

OCTOBER 1963

MOTIVE



MOTIVE MAGAZINE

POST OFFICE BOX 871, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37202

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FRONT COVER: AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1963, a painting by the nationally known artist, **JACOB LAWRENCE**. As a Negro, Mr. Lawrence understands the meaning of the struggle for freedom. *motive* featured his painting in the April, 1962, issue. Mr. Lawrence graciously consented to paint this cover especially for *motive* to help underscore the urgency of our times and expose the raw face of hatred and evil and oppression.

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motive is the magazine of the Methodist Student Movement, affiliated with the World Student Christian Federation through the National Student Christian Federation. Published monthly, October through May, by the Division of Higher Education of the Board of Education of The Methodist Church; John O. Gross, General Secretary. **Copyright © 1963** by the Board of Education of The Methodist Church.

Subscription Rates: individual subscription, 8 issues, \$3. Single copies, 50 cents. Optional discount subscription plans for groups handling their own distribution are available; information on request.

Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Nashville, Tennessee, under Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1102, act of October 3, 1917, and authorized July 5, 1918.

the summer lover to his love

The sea has age enough to measure
Our performance. He's seen amblers
On this strand win and dally, scramblers lose,
Scrappers fall away from hope like mourners
From a sign, while hoppers scrapped the stars
And learned to choose. He's seen the rocks
Here ground to sand while men became erect
And wrote wiser names for love that
Doesn't stand. Right here on this strand.
Too, he's seen love stand.

Now if God won't hear our witness
Let the sea. Let him be judge who set
Precedent in ordering the world:
Punctual as waves, variable as
The wind before a sail, perpetual.
Who never lost a motion, let decide.
He knows our rights and the license
Of the season, knows all the dangers.
Tonight the danger's ours as
Utters the asides in his chambers.

While we lay here half in love he's counseled
Darkness. At dawn he brings his thought.
The breeze speaks of it in chilled whispers.
Leaves it in the sand's ear where silence
Shocks us at our need. We are dust. The sea
Has gone. Who once was just has packed
His bags alone, admitted no one, gone;
But left a final word. As we walk among
His final birds I find it on the waves,
The wind, bruited in your eyes. You've heard.

—R. B. LARSEN

ROBERT CHARLES BROWN

a place to hide

Hide us Jesu, when the night runs
On October moon
Burgundy and broken
As scarlet roosters, slain
When winter sets its desperate teeth
Along the edge of days
Unsuspecting and brittle
As tiles met by brazen feet, four and sure
Measuring their way through trembling fields of barley
Balking in their green palatial ruins.

Dread, burst from its lean cradle
Sharp as a sickle's breath
Hammers sharply at its mother's tomb
Where blind flies banquet, black as roosters
Brass and dead on harlots' tarnished thighs
And spiders fling arrows
Scolding and bitter into the moon's face.

Protect us Jesu, when the angry day
Spills from its fragile vial
The orphaned echoes
Of dumb mutes chanting death
Among the bones and ashes of simmering barley.

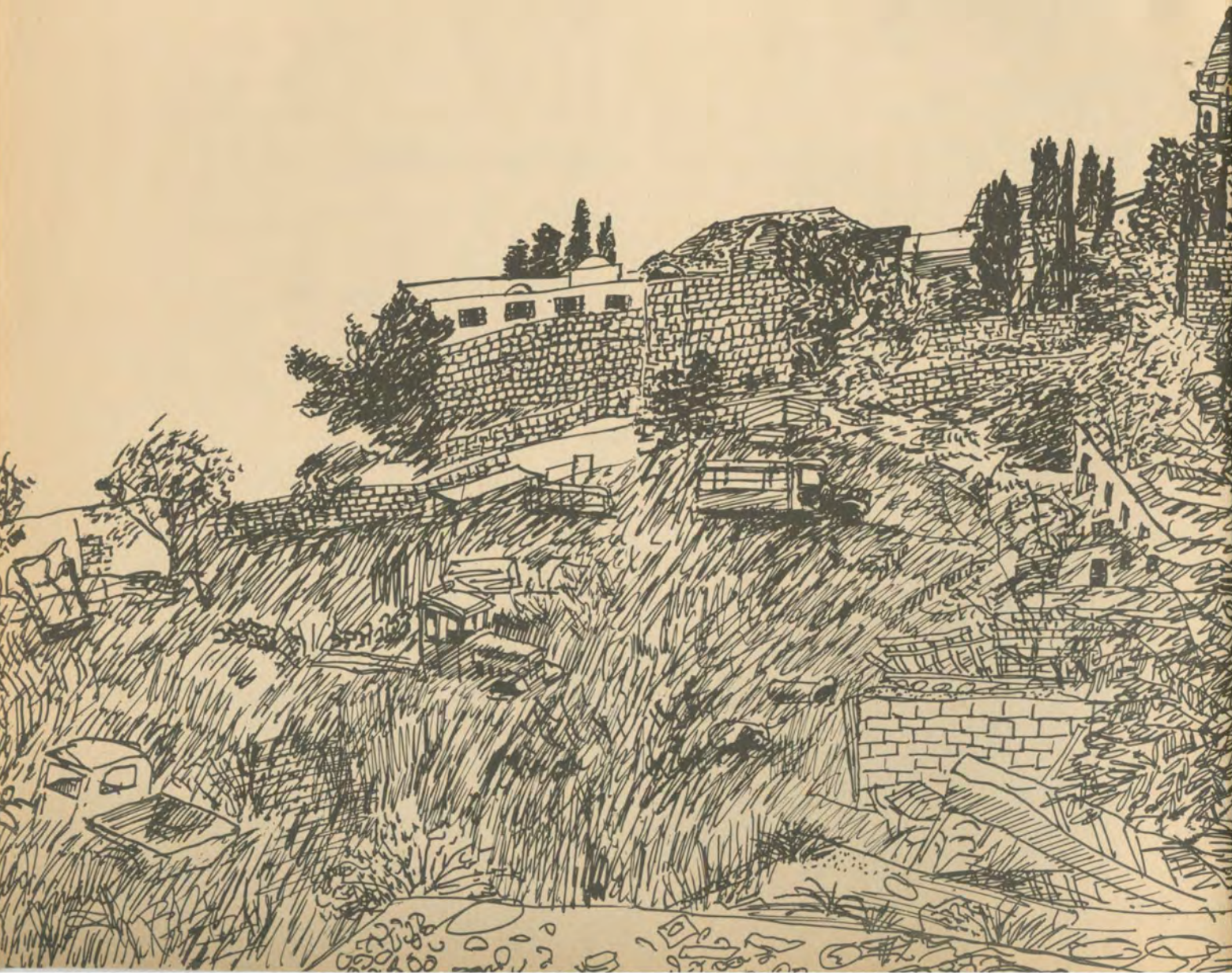
—WALTER L. HOWARD, JR.

fiction

sub, yo daid

BY JACK MATTHEWS

drawings, below and page four, CHARLES GROOMS



THE vacant lot was as uneven as a roller coaster. At one time men had started digging the basement for a building there, but the project soon failed and the equipment was taken away, leaving gigantic mounds of dirt staggered about deep holes.

Time, rain, tennis shoes and bicycle tires wore these mounds smooth. Enormous bull thistles grew in the crotches, dandelions sprang up among them, and the whole vast lot was cut off from the street by billboards advertising gasoline, soft drinks and chewing gum.

This was too lonely a place for most of the children to play in. The hum of traffic was strangely muted and the buzzing of insects took its place. Eventually, hundreds of dwarfish elm and maple trees took root among the thistles, and the lot became a bumpy, erratic jungle, dotted with bald mounds.

Naturally, many kids rode their balloon-tired bicycles over the mounds, but about the only really good place they could ride was a narrow trail along one edge. The rest of the lot was wilderness. A strange, dense, sweet-and-sour-smelling place choked with rough green leaves, the massive heads of yellow dandelions and the bronze armour of innumerable rusting cans which collected in the crowded creases between the mounds.

It was atop one of these mounds that Law was waiting. He stood there with his head raised like a picture of an Ethiopian king, his vast lips thrust out and his eyes in a look of sleepy contemplation.

"Hello, Law," I said, as I clambered up the mound.

"Hello, Curly," he answered, glancing down at me.

"Curly" was my nickname because my father shaved the sides of my head, leaving short, curly tufts of honey-colored hair growing out of the top.

I was chunky, almost fat, and conceded to be one of the strongest boys of my age in the neighborhood. Lawson Griggs was a head taller than I, ten pounds lighter and a year older. He could run faster than anybody I had ever seen and he had gigantic feet with heels that stuck back like great gray knobs.

Law was brooding. He looked funny in his big shorts, with long ebony sticks for legs and no socks and pink toenails showing through the tops of his blasted and dirty tennis shoes.

I had something good for Law so I let it wait. He picked up a flat stone the size of a quarter and winged it aimlessly at the back of a billboard and licked his lips and blinked. I picked up a stone and shot it straight up in the air and both of us watched it go up and get pulled back, like a Yo-yo in reverse.

