip of the Philippines to the northernmost tip of Australia; they are the next-door neighbours of Malaya in the West and of Australian New Guinea in the East.

This country, this administrative and political unit, stretches for 3,000 miles along the equator—the distance between the mountains of Killarney and the Caspian Sea. It contains Java and Madura, as large as England and Wales; Sumatra, a little larger than Italy; Bali, the size of Northern Ireland; Kalimantan, slightly smaller than France; and Sulawesi, nearly as large as Roumania.

The second (and more relevant) contrast is that the achievement of independence was very far from being an easily-won objective. Many territories under colonial rule have moved, and many (particularly under British rule), are still moving towards sovereign statehood along an agreed path with more or less fixed milestones. Indonesia, on the other hand, had a very halting and uncertain progression towards self-government. Whatever the intentions of the Dutch may actually have been in regard to ultimate freedom for Indonesia (a land under their colonial rule for more than 250 years), they in fact more than once launched what were euphemistically termed 'police actions', which forced the Indonesians to devote much of their energy and limited resources to military preparation and open armed conflict. Instead of building or planning a road of constitutional development, the Dutch actually placed obstacles and roadblocks in the way of even progression.[5] This, in short, is what emerges from the description of events which here follows.

As far back as 1901 a so-called 'ethical' policy was launched by the then Prime Minister of Holland, Dr Abraham Kuyper, author in 1880 of a pamphlet, *Ons Program*, in which he argued that the Government should adopt a policy of moral responsibility for the indigenous population of the Indies. The first socialists had entered the Dutch Parliament by this time and were proclaiming the doctrine of 'Government of the Indies for the Indies', with their eyes open to the ultimate aim of self-government.

A far deeper impression had been created, however, by the Liberal C. Th. van Deventer, who had not only drafted a new programme for his party, advocating welfare, decentralization and more employment of Indonesians in the administration, but in 1899 had caused a sensation by his article entitled *A Debt of Honour*, in which he had argued that all the money drawn from the Indies under *batig saldo* since 1867, when Parliament had assumed responsibility for the finances of the Indies, should be repaid. Following a tremendous outpouring of noble sentiment, the new gospel came to be known as the policy of 'decentralization', in terms of which it was envisaged that powers would be delegated from European to Indonesian officers, from the Governor-General to departments and local officers, and from the Hague to Batavia generally. It was also *supposed to mean* that autonomous organs managing their own affairs in co-operation with the government would be established in the colony. In practice, however, the Decentralization Law of 1903 and the decrees of 1904/5 creating councils composed of Indonesians, Europeans and Chinese went nothing like as far as the decentralization scheme which Governor-General Mijer had submitted to the

home government as far back as 1867. And up to the outbreak of World War I, which cut off Batavia's communications with the Hague, the Governor-General remained completely under the control of the metropolitan government.

In 1905, de Graaff, the Deputy Director of the Civil Service, raised the question of the substitution of Indonesians for Europeans when he proposed a reform of Java's territorial organization, which would give local officers greater power. For the time being this was sidetracked, and in 1914 the wider scheme which he submitted (embracing the re-organization of the Indies into twelve governments), was also shelved. However, general lip-service was paid to his plan to give Indonesian officers greater powers, the word *ontvoogding* (emancipation) being quite widely used. The first step was taken only in 1921, however, when it was laid down that certain concessions might be made to 'regents'[6] in recognition of special merit. The first 'regent' to be 'emancipated' declared, nevertheless, that his position was in no way affected, and for the next ten years the European administration remained 'just as before'.[7]

Meanwhile, the promotors of the 'ethical policy' had turned to the village as a lever for the improvement of native welfare. Beginning with de Graaff's *Village Regulation Act* of 1906, which provided for a Village Government, comprising the headman and the village officers, and a Village Gathering competent to regulate village institutions and provide for the village's requirements, measures were taken to improve agricultural production and veterinary care, to establish village schools, provide sound credit and promote public health. The most elaborate village administration was built up. But it was an instrument of such excessive interference from above that there was hardly any village autonomy left, and the general effect was to turn villages against Dutch rule. The Dutch method has been described by Furnivall as: 'Let me help you, let me show you how to do it, *let me do it for you.*'[8]

Although the Volksraad was established in Indonesia in 1916, plans to add a representative element to the bureaucratic East Indian Government go back several decades before that year. The law creating the Volksraad, however, taking the form of an additional chapter to the East Indian Government Act, positively provided for a 'representative body' composed of 39 members. Of these 39, one, the Chairman, was to be appointed by the Crown; of the others, half were to be appointed by the Governor-General, and the other half were to be elected by indirect suffrage. With the exception of the provisional fixing of the budget, the Volksraad was given only mandatory powers. The Governor-General was left free to consult the Volksraad on any subject he might desire, while the Crown was given the power to prescribe consultation with respect to any measure it should deem desirable. For the rest, the Volksraad could express opinions, question and petition the Netherlands Government, and conduct enquiries (without, however, having the power of compelling witnesses).

Throughout its existence, the trend was clearly enough in favour of increased native or indigenous representation in the Volksraad. However, even in the body's fullest bloom, it contained only 30 Indonesians as against 25 Europeans, 5 non-Indonesian Asiatics, and a Chairman appointed by the Crown. Of this membership, 20 Indonesians, 15 Europeans and 3 other Asiatics were elected, the remainder being appointed by the Governor-General. As far as the electorate was concerned, the total number of eligible voters in 1939 was 2,228, of which 1,452 were Indonesians, 543 Dutch, and 233 non-native Asiatics.[9]

In the Volksraad, then, (a purely consultative and advisory body), two implications become apparent. Firstly, the Indonesians as representatives of the people of the country and as the 'trainees' for independence had a very doubtful say. Secondly, such a small body of electors in what was in any case not a legislative organ, can scarcely be described as a start on the road of political education or the path of granting self-government to a people who, since the beginning of the century at least, had been enlivened by an increasingly virulent nationalism which demanded self-determination.

As a channel for the expression of Indonesian political views, the importance of the Volksraad was further limited by the fact that many of the nationalist leaders declined to participate in it. 'Nor', as Emerson writes,[10] 'was it without basic relevance that, particularly during the 1930's, a number of outstanding nationalists were spending a great deal of their time in Dutch jails or concentration camps, not appearing on the political scene until after the arrival of the Japanese'.

Possibly the most important aspect of 'pre-independence training', (if one may use such a phrase), is the construction of an efficient civil service. The extent to which a government depends on its civil service is often under-emphasised; having a parliament or legislative body with full powers and free from foreign control does not immediately imply *governmental* control for the country concerned. Cabinet ministers and Prime Ministers, even Presidents and their colleagues come and go—very often like the wind—but civil servants and their departmental divisions stay.[11] In this respect the failure of the Dutch to prepare the country for responsible self-government is seen in its most abject light. As late as October, 1940, out of the 3,039 higher rank civil service positions, only 221 were held by Indonesians; and even in the middle civil service ranks there continued to be large numbers of Europeans, including Eurasians, who, under the Dutch system, were counted as Europeans for all legal and formal purposes.[12]

If one tallies up through the public service, the Village Councils, the Volksraad, etc., the number of Indonesians who came to have some acquaintance with modern political processes and representative institutions, it is clear that neither the number of those involved, nor the limited powers and responsibilities entrusted to them, were in any sense adequate to the tasks which independence thrust upon them.

INDONESIAN REACTION AND OPPOSITION:

In the face of the Dutch government's intransigence, Indonesia's struggle for independence became a bitter, protracted, and often bloody affair. The modern ideas engendered by the 'ethical policy' did not remain in a water-tight Dutch compartment, but had a very strong influence indeed on the small number of Indonesians who came into contact with the outside world. By the time, therefore, that any part of the Dutch opinion showed some sympathy with Indonesian culture, Indonesians themselves were emerging from their own isolation, and were asking for equal treatment and free expression.

There was a growth of Islam, and not of Islam alone, but Islam as an expression of nationalism; the Abduh movement aimed at the restatement of Islam in terms of social values, and worked for a more progressive Islamic society. This was in contrast to the ideas of the Dutch scholars who simply preached the maintenance of adat laws. Islam was given a social and ethical programme, and in this way helped to develop the political consciousness of Indonesians and strengthen the nationalist idea.

Parallel to this growth came events in other parts of Asia which gave it greater significance. Nationalism throughout colonial Asia was given greater self-consciousness and deeper self-confidence in 1904, when the myth of White superiority was challenged by the news of Japanese victories over the Russians. In 1911 the organisation Saraket Dagan Islam was formed, blending quite judiciously economic and religious motives, and developing by 1918 into a powerful organization with a membership of 800,000. Attacking Dutch rule, and introducing a Marxist analysis of society, it made demands for independence 'by evolution, not revolution'.

The Dutch reaction to this type of protest and pressure, although inadequate, was sufficient to maintain a 'collaborationist' as distinct from 'non-collaborationist' wing when the group split in 1921. The division was essentially based on a Marxist versus religious view of the best way to attack the Dutch regime, the break-aways maintaining that Saraket Islam was capitalist and that the best way to fight the Dutch was on an anti-capitalist basis.