"Ain't *nothin'* to do!" Law complained. Sometimes Law uttered this phrase incongruously, as when we were sitting down to eat licorice sticks, or maybe an ice cream cone from Karvasales' Ice Cream Emporium. Law would gaze at the delicacy before him and say: "Ain't *nothin'* to do!" Law was always sleepy, but he never slept. Going to school, I would see him loafing in front of the fire house, waiting for me, after having delivered his morning papers in the black dawn.

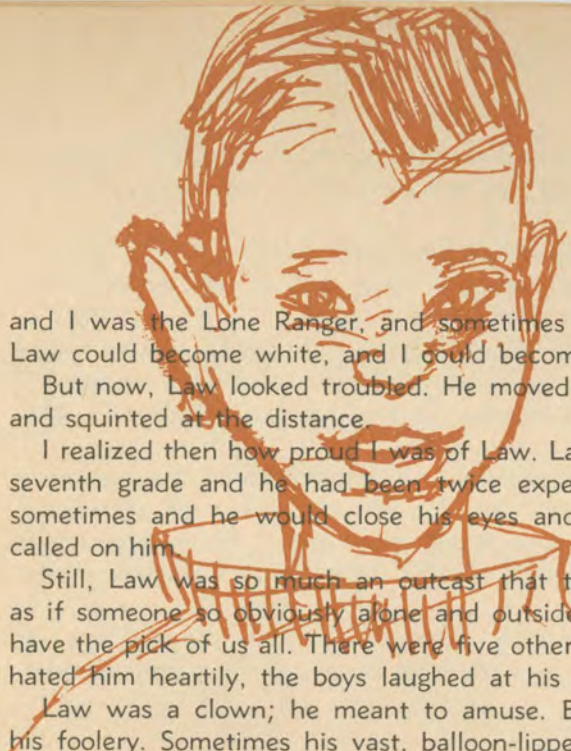
Law sat down and sighed, aiming along a stick. His thick lips went *pah, pah* in a halfhearted shooting sound.

I couldn't wait any longer. I sat down beside him and excitedly began to tell him about a Civil War movie I had seen the night before with my older brother. In it, there was a Confederate Colonel who was wounded and returned to the old plantation. The Union Army broke through the Confederate lines and marched up to the plantation, burning everything in their path. The troops had been drinking and they felt murderous. The Colonel was dragged out and a rope was put around his neck and he was set upon his horse.

When they were about to put the whip to the horse, Japheth, the Colonel's personal slave, came up to the Yankees and clasped his hands under his chin, telling them that if they would spare the Colonel's life, he'd show them where a whole regiment of Confederate troops was quartered. Japheth's face was perspiring and streaked with tears and it seemed that the bonfires in the front yard were all reflected in each of his bulging eyes. The Union Major, who looked like General Grant, meditated for a moment to the sounds of the crackling fires and then he cut the Colonel's bonds and told him to ride away.

Japheth led the Union troops through mountainous country until nightfall and then he tried to escape. But he was shot in the back trying to run away and as he lay in the bushes dying he muttered: "You should be safe now, Massuh!"

As I told this story to Law, I could see he was touched. The scene of Japheth saving the Colonel had really inspired me. Often, Law and I would act out movies together. Sometimes he was Tonto



and I was the Lone Ranger, and sometimes (believe it or not) vice versa. To a child's imagination Law could become white, and I could become the monosyllabically faithful redskin, Tonto.

But now, Law looked troubled. He moved the toe of his tennis shoe over the top of the mound and squinted at the distance.

I realized then how proud I was of Law. Law was a kind of inverted hero. He had flunked the seventh grade and he had been twice expelled from school. He was known to carry dirty books sometimes and he would close his eyes and make a big show of praying in class when the teacher called on him.

Still, Law was so much an outcast that to have him for a friend meant something special. It was as if someone so obviously alone and outside of everything could actually judge us objectively and have the pick of us all. There were five other Negroes in our class, two boys and three girls. The girls hated him heartily, the boys laughed at his antics much as the white boys did.

Law was a clown; he meant to amuse. But there was something imperturbable above and beyond his foolery. Sometimes his vast, balloon-lipped brooding crossed the line of pose and became a real kind of trance upon the world . . . as if his mind were a dog, who runs away playfully and then is distracted by something down the street and is suddenly not being coy, or teasing you, but has forgotten your existence and is dead-set upon something beyond your sight.

At any rate, Law was vaguely troubled. He said so. He sighted along his stick and went *pah, pah* several times and brooded with his lips. His eyes were red-veined from too many cigarettes. It was one of the scandals of our school that Law smoked. Even cigars. He made an art out of childish sins.

But he was serious about things, too. He loved to arbitrate; sometimes comically using big, made-up words, still sometimes seriously. His decisions were always sought after. They were inevitably colorful and interesting, seldom just.

"You'd be a perfect Japheth, Law," I said. "You look exactly like him."

Law stuck a dandelion in his mouth and spoke softly around it. "I *knew* you was going to say that."

The dandelion twirled in his lips and the yellow was reflected in the shiny black skin of his chin and cheeks, revealing that he was a real butterlover.

"What the heck, Law," I said. "Don't you want to play?"

"I don't know exactly as how I don't wanna *play*," Law said meditatively, as if his voice were mortally afraid of hurting his own feelings. "But I gotta *think* about this thing."

"What's there to think about?" I asked.

"Well, for one thing, I ain't gonna play no slave."

There was a canny look in Law's eye, as if he had caught me up in a plot to trap him. He chewed on the dandelion and spat past the blossom. A drop of sweat was fastened to one of his temples.

I saw the position Law was in, but still I wanted to play. It was important to re-enact movies at that stage in my life. It was as if I made such adventures credible and somehow finally brought them within my own realization by going through them afterwards. This was one of the reasons Law and I played together. We liked to re-enact movies, things that happened at home, in school. Others were inclined to be bored by our little dramas, but Law and I were absorbed. Law was a terrific mimic. And he could achieve such ridiculous postures with his long, bony body that I was frequently convulsed into helplessness.

"You play Tonto sometimes when I'm the Lone Ranger," I said with a note of disgust in my voice.

"That ain't the same thing," Law said. He took the dandelion out of his mouth and threw it to the ground. Then he spit the sourness after it and made a massive grimace with his mouth turned down.

"Hell, it's just pretend," I said. "Not only that, Japheth was the real hero. Boy, you should've seen him when he died!"

Law was shaking his head now, his mouth still turned down.

I could almost feel his interest in the whole movie drifting away so I did the logical thing. "All right," I said, with finality and martyrdom in my voice: "I'll play Japheth and you be the Colonel!"

Law narrowed his eyes and looked off into space. He caressed his upper lip with thumb and forefinger and meditated.

"We'll play like this lot is the mountains near Chattanooga," I said hopefully.

"That where it was? Chattanooga?" Law asked. When I nodded, he said: "My great-grandmother come from near there."

"See, maybe you're related to Japheth," I said hopefully. "You'd be just right for the part."

"No. I'll play the Colonel," Law said.

For a while we enthusiastically lost ourselves in the violence of battle. I was a series of Union soldiers, charging over a mound and shot by Colonel Lawson Griggs. I would roll dramatically to the bottom of the mound, always clutching my chest or belly.

Law's contribution to the realism of battle would be to roll over in the weeds occasionally and wave his feet slowly in the air, as a dog does when its belly's scratched. But Law didn't get shot often, which didn't surprise me. It was a characteristic of him that in war play he didn't like to be the one to fall under a hail of bullets. This suited my dramatic instinct fine; it gave me a chance to fall all over the place and scream terribly.

Finally, we lay panting in the sun, done-in after having been shot so many times.

I was ready for the melodrama to begin, but apparently Law wasn't through yet. He climbed to the top of the hill and proclaimed in what he felt was a Confederate Colonel's drawl (I imagine he was imitating his oft-mentioned great-grandmother): "Suh, yo daid!"

When I didn't respond but simply lay there at the bottom looking up at him, Law got an earnest look on his face and said, "Curly, do some more charging. Come on, Curly!"

I knew I was good at battle scenes and I was always proud to be asked. I charged up the mound and Law aimed his stick at me, yelling: *pah, pah, pah!*

I rolled frantically down the hill and at the bottom, I looked up to see Law staring at me arrogantly.

"Suh, yo invade our homeland, yo daid!"

"Okay, let's pretend we're at the plantation now," I said.

"Okay," Law said. "You're my slave. What's your name?"

"Japheth."

"Japheth," Law repeated.

"All right," I said.

"Start out like you was shinin' my shoes," Law said.

"Heck, no, Law. What's that got to do with anything?"

"Just like it was. My great-grandmother told me about life back in them slave days. I reckon I know more about it than you. I call you 'nigger' and things like that. I treat you like a no-good dog and still you come back and save my life and I don't even bother to thank you none. I just expect it out of you, cause you're my nigger."

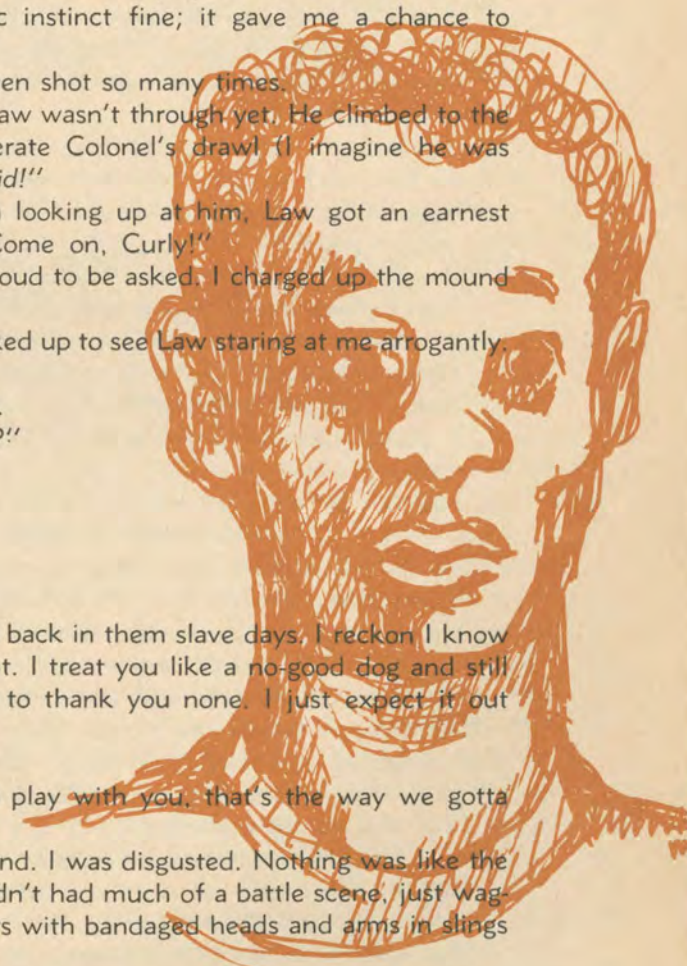
"Hell," I said, all excited. "The movie wasn't like that!"

"Well, that's the way it really was and if you want me to play with you, that's the way we gotta play."

I pulled some dandelions out and threw them to the ground. I was disgusted. Nothing was like the movie, so far. Even the battle scene. Actually, the movie hadn't had much of a battle scene, just wagons going along a country road and a bunch of dirty soldiers with bandaged heads and arms in slings and the dull booming of cannons in the background.

"I can make it better than the movies, Curly," Law said encouragingly. "I know all about them times."

The purist in me objected. The nearer to the movie, the better. Still, Law was stubborn. He had a mind of his own. I was always afraid that he would just get disgusted and leave. Sometimes he did



that at the most interesting times. This perversity was part of his fascination.

"All right," I muttered. "You can have it your way. But when we get to the hanging, we're gonna play it just like the movie."

Law nodded soberly and thrust his foot forward.

"All right, nigger," he snapped. "Shine my shoes."

I looked down at Law's tattered tennis shoes, with his big toes bursting through, and said, "Yassuh, Massuh," the way the movie Japheth had said it several times.

"Now go and fix me one of them mint juleps, nigger," Law said. "And make it *snappy!*"

"Aw, do we have to go through all this?" I asked.

"The man's comin' down the road right now to tell us the Yankees are comin'," Law explained. "He's gonna interrupt me while I'm drinkin' my mint julep."

"All right," I said.

"How you 'dress me, nigger? You say, 'Suh.' "

"What's gotten into you?" I said. "I wasn't playing when I said that."

"You talkin' back to me, nigger?" Law asked, raising his eyebrows. He cracked an imaginary whip over my back, going *cha, cha!*

I had to giggle, but I couldn't resist the spirit of the thing, so I bowed and said, "Yassuh, yassuh!"

Law narrowed his eyes at me and watched me make a mint julep.

"Now you're another slave comin' to tell us the Yankees are comin'," Law said when I handed him an imaginary drink.

"Massuh, Massuh," I yelled. "The whole Union Army's a comin' down the road!"

I waved my arms frantically and rolled my eyes.

Law narrowed his eyes and rested his hand on an imaginary sword.

"Nigger," he said. "Get outa my sight. I got me some *fightin'* to do!"

"Yassuh," I said, and melted away.

Then, as Japheth, I loaded guns for the Colonel as he strode from window to window. Suddenly, he stopped.

"Nigger!" he roared. "This here gun ain't *loaded* properly!"

"That wasn't in the movie!" I yelled.

"Don't talk back to *me*, nigger! I shoot a nigger fer less'n that!"

"That's not part of it!" I yelled frantically. Nothing was right. Law was backing up the mound, his hand resting on his sword. I was yelling at him in frustration and he was soon yelling back.

He took out his sword and said, "I *kill* you! I ain't kiddin', nigger, I *kill* you!"

"There wasn't anything like this in the movie!" I yelled for the tenth time.

"I show you how it *really* was, Curly!" Law cried. I was suddenly aware that he had been repeating that phrase as often as I had been repeating mine. Neither of us had been listening.

"If you can't play fair, don't play at all," I said finally.

Law was standing atop the mound again. He seemed to have shriveled up into his wrinkled, oversized shorts. He seemed suddenly skinnier and blacker than ever.

"It's all right with *me* if I don' *never* play with you no more," he said.

"That's okay with me, too."

Law walked away, over the mounds. I saw his head go down and then come up and then disappear, only to reappear for an instant over some bull thistles, and then it was gone for good.

For some reason, we never made up. And, as far as I can remember, that was just about the last time I tried acting out a movie.

Nobody but Law liked to play that way.

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WRESTLING BEASTS DRAWING BY UCHE OKEKE, NIGERIA

african art and the church

BY HALL DUNCAN

*"Let our art, music, dance, drama
be the cement of our community—but with a
new spiritual light glowing through them."—
EMILE NJAU, African artist*

THE artists, in their own way, may be the ones who will really evoke Christian theology in Africa and Asia. But to become authentic, the church in Africa—as anywhere else—will need the combined ministries of Christian social psychologists, artists, and theologians in exploring the vitality and meaning of native dance, music, and the plastic and two-dimensional arts.

African art evidences the impact of Christianity as far back as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Technique and form both show traces of this influence. Although examples of genuine African Christian art of this era are hard to find, what is existent indicates a Christian influence from the early church fathers. Margaret Trowell suggests that the African nail-studded figures of this period were influenced by the figure of Christ on the cross. She suggests that Mother and Child statues in the Benin and lower Congo may have been based on the

Madonna and Child figurines brought there by Catholic priests. Such sculpture perhaps reinforced the concept of the Mother Earth Goddess found in West Africa. Miss Trowell's interpretation of art of this period further suggests the inclusion of new technique and form into a theology that remained thoroughly African.

A French airline magazine recently illustrated how Christian symbolism has influenced certain plastic art forms in the Ivory Coast. Their example showed the use of the Christian fish symbol in the over-all design of a mask. Research on the effect of imported Christian art on African art has been limited, and this field of inquiry is open for extensive exploration. Such research is vital if the churches in Africa are to understand what is taking place in current African religious symbolism—particularly in sculpture and painting.

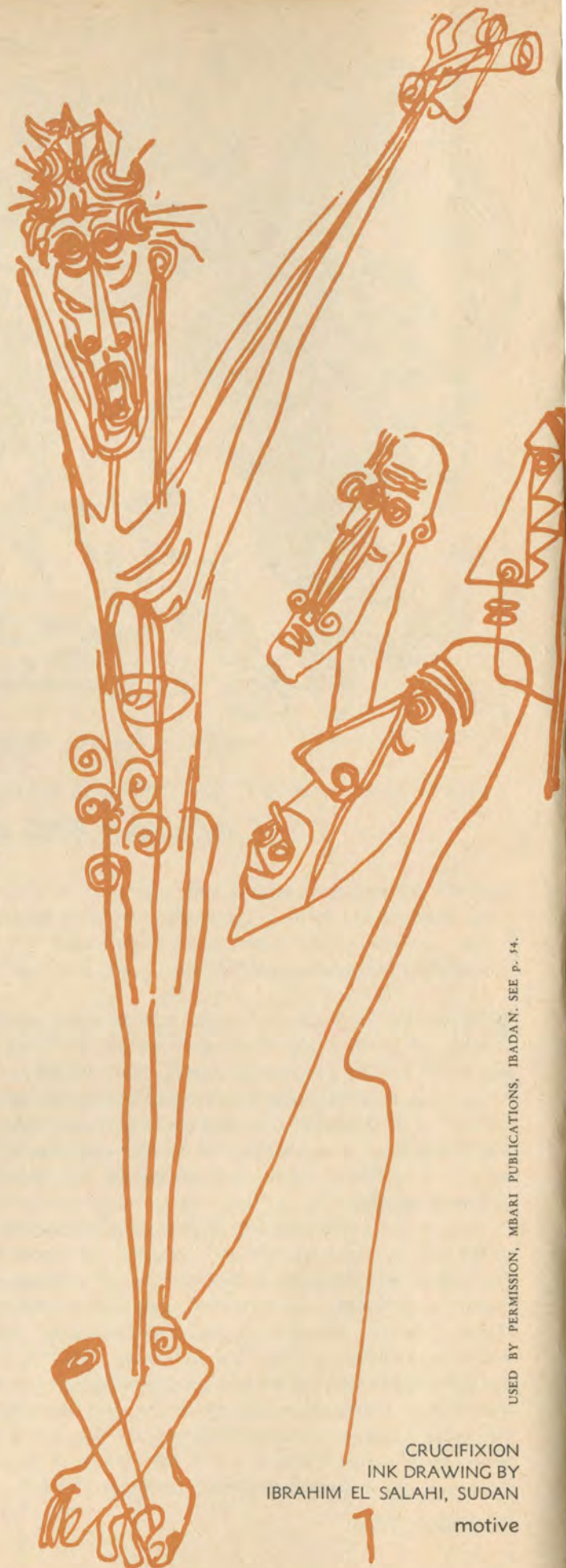
The steady procession of European explorers, religious missionaries, traders and settlers brought many articles and items evidencing their particular culture and Christian faith. By the seventeenth century some of these had been absorbed by some of the indigenous cultures. The most notable were

the cross and crucifix. Generally, these were crudely done and were adapted to the tribal religious needs rather than serving as a visual Christian symbol. The African artist must have had great difficulty in his contacts with the early missions whose policy was to destroy—if it could—all that was a part of tribal religion. The early explorers were more curious than respectful of the beauty of form, and the emotion which African sculptors evoked from a piece of wood.