In 1925 the increased representation in the Volksraad offered by the Dutch resulted in further debate on the 'co-operation' issue: left-wing nationalists saw in this change only a device to counteract the growing political consciousness of groups of Indonesians, while others considered it a victory for the nationalist movement, and believed that they might gradually win effective control.[13]

Islam and Marxism were to a certain extent competing ideologies, and the challenge to those nationalists who saw progressive Islamic ideas as the foundation of the State came from nationalists already consciously working for a Communist revolution.

An outbreak organized for June, 1926, failed partly owing to the opposition of Tan Malaka, the comintern representative for South-East Asia, and largely as a result of the general indifference of the

railway workers, who were supposed to strike the first blow. A year later the Dutch organized a counter-offensive, ostensibly because they had information indicating a third outbreak. Thousands of 'politically suspect' people were arrested, and internment orders were ruthless enough to coin a new word describing people who were sent to New Guinea as 'di-Gullkan', (i.e. to be di-gulled, after the name of the worst camp, Boven Digul). Many died there, it seems, and the camps were still crowded when the war in the Pacific began.

These events proved to be the turning point; organization went underground, and a new leadership, deeply moved by the actions of the Dutch in these years, emerged, beginning to think and feel as nationalists first and foremost. An ideology developed which provided a united front. Nationalism was now the unifying factor, and was written into every type of organization—trade unions, cultural, religious, and youth groups. Of nationalism, Dorothy Woodman writes:[14] 'As a political concept, it owed much to Western thought, but it was more than a political concept. It was the self-consciousness of people under colonial rule, inevitable, inescapable, sweeping across boundaries of class, of religion, rousing illiterate peasant and intellectual, unsettling industrial worker and aristocrat, bridging regional differences, and ultimately welding the peoples into a common struggle.'

Some gradualists, however, remained, consisting mainly of those who had some vested interest in Dutch rule. By 1939 it was plainer than ever before to everyone that the Dutch had no intention of granting independence, and that 'agitation' was to be met with violence;[15] so in this year all political parties could find sufficient grounds for uniting in one organization, the G.A.P.I. (Federation of Indonesian Parties), which reached a much higher level of political action than preceding organizations, and certainly showed a livelier sense of political strategy.

Events in Europe were quickly reflected in Indonesia, and the nationalist movement felt more justified in asking a metropolitan power ostensibly defending democracy for the following:

(*a*) A Parliament, instead of a Volksraad, in which each political group would have representatives, and

(*b*) Ministers, (appointed from the then Departmental Chiefs), who should be responsible to Parliament.

This time the demand was taken seriously, but with no sense of urgency, and a committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of a certain Mr Visman, whose purpose it was to present reports from all political parties.

Queen Wilhelmina, then in London, did not, however, wait for the report to be published before issuing a vague pledge that once the Netherlands was liberated from the Nazis, steps would be taken to 'lay the foundation for a happy and more prosperous future for the entire Kingdom.' The Dutch Government in London did not

apparently believe that their rule of the Indies was seriously challenged, although twenty-eight Indonesians in the Volksraad asked what the consequences for their country would be of Dutch signatures on such agreements as the Atlantic charter, pledged as it was to fight for democracy against the threat then currently menacing the Western World, namely, Fascism.

The Dutch had not, however, learned a lesson from their bitter experiences in Europe, for while they professed (and fought doggedly for) democratic principles in the Western World, they never regarded these as relevant to the East. It was indeed a Charter of the Atlantic, applying as it did only to White people. This division, not only between theory and practice, but between Asia and the West, led the Indonesians to draw their own conclusions,[16] and a body composed of all organizations, an assembly called Majlis Rakjat Indonesia, (in effect, a representative body for the movement), was formed. It was in this form that for the first time followers of Karl Marx and the Prophet were joined in the common aim of independence, all other issues becoming secondary.

Once this unification had been achieved, independence was a matter of time only, despite the War, the Japanese occupation, a British interlude, and a United Nations intervention: and Indonesians finally became official masters of their own fate on the 27th of December, 1949.

CONCLUSION:

'The story of the Colonial Age', writes Professor Macmillan,[17] 'ends sadly where it began. The inexperience which originally brought colonial people into subjection still prevents them from standing squarely on their own feet'.

This statement applies particularly to those countries, such as the Congo and Indonesia, which were ill-prepared for self-government. In all colonial territories, however, which have used a nationalist movement to agitate against metropolitan rule, it is to be hoped that the energetic, revolutionary spirit which fired the independence movements can be harnassed to the certainly more mundane, but no less challenging, task of constructing a progressive, prosperous and stable order in these countries.

NOTES

[1]A. Nevins, *The Gateway to History*. Published by Heath & Co., 1938.

[2]H. S. Deighton, *History and Race Relations*, in Vol. I, of *Race*, November, 1959, published by Oxford University Press.

[3]Which is not based on personal experience with Indonesia, but is the result of a survey undertaken at the University of Natal.

[4]For these see Colin Legum, *The Revolt of the Elite* in *Africa South*, Oct./Dec. 1959. (Vol. 4 No. 1).

[5]See Emerson, *Representative Government in South East Asia* (Harvard).

[6]i.e. Chiefs.

[7]The words of Raden Djajadingrat, quoted by Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice*, p. 296.

[8]Ibid., p. 389.

[9]These and subsequent figures on civil service employment from Kahin's *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia.* (p. 34).

[10]Supra, p. 21.

[11]Jennings in *Approach to Self-government* emphasises this point. He writes (p. 125): 'The notion that a country is governed by politicians is fallacious. The task of the politician is not to govern but to supervise government, to take decisions on questions of principle which are submitted to him, and to maintain a close relation between public opinion and the process of administration. The actual business of government is the function of professional administrators and technical experts.'

[12]The following figures for Congolese employment in the Congo civil service in June, 1960, present an interesting comparison, which can scarcely be regarded as co-incidental. According to *The Economist* of July, 1960, (p. 71) there were in the first three grades of the civil servants 4,600 Europeans to 3 Africans, and, in the fourth grade, 5,159 Europeans to 635 Africans. In the *force publique* there were about 1,000 Belgian officers to some 30 African warrant officers.

[13]This 'co-operation vs. non co-operation' argument is found in the pre-independence struggle of many territories. In South Africa itself, one recalls in this connection the arguments among Africans about the Natives' Representative Council when that body was established by the Smuts Government. I suggest in passing that the calibre of men sitting on that Council as compared with that of those at present co-operating in the Bantu Authorities System is some indication of the extent to which African opinion has been forced to the left over the last 15 years.

[14]*The Republic of Indonesia*, p. 159.

[15]Colin Legum in the *Africa South* article mentioned above writes 'The leaders of the independence movement are the Congolese élite . . . The creation of an African middle class was a central feature of Belgian policy; an élite of évolués, it was believed, would become the ally of the Belgians in maintaining stability . . .' And, 'The idea is not peculiar to the Belgians. It has for a long time been in the forefront of the thinking of both Lord Malvern and Sir Roy Welensky in Central Africa, and of Michael Blundell in Kenya. To the credit of their political intelligence, it has never been the policy of the Afrikaner Nationalists. Superficially, the concept of a solid African bourgeoisie, with vested interests in the *status quo*, is not without its attractions. What it overlooks is that revolutions are never made by hungry peasants or by slum-ridden working-classes; they are made by the middle-class lawyer, teacher, businessman, doctor and clerk who feels himself capable of doing something concrete about righting the wrongs inflicted upon him.'

[16]This antinomy underlying Dutch policy in Indonesia went very much deeper, however. Kahin, (supra, p. 49) writes: 'Even the student who limited his reading to the curriculum could not help noting that the dominant strain in Dutch national ideology was independence from outside control, and found it hard not to see a parallel between an upholder of Dutch power in the Indies, such as Van Hentz and the Duke of Alba. Likewise, he found it difficult, in view of Dutch national history, to understand why the history books on Indonesia which he was given painted Diponegora and other leaders of resistance to the Dutch as worthless traitors and selfish opportunists. This account can be applied equally, (it may be noted), to the policies of other colonial powers, particularly in Africa. The best account of this I am aware of appears in Chap. I of Hodgkin's book *Nationalism in Colonial Africa*, although on British policy specifically Prof. J. S. Coleman's article in the June, 1954, edition of the *American Political Science Review* is an excellent reference.

[17]*The Road to Self-Rule.* p. 256.

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

GRADUATION CEREMONY: 25th MARCH, 1961

ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION*

by

DR HARRY OPPENHEIMER, M.A. (Oxon.), Hon.D.Econ. (Natal).

Mr Chancellor, Sir,

May I first of all be allowed to congratulate those who have graduated today, and particularly to congratulate those on whom this University has just conferred honorary degrees. It is not very long ago that an honorary degree was conferred on me in this hall and in a world where many values and many honours and distinctions have become cheapened, it is quite certain that the granting of an honorary degree by a University which has the record of achievement and maintains the high standards of this is something of which any man must be very proud, indeed.