As the African artist entered the twentieth century, he found it difficult to explore the plastic arts using Christian themes. On the one hand, he was moving from the forms of art vital to his own particular community and its well-being, and secondly, he found himself being dictated to by European criteria. In many ways this European culture and art evidenced a magic and power apparently superior to his. As the artist lost his community contact in the process of detribalization his creative expression suffered. Often he worked only to please European groups who sought African-made curios. He became a parasite of a culture very foreign to and often misunderstood by him. The African artist who did accept Christianity often found his former art market and prestige among his own people disappearing. In the mission compound his security and prestige became highly dependent upon those from outside the continent who came to "save his soul" and to "civilize" him.

Other influences also affected him. The slave raids burned and pillaged significant works of tribal art. Such bloody encounters also took their toll of artists. As the remnants of the slave raids tried to piece together what was left, their economy was lowered, and their art lost much of its finesse, feeling and quality. Tribes that were sufficiently strong militarily were able to preserve more of their art, especially their religious art. However, rain, humidity and insects continually brought destruction, especially to murals and sculpture.

The finest African art of the past three centuries is found in the more stable and well-organized West and Central African kingdoms. We also note that where African religion was highly developed and thoroughly rooted in the culture, art was done with a sense of deep purpose and loving care. In some African kingdoms, the artists were employed full time, to fulfill the aesthetic and spiritual needs



CRUCIFIXION
INK DRAWING BY
IBRAHIM EL SALAHI, SUDAN
1
motive

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of their ritualistic, community life. This was African art at its best. This art was dynamic because it arose out of community consciousness and need. Art was absolutely necessary to religion—to life—to power. It played a key role in the spiritual and physical well-being of people.

One factor that has influenced and is still influencing the quality, use and production of African art is the shift in this century from a barter economy to a cash economy. The effect has been to discredit or negate the use of items of art which would be used in sealing transactions such as the "bride price." As the economy of African countries developed to the point of efficient industrialization in some areas, the African has been less dependent on the old systems for holding his tribe together. European industrial power has disillusioned him about the once unquestioned power of his tribal religion.

The African has been made dependent on things which are produced by Europeans. And these things influence his art. One sculptor I saw at Cyrene was tracing a lion out of a British coloring book as he prepared a carving!

It is much easier for the African artist to cater to the European tourist trade with hacked-out masks and rows of elephants than to "sell" his own people his art work. Much African economy simply does not allow a margin for buying anything beyond bread, housing and clothing. Even the "affluent" Africans have not formed a sufficient clientele to give the African artist an incentive to produce for his own people. African art now is best appreciated by the African middle and upper classes in the newly independent countries of Ghana and Nigeria.

Artists are struggling to awaken interest and support for their painting and sculpture, some strictly from a secular point of view. One Dahomey portrait artist whom I know must travel extensively on his bicycle. His life is a hard one: he leaves his wife and children and scours the countryside, vainly searching for people who will pose for him and buy his art. In some areas of Africa, for a person to have a portrait made of himself would open a dangerous channel for sorcery against him and his family.

The artist in cities faces big problems. African cities have a more serious lack of community consciousness. Advertising exploits the African and sells him on household items: sewing machines, radios, clothing, toiletries, consumer goods with no

religious value. There appears to be little or no demand for religious pictures other than a few done by overseas artists.

FORTUNATELY, a change is slowly coming in religious art. There is now an increasing demand for church pictures depicting African life situations and drawn by African artists. In Kampala, Uganda, this past year, it was encouraging to hear African church leaders call for the development of a Christian art in Africa. This need was stressed urgently in the editorial board meeting of the All-African Sunday School Curriculum. But compared to the African market for paintings, the photographic market is a staggering one. The photograph, done on the spot, has a tremendous personal appeal, being identified with the local scene and life. The photo serves a prestige need and is within the economy of most Africans. To what extent the photograph ties in with syncretic religions or ancestral worship remains an area for further study. One interesting observation of photographic power comes from Rhodesia where some religious sect leaders used retouched photos of themselves floating in space to show their divinity to an audience that believes that photos do not lie.

In our testing of religious symbolism in Africa, there are indications that William Fagg of the British Museum has probed the heart of the matter when he says ". . . when Pagan faith gives way to Christianity, it loses depth in the process. The convert's new belief is more superficial and transitory than the old, since the philosophical and largely unconscious basis for his thought has not been engaged by the conversion." Fagg concludes that almost invariably the traditional arts—through which the old faith was expressed—are allowed to lapse, or are actively rejected instead of being converted to the new faith. My observations in Africa confirm what William Fagg asserts. We have not done enough work in depth to help the African find total "conversion" as an African.

The African artist finds himself in a quandary as he tries to find an authentic expression that is "himself." He battles just to know what his religious faith is. In general he has been subjected to imported art, but what he wants most of all is freedom to express himself, to convince his fellow Africans that where his thought is clear and profound he does have something to say. Some long for deeper



WALL PAINTING OF ZACCHAEUS, MOZAMBIQUE

acceptance among their own people. Others strive for a following in groups outside their confused culture.

SO far, in Africa, very few African painters and sculptors are producing art for the African churches. Their biggest obstacle is the African churches themselves, which have been hostile toward art or have not admitted the need for art. This is because the churches have largely Protestant conditioning against the use of art produced in Africa. I have observed that in many African churches there is little artistic inspiration or desire to do much at this time in art. Reyburn, a missionary-anthropologist writes, "The attempt to introduce any traditional art form into a church is confronted by the heterogeneous congregation. What appears to be the rejection of art forms by the congregation is rather the reflection of the inability of the congregation to view things from the perspective of a uniform will."

This conflict in trying to achieve a uniform will from scattered backgrounds was aptly expressed recently at a Christian arts workshop in Rhodesia.

The delegates presented several proposals relating to revitalizing the visual and plastic arts in the Christian church. Their first resolution stated that in recognition of the long tradition of Christian art in many parts of the world, they wished to encourage African churches to use any carvings and paintings conveying moral Christian teachings—for example, the cross and events in the life of Jesus. They pointed out that *any artist must be given his freedom of expression* in painting and carving any religious story he desires, but that he must be thoroughly acquainted with the facts of the story.

Their second resolution called for African communities to explore the use of local materials in beautifying their churches. In much of Africa there is very little pride or effort in making church buildings into authentic African expressions and keeping them neat and attractive.

Such resolutions are the hope of the African Christian artists who are part of the minority groups in the African churches. They face strong opposition from the older groups conditioned to the outward visual forms of Western Christianity. The continued refusal of the older African Christian groups to even explore the arts poses a question, "Have Africans accepted outward forms of worship that have been imposed upon them and have they ever felt free to explore forms of the arts that truly express and symbolize their internal religious feelings in the Christian church?" It may be that they interpret encouragement of experimentation in art as a way of giving them "inferior" visual religious expression and hence, a religion with less power than the white man.

Sir Herbert Read throws light on the reason why there is a lack of meaningful Christian art in Africa when he says that since art is human activity the value of art depends on the sensitivity of the personality of the artist, coupled with his depth of feeling, and those who view and use his art. Until there is a sufficient appreciation and feeling of need for religious art among the African congregations, the artist will be banging his head against a stone wall. In Read's terms, the African artist, to achieve greatness, must in some way appeal to community feeling.

Religion through the ages has helped keep community feeling alive for the arts. It was deep com-

motive

munity consciousness which provided moral, religious and economic stability in old Africa. Will it now reassert itself?

The arts are indeed able to build community consciousness. I have seen this in a limited way among the Bunyoro in Uganda. Art can help to develop a more sensitive awareness to religion and the part it plays in meeting human need. The African artist in such communities can feel free to provide religious art that is both fully acquainted with and representative of his innermost spiritual thoughts and feelings and fully aware of today's demands. However, it is quite apparent that until the churches themselves feel secure enough in their belief and faith there will not be sufficient openness to exploration and experimentation in the arts to have any meaningful impact. Reyburn cautions us when he says that merely by introducing art the church will not be Africanized, for these things feed on motivation. Such motivation must come from the community if the arts are to play their proper role. Also, there has never been a complete extinction of the old ways in Africa. As Herskovitz, the anthropologist, says, ". . . rarely does a culture give way entirely before another, that the result of contact is a new synthesis far more than extinction."