When I talk of a record of achievement, what I have in mind is the provision of intellectual and moral leadership to the country, and when I talk of maintaining standards I am talking in terms of the standards of what we call Western civilisation, in the best sense of that word. Now, of course, all this may be thought to be trite and to be almost devoid of content, but just for that reason it seems to me, Sir, that it is worthwhile to try a little bit to define what one means by these terms.

Obviously when one talks of civilised standards, it has got absolutely nothing to do with people's colour. If we didn't know that, we haven't got to look further than Nazi Germany or Communist Russia to see that having white skins is no guarantee of civilised behaviour. On the other hand, what has happened in Africa lately has made it perfectly plain, if it wasn't plain before, that the granting of national independence is no magic charm to transform primitive tribesmen into freedom-loving democrats. Nor is the much-vaunted ideal, 'one man, one vote', the touch-stone in this question, because there again a great deal of experience in Africa has shown extremely plainly that the system of one man, one vote, in the absence of an educated and sophisticated electorate, far from being a guarantee

* As transcribed from a tape-recording on the occasion.

of freedom and democracy, is much more like a guarantee that there will be no freedom and extremely little democracy or civilisation.

Even parliamentary democracy, while it certainly is associated with civilised standards in the sense that parliamentary democracy doesn't work in the absence of such standards, certainly isn't the same thing; and I wouldn't for a moment like to think that it was impossible to maintain civilised standards in the absence of a parliamentary democracy. It's not a question of majority rule either—clearly you can't maintain civilised standards if there is tyranny or if there is arbitrary rule, but the fact that there is a majority of the population in favour of some type of government is no proof whatsoever that that government acts in accordance with the best standards of civilised life. Civilisation isn't the maintaining of high material standards either though there again they are very often associated. But you can't say a country is civilised merely because its material standards of welfare or its technical skills are high.

We can summarise what these civilised standards are or indicate some of the things which these civilised standards are not. We'll say, to begin with, that they are not determined by colour. Nor are they the same thing as national independence or universal adult suffrage or parliamentary democracy or material well-being and efficiency. Civilised standards are really none of these things. Ultimately I would say that what marks civilisation is a concern for the individuals who make up its living substance as individuals. I think one might reasonably define civilisation as an environment in which individual potentialities can best be realised, and perhaps it would be fair to say that a civilised man is a man who guides his actions by a sense of the fundamental importance of individual human dignity.

Now perhaps you may feel that this still is just a platitude — perhaps it is, but if it is a platitude then I would say that the greater part of all the difficulties in the African continent are due to neglect of that extremely important platitude.

What I have been saying is very much the same thing as what the British Prime Minister referred to in a famous speech when he talked of the necessity in Africa of not looking to colour or to the group to which people belong, but to individual merit. That is what he said, though I must honestly say that I don't think that has always been what his Government has done. It is very difficult to stick to principles always. I have been long enough in politics myself to know that moral principle is no substitute for a political programme. Statesmen have to deal with a great many very intractable facts and the most intractable facts are the fears and the prejudices of their own followers. A politician can't possibly hope to do the best, he can only hope to do his best. Nevertheless, making all allowances for what is practical politics—what is realistic—it's quite clear that no political policy, no programme can afford to be divorced from fixed principle. Of course, if the principle is wrong the policy will be a bad one. But if there is no fixed principle by which policy is tested,

then the policy is going to be feeble, vacillating and ineffective. I would suggest to you that in Africa the principle by which public policy ought to be tested is respect for the dignity of the human individual and the need to build an environment in which human potentialities can be fully realised.

Now here in the Union of South Africa there is endless talk about maintaining the standards of Western civilisation, and politicians of all parties justify their very different policies by reference to those standards. But the melancholy fact is, that in spite of all this concentration on the maintaining of civilised standards—standards of Western civilisation—we are in this country becoming daily more isolated intellectually and morally from the other great Western nations. If it is true that what we are doing in South Africa is to defend Western standards, then it is quite clear that we and we alone are defending them.

And now we have got to a point where we in South Africa are about to leave the Commonwealth. It's the politicians, not I, and eventually the historians who are going to apportion the praise or blame for what is about to take place, who are going to say whether it could have been avoided or not. About all these matters I express no opinion this morning. But I do say this, and of this I am convinced, that whether it could have been avoided or not, whether anybody is to blame or not, the end of our membership of the Commonwealth is a grave misfortune, an unmitigated misfortune for South Africa. It is a misfortune economically, politically and militarily and it is nothing but wishful thinking to suppose that entering into treaties with Great Britain or with some other of our former partners in the Commonwealth can be an adequate and secure substitute for the ties that have been broken and the confidence that has been shattered.

In addition to that, what has happened is a grave setback to the cause of national unity in South Africa, because one section of the people have lost a connection which is emotionally very dear to them indeed, and another section of the population have appeared to rejoice at that loss. That is a very serious setback to the national unity of South Africa. More than that, and perhaps most important, what has happened is a moral disaster for this country. We have got to remember that our leaving the Commonwealth has followed and has been occasioned by the unanimous condemnation of South African policy by all our fellow members in the Commonwealth—not those with whom we maintained distant relations only, but by our closest friends. That universal condemnation has been on moral grounds. Unless, therefore, we here in South Africa are going to be arrogant enough and thick-skinned enough to think that it is only in South Africa where wisdom and virtue are to be found, then we've got to face the fact that what has happened is a moral disaster for this country.

Now I am not saying these things because for one moment I have lost faith in the future of this country. On the contrary I am quite

sure that the possibilities of greatness before us are still boundless. But the first thing that one has to do in any difficult situation is to face up to the hard facts. And the basic hard facts of our present situation are that in a dangerous world we are condemned, outcast and alone.

Now I say to you that in those circumstances it is only common sense that all South Africans of goodwill and of good sense should, as far as they can, do their best to minimise the difficulties that are between them and to come together to put right what is wrong in this country, so that we can resume our honoured place among the freedom-loving nations.

Why is it that South Africa is so condemned—hated by some, despised by others, pitied by its best friends? Do not for one moment believe that that is because the public in Great Britain, for instance, or in America would like to see us in South Africa hand over power to the masses of the African population who are plainly not yet in a condition to exercise power in a sensible way. Nobody expects that of us—nobody wants it, and indeed, if that were to happen in South Africa, it would be regarded by sensible, liberal-minded people throughout the Western world as another tremendous disaster to liberalism and to good sense. The charge against South Africa, the condemnation of South Africa is something entirely different from that. It is on quite different grounds. What is charged against South Africa is that we who cherish individual freedom for ourselves withhold individual freedom from people of a different colour simply because they are of a different colour. We are charged with refusing to men with different-coloured skins the opportunities to develop their potentialities, a thing which we insist on for ourselves, and we refuse those opportunities simply because they have skins of a different colour. We are charged in South Africa with keeping respect for human dignity for Europeans only.

We've got to search our hearts about these matters and if we look to the practice—the facts of South African life and not just at the theory of South African life—what answer are we going to find? It may be, it is often said, that different races have different capacities, different standards, intellectual and moral. I don't know if that is so, and if it is so, I don't know how much is due to environment and how much to heredity. But I know this, that if one compares the capacities and standards of one race with those of another race, all one can possibly mean, if one means anything at all, is that one is comparing one average with another average. The essence, however, of Western civilisation is to look not to the average of a race or a class or a group, but to look to the quality of the individual. So long as we in South Africa persist in limiting the scope for development of individual citizens of this country by reference to our idea of the average capacity or the average standards of the group to which they belong, so long will South Africa be an outcast among the nations.

There is no section and there is no party which can solve this

question alone in South Africa; everybody has something to contribute. It may well be that the Government's plan for autonomous Bantu areas may open opportunities—I think it would open opportunities for development and for self-realisation for many of the African people of South Africa—but that's not all. The United Party too, a humane party, free from dogma, eclectic, willing to borrow from the programmes of more rigid parties and now apparently prepared to accept willingly the need for some degree of Federalism in South African life—that Party might well be able to give a lead. I would think that the Progressive Party too had a part to play—they after all have devised a political programme which is based specifically on the principles of individual merit and the proposals they have put forward have a most striking resemblance to the proposals which are about to be submitted to the electorate of Southern Rhodesia with the joint approval of Sir Roy Welensky and of the British Government.

I am sure that all Parties and very many good men who don't belong to any Party at all believe that they are working in order to maintain and to deepen the best standards of Western civilisation. But I would say that the vision of what we are really trying for has become blurred. We in South Africa have begun to think that Western civilisation is just a matter of good relationship—of a right relationship between groups and sections and classes. It certainly improves these things, but the essence of civilisation is not that, it is an attitude towards the individual.

Now, Mr Chancellor, this great University has given and will give much to South Africa. It has given scholarship and techniques, organisational skill, energy, the power of leadership and so much more. But all these things are going to be dust and ashes unless this knowledge and this skill and these techniques are directed with an over-riding respect for the value of the human personality as such. That I would say is the hallmark of civilisation and that is the glory of any great University.

THE INTERPRETATION OF BOOK SIX OF VERGIL'S *AENEID*

by T. F. CARNEY

In recent years the build-up of lexica to Latin writers, combined with the increasing skill and refinement of philological method and literary analysis, has breached the monolithic front of Latin literature, intimately revealing its growth and structure. The relation of its various writers to one another and their individual contributions to the development of the body of the language are now fairly clear, and it has become possible to assess linguistic trends and innovations in an objective fashion. A fuller appreciation of the inadequacies of the contemporary literary language as a vehicle for poetic expression has put Vergil's contribution as a craftsman with words into well-deserved prominence—for his solution of a number of serious technical difficulties so expanded the capacity and versatility of the poetic language as to make a different medium of it. For example, the Homeric epithet, invaluable to epic, was non-existent in Latin and periphrases involved jejune prepositional phrases and the use of banal, unemotive words. Vergil evolved special formulae to deal with this problem, employing a duality of expression sometimes termed 'theme and variation'.[1] Eschewing banality,[2] Vergil gave to his diction an original amplification and colour by using words with etymological force, so as to give them a kind of penumbra of associations,[3] against a background of subtly-modulated cadences of sound.[4] Vergil's adaptation of the artistic period to hexameter poetry was a major achievement in the history of Latin verse.[5] The prodigious labour that went into the composition of the *Aeneid* —produced at the rate of one line per day—is well known; something too is known of Vergil's methods of working: first a rough prose draft in twelve books; then renderings into verse as inspiration dictated, with the use of prop-lines so that nothing might stop the flow of creation (but with an occasional line left incomplete when inspiration refused obdurately to come).[6] Polished workmanship is everywhere visible, as is abundant evidence of thorough acquaintance with the literary resources of Greek as well as Latin. The relationship of the individual books to one another and to the overall structure was carefully planned,[7] and the events of book six, being *sui generis*, must have had a special consideration in this regard.

The book of course has obvious connections with Homeric epic,[8] but then much of Vergil is derivative—and not only from Homer.[9] Discussion of charges of plagiarism has led to important discoveries. Re-use of loci from other writers gave to Vergil's verse, of set purpose, a penumbra of emotionally-charged associations.[10] But, at a more fundamental level, he could not, as a writer, step completely free from his past and his contemporary literary environment (some Vergilian reminiscences are clearly unconscious);[11] derivation is, in fact, an essential organic process. Two false assumptions in this regard have been clearly shown up. To assume that a writer can either express original thoughts in terms peculiar to himself (and that this alone is praiseworthy), or can derive his words and therefore, it is suggested, his thoughts from others (and that this is *ipso facto* to be condemned) is to oversimplify. As a corollary, poetry is not explicable in its entirety simply by identifying the historical, philosophical, religious or literary referents which underlie a passage. More sympathetic understanding of Vergil's assumption of position in respect to his tradition has led to a new orientation of view-point, which in turn has yielded important insight into the formal and ritualistic elements in Vergil.

For underworlds, monsters and gods are the expression of certain basic elements in mankind's spiritual experience—Jung's archetypal images. So a description of an underworld must ignore the poet's own preconceptions as an individual to revive those common to the primitive roots of his culture.[12] For just as a re-used phrase associates its new setting with all the associations of its original context, so a symbol, such as the mystical sign of the Labyrinth on the Cumaean Gates, can evoke, by association, a powerful emotional response to a passage.[13] Moreover the description must be couched in the language of ritual to induce the necessary conditioning of the reader's mind and emotions. In such a case it is essential to be derivative.[14] Thus the prologue to the journey into the underworld in book six elaborately represents the penetration of one recess after another—the temple, the Sybil's cave, the grove of the bough, then the underworld—and progress is cast into the rhythmic structure of ritual: first the sacrifice to Apollo, then Aeneas' two prayers, answered by the priestess first as god then as human; two tasks (the finding of the bough and the burial of Misenus) and, as closure corresponding to the opening, the great sacrifice to the gods of the dead. So the scene of the finding of the bough is pure magical prescription: no words are spoken; everything is action and movement performed in ritual silence.[15] Simultaneously and at another level of suggestion—for many levels of significance subsist within the complex allusiveness of Vergil's epic, wrought as it was with such prodigious toil—Aeneas moves through a dream world:[16] there is the sombre atmosphere of the commencement of the journey (the monstrous sanctuary of the Sybil, the black woods of Avernum, the burial of Misenus) initiating a shadowy journey with increasingly terrifying apparitions as Aeneas meets and relives

moments in his past (Palinurus, Dido, Deiphobus, Troy) and those with nightmare figures (Lapiths, Titans, personified crimes) looming obscurely in the background.[17] All dream experience this, prefiguring the abrupt awakening from this vision of the underworld at the end of the book.[18]

The full significance of this sensitive approach to Aeneas' psychology has been recognised only recently as a result of studies dating the ancients' discovery of the various aspects of the mental processes.[19] The psychological understanding displayed in Latin authors prior to Vergil is of very limited extent. Analysis of motivation had been attempted by comic poets, rhetoricians and historians but had been distorted by formalism requisite to presentation in these genres (stock-characters, *exempla* and *species expositionis* respectively). True, greater awareness had been attained in the writing of love poetry, deepening literary observation in this respect, but much of this was inchoate.[20] In general, contemporary psychological knowledge was limited and character-drawing crude: in the main simple personalities with a single leading passion being portrayed. Hence Vergil's frequent resort to the Attic tragedians with their subtler sensitivity.[21] Book six depicts psychological development in the adult character of its hero as a result of traumatic experience.[22] This is a major intellectual advance made by Vergil, enriching the concept of character as understood by his predecessors[23] and opening up new fields for heroism[24] and for the epic.

This new insight, however, necessitated a reassessment of the spiritual world in which Vergil's hero moved, and, in his depiction of this world, Vergil was to make two great contributions to the progress of literary thought. Inheriting the gloomy and pessimistic Hellenistic conception of fate as a malignant, amoral pursuer of man, he poured a mass of moral aspiration into his 'fata', making them beneficent and orderly. He thus rejected the devolutionary theory of evolution to invoke an optimism novel in Roman literature.[25] Simultaneously Vergil introduced the idea of vocation and so moved epic into a new spiritual dimension. The vaster theme of world destiny becomes implicit in the legend of one man's achievement. It is not merely that a vastly extended temporal dimension is added to the poem—visible when Charon wonders at the Golden Bough, 'so long unseen', conjuring up dark centuries of the unhistoried lower world—a superhuman element is added in that vocation, not personal happiness, becomes its motive force.[26]

In other respects, however, the spiritual world of Aeneas was that of contemporary thought, for Vergil had all the inconsistency of his coevals in dealing with the problem of self-determination—for the concept of free will had not yet been evolved. Contradictions are patent in Vergil's account of the relationship, fate: man. 'Personal' fates mean conflict of fate with fate and even change of fates; as the struggle of the fates is important, a sense of the futility of human struggle is inevitable. Besides the confusions of contemporary philosophy Vergil had the encumbrance of a traditional epic divine

machinery to contend with, yet he was torn between the thought of the rule of natural law and the claims of individuality, instinctively moving towards an assertion of the freedom of man's will. His solution was that it was not impossible but wrong to resist fate (temporarily), that reasoned, deliberate action, working in harmony with fate and often involving great effort, was necessary for the perfect evolution of destiny. He made man the instrument through which destiny works, giving him importance and value by putting overwhelming importance on his willing co-operation with destiny, on the personal responsibility of each man and on the unbreakable human spirit.[27]

Obviously Vergil's enlarged vision of the significance of the hero is capable of allegorical and symbolical interpretation. And in fact allegorical interpretations of Aeneas were evolved within a century of Vergil's death. It is demonstrably true that Aeneas allegorises Augustus, most strikingly in books five and eight.[28] Misapprehension has arisen here from a tendency to assume, once a thread of allegory has been identified, that other levels of allusion cannot simultaneously coexist. This is grossly to misconceive the infinite allusiveness of Vergil's style. The symbolism of the Golden Bough —starting point for Fraser's epoch-making work—well illustrates this. 'The mistletoe simile of lines 205—208 forms an overt point of contact at which power is released from that deep reservoir of primitive belief and practice lying behind Vergil's image.' The paradox of life and death immanent in a healing and parasitic plant reinforces the created imagery (of the strange colour in the dark green wood; the hidden thing that, when found, retains a secret and enigmatic quality in revealing itself; that is plucked, but not with the necessary ease). One mode of thought expands the other and develops their totality into a complex and sinister unity.[29]

Hence it is that the symbolic figure of Aeneas has been so variously interpreted. He has been seen as a Roman Everyman on a pilgrim's progress;[30] and the Aeneid does indeed show clear connections with hagiography, so that it has even been suggested that Vergil is canonising Aeneas as a national hero.[31] Again, he has been conceived as a Stoic sapiens in course of evolution.[32] Obviously book six requires careful and sensitive appreciation: it has a symbolism that allows of several levels of interpretation jointly. Analysis has in fact revealed a complex interweaving of three themes: a spiritual experience, yielding a purifying illumination that fits Aeneas for his historic mission; the moral development that underlies all lives of truly heroic virtue; and the effort of man's thought to understand the nature and destiny of man.[33]