THE Catholic church has boldly launched out in the arts in some parts of Africa. Examples are the work of Father Kevin Carroll in Nigeria, who helped develop the rich pagan art for Christian adaptation but *only after exhaustive and profound research*. Also, there is monumental work in music such as the *Luba mass** in the Congo which renders the fullness of the African feeling of joyousness for the Luba Christian to take part. In the Protestant church, we have the work of Robert Kauffman who is experimenting and studying the music and religion of the Shona people.

But along with profound research into existing forms and uses of art in Africa comes the need for intensive art training programs which will encourage and help Africans explore media and techniques new to much of Africa. As Professor Rhodes of Columbia University recently said to a group of Africans, "You can never escape outside influences and techniques. Use them intelligently to help express

yourself in the arts, but never surrender to them."

African art schools have been making important strides in this direction. The Art Department of the Writing Center at Kitwe is training illustrators. Sensitive work is coming from Makerere College in Uganda. The painter and sculptor Elimo Njau is a good example of what this institution can produce. Njau has been very successful not only in his own work but in that of encouraging African children to express themselves as individuals in art. He tells them, "When you copy, you put God to sleep." Elimo has touched the root of our problem in the arts.

One of the first steps in developing community consciousness for the need and use of the arts for the church is to encourage drawing among the children. Drawing games, using only the finger or stick in making impressions in sand, can be great fun. (Such drawing games are found by Torday in his work among the Bakuba in the Central Congo.) We need to encourage the use of colored muds applied with sticks to make designs on walls. Some communities have done this and villages of beauty have resulted. Encouragement of picture-making on the mud walls of the church can illustrate Bible lessons and fables as once the great murals covered ancient places of worship.

In all these activities there must be a community "doing" rather than merely hearing about these things. They must be inspired by concerned, talented African leadership from their own group.

Experimenting with materials, bark is used as a painting canvas. Ashes, cassava root, anthills, and so on can be used for color. Other tools are common things, such as feathers, sticks, stones, banana fibre, even shoe polish, the number of things that can be used are endless, *and all within the economy of the people*. There is a wonderful creative art instinct among African people. If motivated by a *new outlook of the church to explore the arts realistically*, this creativity can enrich the life of the community, religiously and otherwise.

Only by the breakthrough of demonstration and community acceptance of the adaptation of the arts to Christian use can the opposition to the development of such arts be overcome. Only then will the African artist begin to hold a place of esteem in his community. Primarily, enlightened African leadership in Christian communities can pave the way.

* *MISSA LUBA*, on a *Phillips* 45 rpm record, \$3. St. Benet's Store, Wabash Ave., Chicago, Illinois



SURVIVORS

LINOCUT

ROBERT HODGELL

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motive

seeing the unseen

BY HAROLD K. SCHILLING

LIVING and thinking on the threshold of the unseen is by no means unusual. Nowhere is this more in evidence than in science. While unfortunately science is commonly thought of as being largely an enterprise in the collection of so-called facts that are presumably directly perceptible, actually it is primarily a search behind or beyond them. Science does not even begin until one has inquired into how raw data fit together and can be explained, in terms of what conceptual, theoretical structures they may be seen to make sense, what patterns of hidden reality and relationship they reveal.

Science has insisted on pushing its inquiry to ever deeper levels, until it has now reached that of the so-called elementary particles, of which all physical objects consist. According to this conception, a book, for example, is a swarm of billions and billions of particles called protons, electrons and neutrons, that are exceedingly small and proportionately as far apart as the planets are in the solar system. In a sense it is mostly empty space. If in our imagination we were to put the book into a press powerful enough to squeeze it down until all its constituent particles "touched," with the empty space squeezed out, so to speak, it would be so tiny a pellet that it could not be seen by even the most powerful of optical microscopes.

But there are still other questions. Why, if the book is simply a swarm of widely separated, unconnected particles, doesn't it collapse? Why, if we were to pick it up in order to move it, would it not fall apart? How can it keep its shape? Since each page is a separate swarm of moving particles, why is it that the pages maintain their identity when the book is closed? Here is another order or degree of mystery. And in the attempt to penetrate it science has come upon still other kinds of hidden

Man always lives on the verge, always on the borderland of something more. He is the only animal, apparently, who has built restlessness into a metaphysical principle. . . . Indeed the intimation of something more, beyond the horizon, belongs to the very nature of consciousness. To be conscious is not just to be; it is to mean, to intend, to point beyond oneself, to testify that some kind of beyond exists and to be ever on the verge of entering it.

—Philip Wheelwright
The Burning Fountain

realities: "nonmaterial" ones, with respect to which the term "touch" makes no sense, that are not "concrete" in the sense that particles are. They are the so-called fields of force that exist in the otherwise empty space surrounding the particles, and yet are determined by the nature of the particles. It is to these hidden, insubstantial field entities that we look for the explanation of the behavior of the particles when they collide, or of the pressures and tensions that appear when one tries to move or deform a book, or of the chemical chain reaction called burning that ensues when a flame is applied to it.

These successively deeper probings of science that have led to this remarkable picture point to a distinctively human phenomenon: namely, profound dissatisfaction with knowledge of only the apparent, coupled with a powerful urge to explore the realm of the unseen behind it. While man seems always, from his most primitive beginnings, to have felt an urge to look beyond, it has taken him a long time to develop this restless, demanding, probing attitude to the extent that science became possible—and with it this picture of what lies beyond the threshold of surface appearances.

A fact to be reckoned with, however, is that this uniquely human dissatisfaction is never satisfied completely as far as scientific images and models are concerned. Certainly we can claim no adequacy for the elementary particle picture, remarkable and useful though it is. And why this should be so is not hard to understand when we consider the difficulties inherent in any attempt to develop such a conception. To begin with, the entities we call electrons, protons, or neutrons are not of such nature as to be individually open to direct inspection. Then, too, such methods as we have for getting at them indirectly indicate that the term particle symbolizes ade-

quately only some of their characteristics, and that others are more aptly suggested by the word wave. Therefore to think of them—by analogy—as either particles or waves alone would be grossly inaccurate. To tell the whole story about them, we must then apparently either employ a symbolism that somehow combines the notions of *both* particle and wave, or abandon the use of these images altogether in favor of a totally different approach. But neither of these alternatives is at all easy. The concepts of particle and wave come out of our ordinary experience with stones and bullets, water waves and sound waves. Categorically these are, of course, completely different. Stones are discrete objects—one can pick them up and throw them around. Waves are not, in that sense. Rather they constitute a phenomenon, or a kind of motion by which energy or a state of deformation can be transmitted through an extended medium like water or air. Therefore logically and linguistically it seems utterly paradoxical to describe any one entity in terms of two such different categories. Nor are we familiar in everyday experience with any sort of object that does as a matter of fact have these paradoxical attributes.

The situation is then that the entities encountered beyond the threshold of the physically unseen, in this case in the microworld of the atom and its components, are so utterly different that their properties correspond to those of the visible world only roughly—very roughly. Therefore we must now say—and this is one of the most remarkable contributions modern science has made to our knowledge not only of the physical world, but of human consciousness—that genuine understanding and truly meaningful communication relative to the unseen microworld require ways of thinking and talking that are in many respects radically different from those suitable for the directly visible macroworld. This is, at least in part, why today we need an uncertainty principle and a principle of complementarity, and why we minimize the use of mechanical or pictorial models in our theorizing, and prefer to employ pictorially non-committal mathematical ones instead. And this is why in physics we need the radically new methodological approach of quantum mechanics—and why without doubt still further momentous changes in our thought patterns will be required as science continues to probe ever deeper into the beyond.

THE threshold experience of the unseen is such that crossing the threshold always requires new intellectual tools and novel language. To picture the unseen analogically in terms of the seen always introduces serious difficulty. And yet it must be remarked that to do so is not without meaning and value, and does not invalidate claims of the reality

of the unseen. Certainly science has provided vast amounts of information about the unseen—for much of which it can claim with certainty—even though its methods for dealing with the unseen are still far from perfect or appropriate. It has uncovered a marvelous system of relationships between the visible and invisible, the understanding of which has enriched human thought and life to a magnificent extent.

Science is not, however, the only human enterprise based on the threshold experience of seeing and interpreting the unseen. Another that is at least as revealing is art in its various forms. Take, for example, painting and sculpture. Why is it that they have so much more to say to us than has photography? Is it not because they represent penetrations into the realm of aesthetic reality to regions far beyond those accessible through the camera? And the musician? The story is told that after Beethoven had once played a piano sonata he was asked what message he had meant to convey by it. In reply he turned back to the piano and played the same composition again. He was aware of realities about which he could not talk adequately except through his music. Music is very much more than audible sound. It is threshold experience that reveals the inaudible beyond the audible. Consider also poetry. Have not the poets reminded us repeatedly that in their poems they use the immediate and apparent to reach for and symbolize more ultimate, veiled meanings beyond?

What a vast world of reality the arts *have* opened up to us! It too is a world of form and structure, of relationships and meaning, the finding of which has immeasurably enriched human life and thought. It cannot be stressed too much that art, like science, is a sublime impatience with the obvious, a living on the verge of something more, and a straining and reaching out for the seemingly unattainable and the invisible. And again it is to be noted that threshold experience requires different ways of thinking and communicating. Hence the language of art is not that of everyday life. Robert Frost, in his essay *The Constant Symbol*, wrote:

There are many other things I have found myself saying about poetry, but the chiefest of these is that it is metaphor, saying one thing and meaning another, saying one thing in terms of another, the pleasure of ulteriority. Poetry is simply made of metaphor. So also is philosophy—and science, too, for that matter, if it will take soft impeachment from a friend.

No doubt this can be said with equal cogency about all the fine arts.

What a wonderfully suggestive expression this is: the pleasure of ulteriority. Ulterior, according to Webster, refers to what is situated beyond, or on the other side, beyond what is manifest. Man is then not only the being capable of threshold experience,

but the being who takes pleasure in it—"the pleasure of ulteriority." And surely it is not at all an impeachment when Robert Frost thinks also of science in this way. Science—at least basic science—is preoccupied primarily with the beyond where ordinary concepts and language do not suffice. Philip Frank, a scientist and philosopher of science, said:

The main activity of science . . . consists in the invention of symbols and in the building of a symbolic system from which our experience can logically be derived. . . . The work of the scientist is probably not fundamentally different from the work of the poet.

Indeed! And this is because, as he goes on to say,

Reality in its fullness can only be experienced, never presented. Every presentation, scientific or poetic, proceeds by creating symbols.

And this in turn follows because reality always includes what lies beyond the threshold.



A third gateway experience, as hinted also by Robert Frost, is represented by philosophy. Here we meet the searchers for hidden meanings, for rationality. On one side of this threshold is an accumulation of established conceptions, myths, beliefs, and mores that constitute, so to speak, the visible world of the obvious and accepted notions of mankind. Along comes Socrates who asks uncomfortable, needling questions, disturbing the status quo, and bidding us to step over the threshold into the realm of as yet unseen ideas and ways of thinking. What, he asks, do your present ones mean? What should they mean? Are they true, or worthy or farcical? Perhaps there

are better ones? But analysis and criticism are not the only functions of philosophy. Another is to be creative. And so after Socrates came Plato and Aristotle, and a host of others, innovators all, fabricators of more powerful intellectual tools, builders of grand new structures of thought.

In so far as philosophical inquiry pertains to what we have here called the unseen, we must note that it too is bedeviled by the difficulties of devising appropriate concepts and symbolism—because again meanings derived from common experience are inadequate for purposes of analogy. Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than when we ask about reality. Which is the *real* book, the one known through the senses, that obviously has certain dimensions, and a particular shape, color, and weight, or the one depicted by theoretical physics as a swarm of particles and other invisible entities? Just what is reality? Where does it reside? Among the viewpoints and related conceptual systems that have come out of the exploration of this problem, two have been especially influential: idealism and realism. While they have been perennial competitors, neither has been able to win universal acceptance because neither can of itself provide a completely satisfying way of symbolizing and thinking about all aspects of that essence of things that lies beyond surface appearances and is called reality. And yet how very much life and thought have been enriched by the reflections of idealists and realists—and many other philosophers—as they have engaged in this quest.

Next we must note that universally and perennially men have felt impelled to peer even further into the beyond. Having discerned, through science, art, philosophy, and still other exploratory enterprises, a vast cosmos of hidden realities, men have found themselves confronted by quite another threshold, at which they have cried out *But why?* Why matter and energy, cause and effect, natural law and cosmic order, and the realities of aesthetics and reason? What difference do they make in the total scheme of things? Is there any purpose in it all, or moral and eternal value? Why life and death, good and evil, love and hate? This is the gateway experience of *religion*.

It is especially important to recognize that the *why* uttered here is different from the whys of science and philosophy. It is not a question born of curiosity of the mind so much as a cry wrung from the heart. Often science, philosophy and religion are confused in people's minds. Certainly at times they *seem* to ask identical questions—such as *Why?* *Why?* they may ask, should we have expected a particular event to occur just when it did? Clearly this may actually represent three different queries. For science the focus of concern might be the physical causes of the event, for philosophy the nature of expecta-

tion, and for religion its ultimate significance. To ask What is the meaning of death? from the viewpoint of biology is surely not the same as when asked in the presence of a particular death, especially of a loved one. In psychology or philosophy one may ask What is love? in order to analyze it; in religion, to be able more truly to love. The point is that in religion questions express that sense of tremendous personal significance that Paul Tillich calls ultimate concern, and that distinguishes the religious why from all others.

It is at this threshold that men have become aware of transcendent reality, reality that is also transcendent mystery. And they have discovered that here the intellectual *tour de force* is of no avail, that no push of their own can get them across the threshold. And yet eventually they have found themselves drawn to the other side. In spite of the inscrutability of this beyond there have come out of it compelling revelations of another dimension of existence that they have come to call the holy or sacred, and of ultimate meaning and purpose, of a moral order. Here they have become aware of demands upon them, of forces and compulsions that grasp and pull men, and of transforming, empowering energy that is available to them if they but yield to these demands.

To this reality, the source of these revelatory experiences, many men of all races and cultures have given the name God, however it may be spelled in their respective languages. This God is not, at least according to Judaeo-Christian conceptions, the God defined by philosophic abstractions, but the experienced God, *unseen yet revealed* in, beyond and through the realities of nature and history—the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For Christians he is also the Father of Jesus Christ. He is the God who has himself broken into and experienced the realities of human existence through what the Christian

community calls his incarnation. He is the ever present living, creating, judging, reconciling, redeeming, loving, suffering God.

THOSE of us who believe in the transcendent reality called God should never let ourselves forget that this reality is different from all others that we know anything about, and that therefore anything else can serve only inadequately as a symbol of, or linguistic vehicle for talking about, God. Should we ever say categorically that God is a person? Surely not unless we do it with the realization that only some of God's characteristics may be symbolized in that way. Should we ever say without qualification that God is not a person? I trust not, unless we mean only that the term person is not fully adequate as a symbol of God. Might it not be better to say that in some respects *God is personal* or has personal qualities? Perhaps so, but only if we remember that even so we are talking only by analogy. God the father, God the son, God the holy spirit—all these are very meaningful in some respects, but probably not in all respects. It is remarkable how many different words taken from ordinary language and experience are used in the Bible to refer to God. While many of them belong to the category of the personal, some of them are impersonal, such as light, life, word, truth, and still others.

The revelatory insights that have been vouchsafed us with respect to God are such that their communication requires many different, and even paradoxical, concepts and symbols, and we must not allow ourselves to be committed linguistically or theologically to too narrow a range of them. Conversely it must mean that any one set of related symbols or concepts is of itself incapable of contributing *all* the elements of thought needed for the solution of problems regarding the deity. This is one reason why Tillich uses the unconventional expression "God above God," God beyond all man-made symbols, images, or concepts of the deity, above even those of theism.

While in all threshold experience of the unseen, in science, art, philosophy, and religion, man finds much insight with certainty, there is much also that is elusive and refuses to be captured and encased in words. God has not made a closed world, the content and meaning of which could conceivably be exhausted someday. Rather he is the God-Becoming as well as God-Being, who continues to create, whose world is and remains open and pregnant with unseen possibilities. Our God is the living God, for whom, if I may use such anthropomorphic language, each day is a threshold experience as he looks into the as yet uncreated, unseen future. In giving us



HAVE YOU NOTICED A STRANGE UNRIGHTNESS TO THE WORLD LATELY?

the capacity for threshold experience, he shares with us, so to speak, one of his divine attributes. Surely this is what the Bible means in part when it asserts that man is made in his image.

All these—science, art, philosophy, and religion—are ventures of faith. I do not here use the word *faith* in any strange or esoteric sense, but rather in the familiar one employed in the passage from the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Faith means confidence that a venture *can* succeed, in spite of discouraging circumstances or the absence of assurance of success. On the one hand faith is that without which success is impossible, because without it there can be no venturing forth. On the other hand it is faith that gives assurance of what is hoped for, and transforms it into actuality.

The threshold has always been a symbol of situations that call for faith, for trust, for daring to believe in something beyond. So we have the symbolic act of the groom carrying the bride across the threshold. How little of the future they see at the time, and how little of the meaning and richness of the life beyond the threshold! For both of them it is an act of daring, trusting faith.

It is an act of faith also when an explorer ventures into unknown regions of the Arctic, or of the Amazon country, or "outer space"—and into the realm of atomic energy! Make no mistake about it! When that doughty group of nuclear physicists led by Fermi and Compton twenty years ago set out to build the first nuclear reactor in the hope of releasing atomic energy for useful purposes, this was an act of faith. Here faith means believing in the trustworthiness of nature and human reason and scientific method, and a confidence that the quest will lead eventually to seeing what is not seen at the outset. All science is like that: a venture in faith.