Not surprisingly the zeal of the textual emendator has somewhat abated as scholarship has gradually revealed in greater fullness the enormous complexity of Vergil's writing. And indeed there are considerable philological difficulties involved in the correction of a master, reshaping a poetic language (of which only about ten per cent survives) in a period of rapid linguistic change, especially when

criticism is based on predecessors and successors who are his inferiors. Crudity of treatment in earlier editors[34] has been replaced by approaches which seek to understand, rather than amend, irregularities—with excellent results for our knowledge in depth of the Aeneid.[35] A good illustration of this development is to be seen in Knight's discussion of the 'transferred epithet' of VI, 817,[36] where it is shown that with a subtle lack of emphasis Vergil is transferring the charge of tyranny from the tyrant to the tyrant's enemy. This affords an important insight into the movement of Vergil's thought at the time of writing book six, for it has obvious propagandist bias (against the *superbia* of the extremist Republicans). And greater historical awareness of the changing atmosphere of Augustus' reign[37] has brought greater awareness of the changing background of Vergil's thought, where an initial period of hatred for the brutality of the Triumvirate was followed by a guilty gratitude and inner gratification at imperial favour, followed in their turn by a period of enthusiastic support for the genuine, reconstructive success of the initial years of the Augustan regime, which finally came to be overshadowed by disillusionment.[38] Vergil's misgivings can be seen throughout the Aeneid: he is more apt to sympathise with the victim than justify the law and 'sees the other side of every forceful triumph'.[39] As a result of Vergil's method of working[40] no one uniform mood prevails throughout any book, but a mood may predominate, and the predominant mood of book six is that of optimism and enthusiasm for the promise of the new world being created. For a new world really was created under Augustus, when, for the first time in history, a super-state guaranteed freedom from civil war and laid open the whole civilized world to the prosperity of unhampered commercial intercourse. This inspiration, then, led Vergil to create in book six a theme crucial to the whole Aeneid. In this book Aeneas received a vision and became a changed man;[41] the imagery and symbolism of the book set a new, dynamically-charged spiritual tone for the remainder of the epic, which, in consequence, is as full of conscious progress as the earlier books had been full of indecision.

NOTES

[1]Richardson, *Vergil and the Homeric Epithet*, G. & R. 12, 1943, 1—14 and Knight, *Pairs of Passages in Virgil*, ib. 13, 1944, 10—15.

[2]Hélin, *Essai sur la mise en valeur d'un mot banal: le Pronom is chez Virgile* R.E.L. 5, 1927, 60—68 cf. also Gow's comments on Vergil's practice: *Diminutives in Augustan Poetry*, C.Q. 26, 1932, 150—60.

[3]Marouzeau, *Virgile Linguiste, in Mélanges offerts à Ernout*, 1940, 259—65; cf. also Knight, *Clarus Aquilo*, C.R. 48, 1934, 124—125 (citing Conway, *On the Delicacy of Virgil's Diction*), and cf. Wijdeveld's comments on VI, 130, 251 and 466 in *Virgiliana*, Mnem. 10, 1941, 77—80.

[4]Whateley, *Noises off: some sound-effects in Virgil*, G. & R. 14, 1945, 17—18, and Headlam, *The Art of Vergil's Poetry*, C.R. 34, 1920, 23—26.

[5]Palmer, *The Latin Language*, 1954, 115—118; Headlam, *The Art of Virgil's Poetry*, op. cit.

[6]Knight, *Roman Vergil*, 1953, 80—81.

[7]Crump, *The Growth of the Aeneid*, 1920; Conway, *Virgil's Creative Art*, P.B.A. 17, 1931, 17—38; Knight, *Pairs of Passages in Virgil*, op. cit. and Camps, *A Note on the Structure of the Aeneid*, C.Q. 48, 1954, 214—215 (but Camps errs in moving book six from its focal position—of the five parallels quoted to relate books six and eight only one is valid).

[8]The Yekuîa, in book eleven of the Odyssey; cf. also Ashley, *Poetic Imagery in Homer and Virgil*, G. & R. 2, 1932, 21—28.

[9]Bowra, *Some Ennian Phrases in the Aeneid* C.Q. 23, 1929, 65—75; Bailey, *Virgil and Lucretius*, Proc. Class. Ass. 1931, 21 f.; both analyses stress Vergil's attempts to develop the resources of poetic Latin, consciously improving upon his predecessors.

[10]Palmer, op. cit., 111—114; Knight, *Roman Vergil*, 74—75 and 85—86.

[11]Bailey, *Virgil and Lucretius*—cf. n.9—rightly points out that Vergil was so steeped in Lucretius that derivation, especially of a rather tenuous character, was not always conscious; so also Knight, *Roman Vergil*, 76—80, who develops this point at some length.

[12]Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, 1954, 56.

[13]Knight, *Vergil and the Maze*, C.R. 43, 1939, 212—213.

[14]Lewis, op. cit. and cf. Palmer, op. cit. 112—15.

[15]Brooks, *Discolor Aura*, A.J.P. 74, 1953, 260—280.

[16]E. G. Apollo's 'riding' of the Sybil constitutes the classical form of nightmare experience.

[17]Perret, *Virgile, l'Homme et l'oeuvre*, 1952, 113—114.

[18]Lines 893—899; cf. Knight, *Roman Vergil*, 136 and n.2.

[19]The most outstanding works in this field are Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind*, 1953, and Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 1951.

[20]Copley, *Emotional Conflict and its Significance in the Lesbia Poems of Catullus*, A.J.P. 70, 1949, 22—40, stresses that Catullus fumbled his way to greater moral awareness. Moore, in an article on the Young Man in Terence forthcoming in P.A.C.A. 3, 1960, shows that Terence too, in his later plays, came to a growing awareness of the moral responsibilities of love. It is this comparatively advanced thinking which underlies the striking Vergilian portrait of Dido's love affair.

[21]Knight, *Roman Vergil*, 133—135.

[22]Moore shows that, again in the later plays, Terence consciously depicts development of character in his young men. Vergil is clearly indebted to him for the concept; but it must be realized that Terence's *iuvenes* are adolescents maturing to manhood whereas Vergil's Aeneas is already mature when psychical growth is represented as occurring.

[23]Guillemin, *Virgile, poète, artiste et penseur*, 1951, 199—201 (the psychological knowledge of first century Rome); 265 f., the chapter on '*Le Relèvement*' (the development of Aeneas).

[24]Perret, op. cit., 137—138.

[25]Again the approach was not original: the Hellenistic concept Tyche had its counterpart in that of Fortuna Populi Romani; the Stoics believed in moral destiny and Lucretius, an Epicurean writer, had expounded the theory of progress. Vergil's conviction, however, probably sprang, for reasons which will be indicated below, from the *Zeitgeist*, the rebirth of optimism engendered by the promise in the nascent Augustan régime: Starr, *Civilization and the Caesars*, 1954, 183—186. For the significance of this change of mood cf. Knight, *Roman Vergil*, 123.

[26]Lewis, op. cit., 35—36.

[27]Mathaei, *The Fates, the Gods and the Freedom of Man's Will in the 'Aeneid'*, C.Q. 11, 1917, 11 f. cf. Mullens, *Tragic Optimism in the Aeneid*, G. & R. 11, 1942, 137—138.

[28]Drew, *The Allegory of the Aeneid*, 1927. But it is an idealised Augustus: Knight, *Animamque Superbam and Octavian* C.R. 47, 1933, 169—171.

[29]Brooks, *Discolor Aura*, 270—275.

[30]Ellingham, *Virgil's Pilgrim's Progress* G. & R. 16, 1947, 67—75.

[31]Hadas, *Aeneas and the Tradition of the National Hero*, A.J.P. 69, 1948, 408—414 and Perret, op. cit., 135—136 and 139 (but it should be borne in mind that much of the parallelism to Hebraic hagiography is adventitious, stemming from similar linguistic problems leading to striking linguistic parallels: Richardson, *Virgil and the Homeric Epithet*, op. cit. 13—14.)

[32]Bowra, *Aeneas and the Stoic Ideal*, G. & R. 3, 1933, 8—21.

[33]Mackay, *Three Levels of Meaning in Aeneid VI*, T.A.P.A. 86, 1955, 180—189, sees the journey as the recall and dismissal of great traumatic experiences leading to spiritual illumination and simultaneously as a progress through a typified human life-experience wherein character is developed by conscious choice, set against a background of the eschatologies successively evolved by the Mediterranean mind.

[34]Perret, op. cit. 144—145.

[35]Cf. Anderson, *Commissa Piacula* (VI, 569) C.R. 45, 1931, 13.

[36]Knight, *Animamque Superbam*, C.R. 46, 1932, 55.