Why is it that when we come to talk about the faith of religion we tend to regard it as something strangely different—as is indicated by such clichés as "taking things by faith" and "blind faith"? To be blind means to be incapable of seeing. But this is not the kind of faith we have been talking about! For at the threshold it is precisely faith that *can* see beyond the visible. It is that venturesome state of mind in which when the physical eye fails to see, so to speak, the mind nevertheless does. And it is that condition of being, or mode of living, that enables a man or a community to see to step out to transform the vision into actuality. This is not credulity, nor a renouncing of reason, as the popular caricature of "taking it by faith" would suggest.

It is true, of course, that in many respects faith in God is different from the faith of the scientist, artist, and philosopher. For one thing, the objects

of their faiths are different. In the case of the scientist, his faith is in nature and in certain methods. In religion a man's faith centers upon ultimate reality and mystery—God. Moreover, this is a radical faith that is different from all others because it is all-encompassing in outlook and concern, and involves all of a man in the task ahead. And yet it is equally true that it is in many respects like the other faiths—in their trusting yet daring venturesomeness, in their insistence upon seeing what cannot otherwise be seen, in their devotion to the quest for insight. So much alike are they in these respects that if a man intimately knows one of them he should not find the others altogether strange or incomprehensible.

We often ask ourselves how science and religion, or science and art or philosophy are related. There has been much wrestling of heart and mind over this question. Science, art, philosophy, and religion all represent man's attempt to explore the mystery of the world and of human existence. In this great and distinctively human enterprise of faith they are indissolubly united—but parts or aspects of the whole. To study them separately is not to say that they are separate in fact or in some sense incongruous. It is rather only to distinguish them in order to understand them better individually and together—"distinguish to unite," to use a famous expression of Maritain's.

When a man responds to the lure and beckoning call of the invisible beyond, when he yields to the pulls toward the ulterior, lets himself be grasped by them, and devotes himself to them in faith, then he becomes truly human. Only then can he live life in all its fullness—and only so will he find himself to be in a truly satisfying relationship to nature, man and God.

enigma

The jigsaw pieces fit
Into each opposite
Of themselves: as land,
As sea, they correspond
And, unsatisfied, search
For the right each for each.
The interlocks are cut
So that when the puzzle is put
Together it may be tricked
To stand on end like a picture.
But patience has run
Out of pieces. One
Shape is missing, one space
Filled with out of place
Nothingness: the cost
Of one center puzzlepiece lost.

—FRED MOECKEL

PHOTOGRAPH, MARIANNE GOERITZ, MEXICO



the new revolutionary mood in latin america

BY RICHARD SHAULL

L ATIN AMERICA has produced an unusual number of great revolutionaries—from Simon Bolivar to Haya de la Torre and Fidel Castro. The first social revolution of modern times occurred not in Russia but in Mexico in 1910, and since that time revolutionary movements have appeared frequently on the southern continent. But now something new is happening.

For the first time, the revolutionary mood has spread across most of the continent; it has captured large numbers of peasants and workers as well as students and young people. For some it has meant a radical change of outlook, a new hope for the future and a total commitment of life. In others it has aroused fear.

This mood—and the reaction to it—has also widened the gulf already existing between old and young, Right and Left, Latin America and the United States. What its ultimate consequences will be, no one can predict, but they will certainly be far-reaching.

These revolutionary movements have always resulted from the great injustices and inequalities in Latin American society, which were so firmly entrenched that there was little possibility of easy or gradual change. It is only natural that in such a situation economic development and rapid social change should lead to the spread of enthusiasm for revolution.

In many underdeveloped countries industrial development has bettered the lot of the masses and strengthened those forces working for gradual change, but here something quite different has happened. Here a semifeudal order of privilege has existed for centuries; a very small number of families have great wealth and almost complete economic and political power. Meanwhile the masses live in the most abject poverty and have practically no role in national life.

Recent economic development, while it has shaken the foundations of the old order, has not

changed the basic structures of this society. Industry has brought large numbers of peasants into the large cities in the hope of finding a better economic life and participation in community and nation. Instead they find themselves almost totally insecure. Workers and peasants not only are aware of the injustice under which they suffer, they also realize that they can and must do something about it.

For them as for many of the younger generation of the more privileged classes, the next indispensable step toward a new and better society consists in *radical change in the structures of this society*, "*reformas de base*," to use the term now current in Brazil. This means land reform, a system of taxation based upon the ability to pay, a new fiscal policy of government and banks that will help the small farmer and the common man, control of speculation in land and real estate, the reform of political institutions, new opportunities for education for the masses, university reform, etc.

Because such basic changes have not yet come to any significant degree—and there is little hope that the ruling classes will act quickly to bring them—the revolutionary mood spreads, pressures for change become acute, and a wide variety of movements develop that work for such changes. In some countries this mood is latent, in others it is developing gradually. In Brazil, it has become the passion of large numbers of people.

Another factor that fosters the mood of revolution is a growing *national self-consciousness*. In Latin America, as in Asia and Africa, nationalism has become one of the most important and potentially creative forces in national development. It represents an ideal that inspires great effort for a common cause and unites people in a community transcending regional, economic and racial groupings. No matter how great the dangers latent in all nationalism, we must not overlook the fact that it "very often resembles the constructive features of the

pioneering patriotism by means of which the American continent was developed."

In Latin America such nationalism plays an even more important role by encouraging people who have traditionally looked to other continents and borrowed from them to discover their authentic existence as a people in relation to their own cultural heritage and to the conditions of life where they are. As Professor Mauricio Lopez wrote recently:

The pendulum of our culture has swung back and forth between native springs and European scales of value. . . . We are now moving along in search of a humanism that can draw on both old and new forces. . . .

This new nationalism is strongly anti-American, because the United States is seen as a colonial power. The reaction against overwhelming US economic and political power is becoming more widespread and clearly defined. Egbert de Vries describes the attitude of Asians and Africans on this question, which is very similar to that in Latin America:

By abusing their military superiority and spurred on by the greed of their industrialists for cheap raw materials and markets for their mass products, European governments have drawn the independent peoples of Asia and Africa into their orbit, exploiting them economically, frustrating their indigenous economic growth and national life, denying them the natural right of self-determination, attacking their culture and exposing them to the evils of so-called Western civilization. (*Man in Rapid Social Change*, p. 27)

Professor de Vries adds that neither this picture nor the common attitude toward colonialism in the West corresponds to reality. We resent being put in this class, but we will hardly understand what is happening in South America until we realize that such an attitude toward us is very common. The new nationalism is demanding a radical change in our relationships, and this constitutes a major ingredient of the revolutionary mood.

This mood has become such a decisive factor because it is accompanied by a deep sense of *commitment* to action that would change the structures of society as quickly as possible. This represents an almost total change in the attitude of peasants and industrial workers. For centuries these people were fatalists. Their situation was desperate but they could do nothing about it. Now they are convinced that they can organize and act to change their lot, and that they must do so because no one else will.

The more desperate their situation, the higher the price they will be willing to pay to change it.

A new political consciousness is also growing. Thus the peasant who, until recently, was willing to sacrifice everything to send one of his sons to school, may now decide that his hope lies in joining a Peasant League.

Among students and youth of the more privileged classes, this commitment to revolution is even more striking. In a society in which the bourgeois ideal of the professional as an individual concerned supremely about his own economic and professional advancement has been so widely accepted, the current mood is almost incomprehensible. An increasing number of these young people find it impossible to ignore the sufferings of the masses and the injustice in their society.

The traditional humanism of the Iberian soul now expresses itself in a concern for humanization. With this is coupled the conviction that life and work can have meaning only as they are related to the struggle of the masses. In practical terms this leads to an identification—both in cultural development and in political action—of students and intellectuals with peasants and industrial workers, which could well become one of the most potent and creative forces in the future development of Latin America.



PHOTO, ROBERT HODGELL, USA

This rising tide of social revolution is rapidly changing the political picture in many countries. In the past we have tended to see three major political forces at work; the conservative landlords and their counterparts in the new industrial centers, the liberal democratic forces of the Center, and the extreme Left serving as a tool of international communism. With such a definition it was easy for us—in North or South America—to put our hopes in the Center and to assume that the future lay with it. Recent articles and books on the subject continue to make this assumption.

The most forceful statement of such a position
motive

is found in Adolf Berle's *Latin America—Diplomacy and Reality*. He writes that these parties, although reasonably conservative according to US standards, represent "the real hope of effecting Latin American evolution without undergoing the ghastly experience of a generation of bloodshed, terror, civil war, exhaustion and eventual reconstruction."

This hope may no longer be justified. It assumes that parties that have been getting weaker in recent years will now respond creatively to the social revolution. It also fails to take seriously the complex nature of recent developments on the Left and the reasons for the growing power of Marxism.

The most disturbing element in the present situation is this growing weakness of the forces of the Center. We could almost say that it is their failure that contributes, more than any other single factor, to the crisis that Professor Berle fears. In the polarization of forces for and against changes in the structures of society, these groups tend too often to be on the conservative side. Many of these parties, even those with a liberal ideology, are controlled by forces anxious to preserve the *status quo* or by politicians interested mainly in their own personal gain.

Parties based upon ideologies imported from Europe or North America many decades ago are unable to deal with contemporary problems or to propose adequate solutions. They are suffering from what Teodoro Moscoso, coordinator of the Alliance for Progress, characterized recently as the lack of a "positive ideological drive" for reform.