[37]Carney, *Formalism in Livy*, P.A.C.A. 2, 1959, 4 and cf. n.33, p. 8.

[38]Starr, *Civilization and the Caesars*, 38, 42, 56 and 83; in general 171—186 and 201—202; Starr, *Vergil's Acceptance of Octavian*, A.J.P. 76, 1955, 34—46; Bayet, *Virgile et Les Triumvirs 'Agris Dividundis'* R.E.L. 6, 1928, 195—196; Frank, *Augustus, Vergil, and the Augustan Elogia*, A.J.P. 59, 1938, 91 f.

[39]Cf. Brooks, *Discolor Aura*, 263—267; the impact of recent events on Vergil's mind is manifest in the Aeneid: Pokrowsky, L'*Enéide de Virgile et l'histoire romaine*, R.E.L. 5, 1927, 169—191.

[40]See note 6 and discussion in text.

[41]Guillemin, op. cit., 281—282.

THE CHALLENGE TO OUR ACADEMIC HIGH SCHOOLS*

by W. H. O. SCHMIDT

I must begin with a platitude. The fields of human enquiry are constantly being extended, and the subsequent specialisation, which seems inevitable, leads not only to the accumulation of more and more knowledge, but also to its fragmentation. But though this may be a truism only, it poses very fundamental and complex problems: for the university, which has the task not only of passing on the knowledge acquired in centuries of thinking but also of fostering further enquiry; for the academic high school, which must give a suitable general education and through this general education prepare its pupils for the more specialised study at the university. I want to discuss some of the problems that the accumulation of knowledge on the one hand and specialisation on the other hand pose to the academic high school.

I choose the academic high school for several reasons. In the first place, of all the school types, this is the one which *must* concern itself with our intellectual traditions. However much it may aim at the education of the whole person, however much it may help the pupil to become a balanced person through sport and games and extra-mural activities, and however much it may be conscious of the effect of the school as a social unit, the real justification for the existence of the academic high school as a separate entity is that here the intellectual activity of learning 'subjects' is carried on: the introduction to mathematics and physics and chemistry and geography and literature and ancient and foreign languages and history takes place here. The pupils of the academic high school may be formed in other ways as well, but if they are not formed through and in coming to grips with the content and method and thinking and thought of a wide variety of disciplines, then the academic high school has failed in its distinctive task. It may be doing some good, but it is not doing the particular good for the sake of which it exists. The problem of what to do with the vastness of accumulated knowledge is therefore particularly relevant here.

The second reason why I single out the academic high school is that its educational purposes and possibilities have for some time

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now undergone far too little critical analysis in our country. Of course, at this conference a great deal has been said which, though not pointing directly and exclusively to the high school, is also applicable here. I am thinking particularly of the brilliant analyses given by Professor Fletcher and by Dr Hemming of curricula that would suit the needs of education to-day. But if we look at reports of education commissions on secondary education in South Africa in the post-war years[1] one is struck by the absence of any really serious analysis of the *special* tasks of the academic high school. One gains the impression that everything will be in order if only, by a system of differentiated education, we can prevent the academic classes from being cluttered up with pupils who cannot meet the demands there. But what these demands are—except in terms of formal examination requirements—and for what educational—as distinct from vocational—purposes these demands are made, is dealt with somewhat casually. I am not blaming the writers of these reports, for the tasks which they were set, i.e. their terms of reference, quite naturally led to an emphasis on forms of secondary education other than academic. Nor do I for one moment deny the fact that wiser guidance and more rigorous selection of candidates for the academic streams, as suggested by these reports, would help teachers and many of the pupils to avoid many frustrations. But the fact remains that the educational ideals of the academic high school, which after all determine what is to be done there and the spirit in which it is to be done, have received scant critical attention.

To see our problem in perspective, and to get a grip on it, let me take you to another country and back 150 years to the time when a great reform of universities and of high schools was being inaugurated. In 1810 the university of Berlin was founded. Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote a memorandum[2] embodying his proposals for the founding of the university and of the spirit that was to imbue it. These proposals we must see in relation to the state of knowledge that existed then, and to what one might call the temper of the times. By the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth the knowledge of ancient Greek civilisation had increased enormously. Then, as now, men were looking for standards by which to judge the quality of human life and the society in which human lives unfold. The conviction had gained ground that ancient Greek civilisation had developed the potentialities of human nature to their fullest and highest. The study of ancient Greek civilisation, it was believed, could therefore teach us something about the conditions under which the noblest potentialities of human nature could unfold, and it could provide us with standards for judging contemporary life and society. It was essential, therefore, to study ancient Greek civilisation ever more closely, and for pupils at the high school it set examples to emulate. But apart from this, ever since Descartes, there had been tremendous extensions of the fields of human enquiry which to-day are at the very root of our Western civilisation: mathematics, the physical sciences, astronomy.

So much for the background, and now I must come to the spirit with which the university was to be imbued. Where the universities at the end of the eighteenth century, for one reason and another, had come to place the emphasis on teaching a body of traditional knowledge and examining this, the University of Berlin in 1810 was to embody a new conception of the rôle of the university: the main emphasis was to be on the extension of knowledge and of thought. In pursuing this extension it was to be unfettered. 'The State', wrote von Humboldt, 'should not look to the universities for anything that directly concerns its own interests, but should rather cherish a conviction that in fulfilling their real function, they will not only serve its purposes but serve them on an infinitely higher plane . . . affording room to set in motion much more efficient springs and forces than are at the disposal of the State itself.'

If the university were to be set free to devote itself to its true task, then it would have to have students who already possessed a great deal of the traditional knowledge formerly imparted at the university. Preparing for the University no longer meant, as it had done before, learning Latin grammar and other essential skills, it meant acquiring these plus a body of traditional knowledge which had formerly been taught at the universities themselves—in their Arts faculties. This meant inevitably that the school—the new *Gymnasium*—had to teach more than it had formerly done. The normal age for entering the university was, in due course, raised drastically from something like sixteen or seventeen years to nineteen years.

But then, as now, there was another side to the purpose served by the academic high school. It had to prepare for the university, but it had to do more than this. Knowledge, acquired as a necessary foundation for study at the university, must also serve immediate ends that concern the whole of society. The *Gymnasium* was to mould individual personalities of its pupils according to an ideal: the ideal of the fully developed, harmonious personality, and to give criteria for judging the present, necessarily imperfect, and possibly evil, society. The study of the ancient Greek civilisation was to provide the standards by which to judge. The curriculum of the *Gymnasium* was therefore conceived as consisting of a central core of studies (Latin, Greek, Ancient History, Mythology and Literature) around which a miscellany of modern subjects (mother tongue, mathematics, science) and even contemporary affairs could be studied.

This kind of school very soon ran into difficulties. The reasons why this happened are manifold, and I want to point out only the two reasons which seem to me basic. Firstly, those disciplines which are at the very root of the civilisation that developed in the nineteenth and twentieth century, viz. mathematics, physics, and chemistry could rightfully claim a greater share in the curriculum—and thus altered the balance in the curriculum. Secondly, new disciplines, which also can help us to see the conditions which have to be fulfilled if human beings are to unfold their highest potentia-

lities and to see themselves and society, both as they are and as they could be, developed to an extent unforeseen at the beginning of the nineteenth century: history, biology, psychology, social anthropology, sociology, philosophical anthropology. The study of ancient Greek civilisation no longer seemed the only road that leads to a reappraisal of man by man—and as a result of the limitations of the minds of teachers and pupils and all of us, it began to be the most dusty and the most wearying road. And so started the recurring reforms of the curriculum which led to the addition of more and more subject matter, and in some countries of stranger and stranger subjects, and the loss of cohesion, purpose, and pervading spirit.

A symptom of this loss of cohesion, purpose, and guiding spirit is the everlasting complaint about the overloading of syllabuses and the harmful effects of ill-conceived examination requirements. Some fifty years ago Kerschensteiner described as the most urgent task facing the schools 'getting rid of every vestige of encyclopedism'.[3] At a conference in Tübingen in 1951 a resolution was passed deploring the 'smothering of intellectual life at high schools and universities'[4] under the sheer weight of the knowledge that students are forced to acquire.

I have said that I should take you back 150 years in order to give perspective and so that we should be able to get a grip on our problem. At which points are we able now to get a grip? I suggest that these are the points: 1. What we have to teach in our academic high schools depends on the state of knowledge in our time and on what I have vaguely called the temper of the times; 2. What is taught must serve immediate human ends that concern the whole of society; 3. What is taught must be coherent; 4. Those who carry out the teaching must be aware of which knowledge is basic to our civilisation, must think in terms of the human ends such knowledge is to serve, and must aim at making such knowledge cohere so that it will develop a dynamics of its own; 5. That the imperfections of our system of public, external, written examinations, real and deplorable as those imperfections are, are not the root cause of the overloading of the syllabuses and of the arid factual teaching of which teachers more than anyone else complain—for in Germany, which I used in order to gain perspective, there are no public, external, written examinations for the pupils of academic high schools, though, of course, there are examinations, but in these the teachers themselves play a much more active part. The root cause is much deeper than that and it is certainly much more complex. A cause, not of fundamental but at least of psychological significance, is perhaps that both as teachers and as examiners we do not really know what we are after in education, and hence we cling to that which seems to be the most certain: facts—in teaching and in examining. It is notorious that teachers and examiners blame each other for exactly the same vice.

The first two propositions—what we have to teach depends on the state of knowledge in our time; and what is taught should serve

immediate human ends that concern the whole of society—are the criteria for building our curriculum. The third and the fourth serve as the starting point for thinking about teaching method and the relation between pupil, teacher, and subject matter. If the fifth has succeeded in removing a faulty diagnosis of our educational troubles, it can now be disregarded. I want to say something about both curriculum and methods.

The two criteria for building our curriculum are interdependent; the one without the other is misleading. The first one—that what we have to teach depends on the state of knowledge in our time—if taken alone, seems at first sight to be a direct contradiction of the tenet of child psychology that it is the child that matters and not the subject. But properly understood this tenet of child psychology—perhaps we should rather describe it as a slogan—should make us realise not that the activities of learning subjects are unimportant, but that we should teach subjects in such a way that their proper impact on the minds and the personalities of pupils is assured. For learning a subject is not something we can do without in some way being changed by it. The great fields of human enquiry, which we compartmentalise into subjects, are modes of interpreting the world around us, which have been developed in the course of our cultural evolution. To train pupils in these is not to impose something alien on them but to support them in their own efforts to interpret the world. For a basic fact about being human is that we give meaning to the things and events and make the world intelligible to ourselves. The smallest child is already interpreting the world around him in diverse ways. Some of his interpretations are highly personal and from the adult's point of view arbitrary and not binding on anyone else; others are capable of being shared.[5] Growing up involves essentially the strengthening of our powers of giving meaning. The school must aid the child by giving it the opportunity to discover and to re-create for itself the meanings that have been given by others and that can be shared. It is by this process of giving meaning that we build up a public and shared world and at the same time become the persons that we are; persons with such and such sensibilities, orientations, expectations, valuations. Because the process of building up a public and shared world and the process of becoming the individual persons that we are, are interdependent, acquiring the knowledge that is basic to our civilisation and developing as a person should never be regarded as alternatives. If a subject is taught in such a way that it cannot increase the pupil's own power and range of interpretation, then indeed it is educationally valueless —and even harmful. I would subsume the tenet of child psychology —'it is the child that matters, and not the subject'—under my second proposition—that what is taught must serve immediate human ends *that concern the whole of society*.—As teachers we need have no uneasy conscience if we demand hard work at many subjects, provided always that we are not teaching these subjects in a way that is educationally arid.

Looking at academic high schools in South Africa I would say not that too much emphasis is being given to the importance of learning subjects, but too little. When I say this I am not using as my criterion what specialists, thinking only of their own subjects, would like to add to the curriculum, but in terms of the fields of human enquiry that are basic to our civilisation and to our own self-understanding.

May I remind you what the minimum requirements are for university entrance, as laid down by the Joint Matriculation Board: passes in the main language *plus* the second official language *plus* a science subject *plus* either a third language or mathematics *plus* a fifth subject *plus* a sixth, the latter two to be chosen from a list. I want you particularly to note that it is possible in South Africa to go through the academic high school (*a*) if a third language has been chosen, without learning any mathematics in the last two years at school; (*b*) studying either physical science or biology but not both; (*c*) without learning any history or geography in the last few years at school. I am not concerned here with how often this really happens; I am concerned with the underlying conception of the rôle of subjects in education at the academic high school.

This conception can be briefly summarised as follows: 1. It is necessary for all pupils to study the home language and its literature and to learn the second official language of the country; 2. There is a basic distinction between the humanities and the sciences, and each of these must be represented in the curriculum followed by every pupil, and in the case of science it can be represented by only one subject, unsupported by mathematics; 3. Once these requirements have been met, it does not matter very much any more which subjects are studied, and whatever educational advantages some subjects may have over others is outweighed by the psychological advantage of letting pupils have some choice.

About the first point—home language, second official language—there can be no disagreement. The second and the third need to be discussed.

We have become accustomed to thinking of subjects as belonging either to the sciences or to the humanities, and there are sound reasons for making such a distinction. At this conference the need for bridging the gap between the two has constantly been stressed. But the basic question for education at the academic high school is not whether both the humanities and the sciences are represented, but whether the fields of human enquiry that are basic to our civilisation and to our self-understanding in this civilisation have been included. If we put this question, then, I submit, we cannot leave pupils the choice as to whether they will, or will not, study mathematics, and physical science, and history, and geography, and that a strong case can be made out for the inclusion of biology as another compulsory subject.

Mathematics and the physical sciences are basic to our civilisation; there is no need to labour the point. But if I look at the need

for self-understanding then it seems to me that history is equally essential, for our civilisation has not fallen from the skies but has developed, and if we want to understand our civilisation and ourselves in it, then we must study history. Biology I would include among the compulsory subjects; I plead for it not only because it has become important to the more material and physical aspects of our civilisation but because it can contribute very significantly to our self-understanding. Moreover, to the pupils at the academic high school the study of biology can give a more balanced picture of what science is about. Allow me to develop this point a little more fully.

The physical sciences and biology no doubt have a great deal in common as far as method and the attitude of the student to his subject matter is concerned. Empirical observation, forming hypotheses and testing these by experiment and direct observation, interpreting the results and building consistent theories from which further significant questions arise—which again have to be answered by turning to experimentation and observation: these are, in a sense, the very heart of both. He who learns any of these sciences learns to interpret nature in terms of a network of concepts that fit into each other and he learns at the same time to accept the challenge to the mind of the facts which do not fit the existing concepts and theories. Provided always that the pupil is not required merely to learn what science has to offer as a body of "established facts" and currently accepted theories, but is given the opportunity to participate in formulating the questions and to search for answers, it can develop in him the same attitudes towards puzzling phenomena in nature as in the great scientists themselves, and impose a similar self-discipline upon him. But though the physical and the biological sciences have so much in common with regard to method and basic attitudes required, there are also very marked differences, for after all the one tries to comprehend inorganic nature and the other organic life. And the concepts which the two disciplines develop diverge more and more, the one depending essentially on mathematics, the other not. To have studied only the one and not the other, at any stage, is to get an altogether one-sided view of what science is and of what kinds of questions it tries to answer. Furthermore, it is easier for the high school student of biology to sense something of the human relevance of science than it is for the pupil who has studied only the physical sciences, for biology includes the study of man in one of his aspects, which physical science, as usually taught, does not.

About geography I can again be brief. It is such an excellent bridge between the humanities and the sciences that it should be used.

My list of compulsory subjects for the academic high school would therefore include: mathematics, physical science, biology, home language, second official language, third language, history and geography. I would have no objection to adding one, or even two,

more subjects, provided these were on the creative arts side, as suggested by Professor Fletcher. Six subjects only for the last two years at high school seem to me, if a great deal is demanded in each subject, evidence of premature specialisation, or, if no high standards are reached in the six subjects, evidence of taking things much too easily or of putting the emphasis on the wrong things. If this meant that the pupils of the academic high school would have to spend one more year at school, I would have no objection. I would have an objection to an extra year at school only if the academic high school curriculum remained as it is to-day, and we then introduced one solitary post-Matric. year designed to repair the damage done in previous five years of schooling.

As for the third consideration of the Joint Matriculation Board, viz. that pupils should have some choice, this can be taken care of in a way different from that followed at present. There is no reason, for instance, why pupils should not be allowed to take four major subjects and four subsidiary ones. Two periods of history per week, on a restricted but well-chosen syllabus, might for some pupils arouse an interest in history and a genuine understanding of the importance of historical ways of thinking, where five periods per week might, in the case of that particular pupil, kill all interest. The same pupil, to compensate for the lighter load in history, might be very happy to spend seven periods a week on a modern foreign language or on Latin or on biology, and feel that he is getting somewhere.

This brings me already to a consideration of how we get pupils to learn all this.

May I remind you now of the third and the fourth proposition which I formulated earlier, and which, I said, should serve as the starting point for thinking about methods of teaching: what is taught must be coherent; those who carry out the teaching must be aware of which knowledge is basic to our civilisation, must think in terms of the human ends such knowledge must serve, and must aim at making such knowledge cohere so that it will develop a dynamic of its own.

I trust that no-one will now expect me to give recipes for teaching eight different subjects. I want rather to follow up these propositions a little way and see where they lead us.

If we do that, then the first point that I must make is that coherence comes not simply from the coherent arrangement of subject matter (though this is important too) but from the attainment, by the learner, of crucial insights at crucial moments.

Allow me to describe to you an experiment on learning which was inspired by Katona's work[6] and which we have repeated with our students who are training as teachers. We undertook this experiment to show what happens when we learn by insight. The students had to solve, individually, a series of card problems. We divided the students into three groups, which for convenience we shall now label the memorising group, the insight group, and the self-active group.

We had two sessions with each student. In the first session we gave them two card problems. In this first session the memorisers were told to memorise the sequence in which the cards would have to be arranged in order to be able to solve the problem, and this they did. The insight students were taught a principle which, they were told, would enable them to solve the two card problems. The self-active students were told that they would have to find the solutions themselves, using whatever method they liked. In the second session the students had to go over the two problems again—to test whether they could still do them and how long they took to do so. After that four new card problems were introduced, the first of them being very similar to those of the first session, the second, the third, and the fourth problem becoming increasingly more dissimilar.

The results are very clear: 1. In the first session the insight students took very much longer than the memorisers to solve the problems—about five times as long; 2. A week later, in the second session, the insight students took as long as the memorising group to solve the two tasks again—they showed no advantage for having understood what they had been doing; 3. In the first new task, introduced at the second session and differing only slightly from those of the first session, the insight students showed only a very slight advantage over the memorisers; 4. In the second, third, and fourth new tasks, which became more and more dissimilar from the original problems of the first session, the insight students at last were rewarded for having achieved insight—almost all the insight students solved these problems, almost none of the memorisers did; 5. The self-active students showed very erratic behaviour: the results here depended almost entirely on the way in which they had solved the problems of the first session. If in the first session the problem had been solved by partial insight plus some luck, then this proved a hindrance to solving the problems; they persisted stubbornly in using procedures which had worked previously, for reasons which were not fully understood, but which simply refused to work now. If, however, on the first occasion full insight into the principle involved had been achieved—and this was quite rare—then the self-active students did as well as the insight students.

What are the implications? Teaching for insight takes time, muddling along with partial insights is a barrier to further learning, insight into a principle that is crucial gives us the light and the power to do much of our further learning unaided.[7]

This brings me to a further point. Insight is described by Gestalt psychologists as a restructuring of the perceptual and cognitive field and it involves a restructuring of the person's orientation.[8] Things which one has seen perhaps a thousand times, one now sees differently and invests them with a new meaning and significance. It changes not only the way we see one thing but also our interpretation of other related things and for the first time may make us aware of what previously had passed unnoticed. It develops new powers of seeing and interpreting in the person.

In thinking about the problem of the overloading of syllabuses we shall therefore not get very far unless we think in terms of the powers which we want to develop in the pupils—or rather which we want the pupils to develop for themselves.

There are abilities and sensibilities which no pupil can develop unless he is made to learn certain subjects. We do not, for instance, develop disciplined objectivity and a flair for asking significant questions of nature by being exhorted to do so—in our time the free world is being told, in effect, that in order to compete with the Russians, it is the patriotic duty of all young men and women with able intellects to undergo scientific training. We do not become aware of the significance of the time perspective for self-understanding in our present civilisation, by being reminded of it. We have to learn science and history to develop these abilities and sensibilities. But by teaching these subjects we do not automatically develop in others these abilities and sensibilities, however hard we work and however much of even a good syllabus we cover. We must know what impact new facts or concepts or ways of enquiring can, under appropriate conditions, have on a pupil's mind, and we must teach with that impact in view. For ultimately the success of teaching any subject depends on the spirit and purpose which imbues every aspect of that teaching: method in its concrete detail as well as pupil-teacher relationships. But even then we cannot guarantee an impact, for the mind of the pupil is not like clay on which we can leave an imprint or which, at will, we can form into a well-shaped pot. It has its own pre-occupations, its own dynamic, its own blind spots, its own purposes, and not everything that enters it can re-orientate it. The really important learning that takes place is discontinuous and it occurs at unpredictable moments. By really important I mean that learning which re-orientates the person and thus develops new powers of interpreting and new responsiveness to the world around him and in him. The task of the teacher is to seize the opportunities that present themselves. This requires an environment and an organisation of learning and of the school which makes possible the seizing of opportunities—in one word, flexibility with purpose.

The view which I am expressing here figures prominently in discussions by German educationalists and psychologists at present under the general concept of *exemplarisches Lernen.*[9] I would translate this as 'prototypical learning'. Insight into, and experience of, one phenomenon, provided it is well chosen, can illuminate many other phenomena. But the insight must be such that what is essential is clearly distinguishable from what is accidental and confined to that particular instance, and there must be an emotional impact on the learner. One experience of what a hypothesis is in science, if only it is a significant experience and has come at the right time, and provided that it really shook the pupil's naive faith in what seemed to him plain facts or established theories concerning something that had become important to him personally, can do more to kindle the

true spirit of scientific enquiry than a hundred routine write-ups under the approved headings of diverse laboratory experiments. One profound insight into the complexities of a political situation in history and the human and ethical issues involved can do more to open up an understanding of history as a whole than the superficial study of vast periods of history can ever hope to achieve.

Prototypical learning depends, firstly, on the choice of learning activities that are the most important to the further growth of insight into the subject, and secondly, on the impact, intellectual and emotional, on the pupil. It demands intensive teaching and learning rather than the ideal of extensive wandering over vast fields. The details within the wider field of a particular subject are a matter for the specialist to explore.

Such teaching demands of the teacher that he himself know his subject exceedingly well—not only the narrow segment laid down in a syllabus. By knowing a subject well I do not mean merely that he must have a great deal of detailed knowledge, but that he must have thought about his subject and must be aware of the ramifications of knowledge and of the relevance of knowledge to human experience. For a true specialist knows of the interconnectedness of all knowledge and of its roots in enquiring minds: to him specialisation must not be a shelter that shuts out all possibilities of a wider vision. On the contrary, for in the words of de Madariaga's famous epigram: 'He who is nothing but, is not even'.

NOTES

[1]See particularly the *Report of the Commission on Technical and Vocational Education*, Government Printer, Pretoria, U.G. 65/1948; and Transvaal Education Department: *Report of the Oversea Mission in connection with differentiated secondary education*, Pretoria, 1955.

[2]Von Humboldt, W.: *Über die innere und äussere Organisation der höheren wissenschaftlichen Anstalten in Berlin*, available in: *Die Idee der deutschen Universität*, Hermann Gentner Verlag, Darmstadt, 1956.

[3]Kerschensteiner, G.: *Wesen und Wert des naturwissenschaftlichen Unterrichts*, Verlag von R. Oldenbourg, München—Düsseldorf, 1952; this was first published in 1914.

[4]Mentioned in K. Strunz (ed.): *Pädagogische Psychologie für höhere Schulen*, Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, München, 1959, on p. 463 in a chapter contributed by Otto Dürr.

[5]See Langeveld, M. J.: *Das Ding in der Welt des Kindes*, available in: Langeveld: *Studien zur Anthropologie des Kindes*, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, 1956. Langeveld distinguishes four different modes of interpreting: (*a*) 'offene Sinngebung', i.e. the interpretations we build up in 'open' communication with others, leading to what I have called here 'the public and shared world'; (*b*) 'unverbindliche Sinngebung', i.e. 'non-committal' interpreting—non-committal in the sense that the meanings assigned can constantly be changed, as in play, where the child builds up temporary illusory worlds and, at will, changes the meanings assigned to things; (*c*) 'kreative Sinngebung', i.e. creative assigning of meaning, in which the artist and the poet engage, creating worlds that exist in their own right: (*d*) 'persönliche Sinngebung', i.e. personal interpretation, which reflects the meaning which the unity of 'I-and-the-world-around-me' has for me—recognised as highly important, for instance, in the field of projective testing.

[6]Hilgard, E. R., Irvine, R. P., and Whipple, J. E.: 'Rote memorization, understanding, and transfer: an extension of Katona's card-trick experiments' in *The Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 1953, 46, 288—292; also available in Coladarci (ed.): *Educational Psychology, a book of readings*, Henry Holt, 1955. In our own experiment we changed a few details of experimental procedure, and extended the experiment by the addition of what we called a 'self-active' group of testees, who had to solve the problems without help.

[7]Relevant here is the study of insight in learning and teaching mathematics by P. M. van Hiele: *De problematiek van het inzicht, gedemonstreerd aan het inzicht van skoolkinderen in meetkunde-leerstof*, Meulenhoff, Amsterdam, etc. —no date given.

[8]See particularly Wertheimer, M.: *Productive Thinking*, Harper, New York, 1945; Duncker, K.: *On Problem solving*, Psychological monographs, 1945, No. 270; Luchins, A.: '*Mechanization in problemsolving. The effect of Einstellung.*' Psychological monographs, 54, 1942.

[9]See Copei, F.: *Der fruchtbare Moment im Bildungsprozess*, Quelle und Meyer, Heidelberg, 4th ed., 1958; Derbolav, J.: *Das 'Exemplarische' im Bildungsraum des Gymnasiums*, Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann, Düsseldorf, 1957; Wagenschein, M.: '*Zum Begriff des exemplarischen Lernens*', *Zeitschrift f. Pädagogik*, 2, 1956, 129 ff.; Wellek, A.: 'Das Prägnanzproblem der Gestaltpsychologie und das Exemplarische in der Pädagogik', *Zeitschrift f. exper. u. angew. Psychol.*, 3, 1959, 722 ff.