When this lack is coupled with an inability to understand the depth and extent of the present revolutionary mood, the resulting political movements are unable to make a creative response. When such parties do act, they often do too little too late, and the steps taken appear as palliatives in a dynamic situation that has already evolved beyond the point where such action could provide a solution.

In some countries political movements of the Center will probably remain in power and perhaps succeed in bringing about reforms. If they do so, it will be due more to the pressure of the forces of the Left and to the impact of their "positive ideological drive" than to the inner vitality of the Center.

In such an uneasy coalition of Center and Left, reforms may come without violence and new political and economic structures may evolve before a complete breakdown occurs. But these new struc-

tures will quite likely be different from those that now exist. They may put more stress upon freedom for national development than upon an "alliance for progress" with the United States, and may move gradually toward national planning, governmental control of national and foreign economic interests, and changes in the social and political order. To the degree that such a coalition can succeed, it will offer the most promising possibility that can now be foreseen for national development and for a redefinition of relationships between the Americas.

Where such efforts do not succeed we can expect a more radical polarization of Right and Left, increasing disorder and violence, and perhaps a complete breakdown. If and when that moment comes, the parties of the Center will lose control. Military dictatorships may attempt, in some cases, to maintain the present order, but the pressures for social change are now reaching the point where it will come by one means or another. It is more likely that new military leaders will appear who will attempt reforms in their own way.

A new order will be set up that may impose extreme solutions and attempt a radical reorganization of society. Out of such a struggle a pathway to a more just society and to national development may eventually be found; but it will almost certainly lead through a period of great suffering, of economic and political crisis, and of the temporary eclipse of individual freedom. What is more important, the ideological and political leadership for such a development will most likely come from Marxism of one sort or another.

OUR overrating of the forces of the Center is often matched by oversimplification of what is happening on the Left. We tend to think of the Left as composed primarily of a small group of agents of Moscow and their supporters or dupes who are primarily intent on subversion. Now there are undoubtedly a good number of such people around, and Moscow is certainly making the best possible use of them. But to characterize the new Left in this way is not only a gross misrepresentation; it is also a sign that we have failed to understand the power of Marxism as ideology in this revolution.

It is not a coincidence that, at the moment when there seems to be a post-Marxian mood in parts of

Asia and Africa, the Marxist influence is growing rapidly in Latin America. In fact, there is no other single ideology that can compare with it in appeal or power. The reason is clear. In the midst of a struggle to change the structures of society, Marxism offers an analysis of the situation and a solution that seems to make sense while the older political parties stumble along with no adequate analysis or any cogent proposals for dealing with the crisis.

We North Americans talk of freedom to people for whom that word connotes the freedom of a privileged few to exploit the masses; we speak of democracy to people for whom it suggests the continuation of the intolerable *status quo*. Similarly we urge reforms but with apparently little recognition of how they can come about.

Marxism, on the other hand, preserves the rigid rationalism of the old liberalism but combines with it an awareness of the deep contradictions in the present order. It provides a realistic explanation of why the present suffering and injustice exist. It uncovers the hidden relationship between class interest and political and social power.

At the same time it promises a utopian solution, a new society in which the injustices of the present

terialism; this number at present is, I believe, rather restricted. Latin Americans are not by nature interested in philosophical systems, and the mood of thoroughgoing secularism among intellectuals does not respond to "metaphysics." Some of those influenced by Marxism become members of the Communist Party and thus become instruments, in one way or another, of international communism. This number at present is also small.

Recent developments in Cuba have created a new sensitivity to the danger of outside domination from another quarter than the accustomed one. Moreover, the Communist Party is, in some countries at least, alienated from the more urgent concerns of the revolution. Nevertheless Marxism appears as the ideology of structural change and national development that can inspire and orient this kind of revolution. And thus its influence steadily grows.

Then there is the hope for the future that Marxism awakens. It promises that a new man in a new world society must appear because history is seen as moving in that direction. Thus all personal goals must be subordinated to this higher objective. In these terms it offers a satisfying emotional and spiritual experience that becomes a substitute for religion.

Now this does not mean that a communist victory is inevitable or imminent. It does mean that, whether we like it or not, Marxist ideals and perspectives are likely to play an important role in the period immediately ahead. Many of those who are most involved in the present struggle will consciously or unconsciously think and act in terms determined to some degree by the Marxist vocabulary, social analysis and program of action.

As long as the present configuration of forces continues, Marxism will at least act as a powerful stimulus and catalyst. It will be the major ideological force in a revolutionary struggle in which Catholics, Protestants and secularists, representing a wide variety of social and political ideals, will participate. To the degree that these other forces are

motive



PHOTO, MARIANNE GOERITZ, CHILE

order can be overcome and unimagined possibilities of national development opened up. This is coupled with a realistic understanding of what is involved in changing society, of the way in which ideals become reality through the use of power.

Some adherents of Marxism may be enthusiastic for the all-embracing world view of dialectical ma-



dynamically involved in the social revolution, the possibility exists that it will become a national revolution moving away not only from international communism but also from dogmatic Marxism as well.

What must be clear for us—whether we live in Latin America or in the US—is that the decline of the Center and the new role of Marxism as ideology confront us with a new situation that demands new categories of thought and a redefinition of responsibility.

To the extent that we are caught in the old categories, we face an impossible dilemma. If we see the Left as merely the tool of international communism, we render it a very great service by pushing toward communism those whose consciences will not allow them to remain apart from the struggle. Many who are most sensitive to the dangers of communism then find themselves misunderstood, isolated and accused of being communist. In their struggle they are deprived of encounter with the ideas and people who might help to keep their minds more open to reality, provide them with a more balanced analysis and program, and encourage their efforts.

If we strengthen the forces now attempting to preserve the *status quo*, we are responsible for maintaining the present injustices and breaking the power of those honestly working for changes long overdue. If this happens, the present intolerable situation will continue, bitterness and resentment will remain latent and deepen. Sooner or later explosions will erupt that could well be more violent and more radical than those now threatening.

The other possibility open to us is to put ourselves firmly on the side of social reform and to support the struggle. In doing so we run the risk of

strengthening Marxism. But we also have the possibility of contributing to the development of national patterns of social, economic and political development that may in the long run be the only real alternative to further penetration and dominance by international communism.

Relations between the United States and Latin America will pass through a long period of tension and strain. The explosive situation there, coupled with the participation of Cuba in the Soviet bloc, has made us especially sensitive to the threat that developments to the south may constitute for our national security and the balance of power in the Cold War. Many Latin Americans look at the same problem from a very different perspective. They are more disturbed by the threat we represent than they are about a threat from other quarters.

It is not easy for those who sense the urgency of the Cold War to deal with present developments in Latin America. The experience can be so frustrating that we may, in desperation, take steps toward strengthening our position that will, in the end, have quite the opposite effect and alienate us still further from our neighbors to the south. Creative diplomacy is not easy in these circumstances; it is also not impossible.

Christians in Latin America and in the United States must be willing to face the given situation with utter realism, trusting in the faith we profess and in the freedom it offers for us to discover constructive solutions in the midst of God's judgment and mercy. To the degree that this happens, we may find ourselves involved in a search for patterns of Christian obedience that will have relevance beyond the immediate problems confronting us in Latin America.

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from
language
to
sacrament

BY HAROLD P. SIMONSON

IN his book *Perspectives on Man* Roland Frye quotes a little-known but nonetheless remarkable statement made by Martin Luther in 1523: "I am persuaded that without knowledge of literature pure theology cannot at all endure. . . . I see that by these studies [languages and letters], as by no other means, people are wonderfully fitted for the grasping of sacred truth and for handling it skillfully and happily."

Even greater emphasis is given to literary study today by Douglas Bush, professor of English at Harvard, who has said that the "plain fact nowadays is that the study of literature . . . has had to take over the responsibilities that used to be discharged by philosophy and divinity." "Most young people," Professor Bush writes, "now get their only or their chief understanding of man's moral and religious quest through literature."

With both Luther and Professor Bush the implication is clear, namely, that literature plays an important role in one's "grasping of sacred truth" or in "man's moral and religious quest."

The growing concern over the relationship of literature and theology accounts for an impressive number of studies by such contemporary scholars

as Nathan A. Scott, Jr., Amos N. Wilder, Randall Stewart, William R. Meuller, William Barrett, and Walter Kaufmann. These men are convinced that a dialogue between literature and religion is necessary so that both may endure. Where the aesthetic and the existential meet is that point of both literary and theological significance. In his Preface to *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature* Stanley Romaine Hopper asserts that "contemporary letters and contemporary religion are occupying, and to a far greater extent than is commonly recognized either by the artist or the religionist, a common ground." That common ground is a theological perspective concurrent with an aesthetic response to experience.

Several reasons account for this connection between literary and theological problems. Foremost is the fact that only as theology engages the whole person can it have compelling relevance; and for the whole person to respond, he must first be awakened to his individual condition—as it is possible to do through literature.

A student of literature who sees from his study only generalized ideas has failed to catch the real value of literary study, and his failure is even worse



THRONES FOR THE TWELVE

WOODCUT 1963

HOWARD ELLIS

if he supposes that he responds to literature only in some detached and standard way. Literature is nothing if it does not singularize the reader. Literature elicits a personal response; it draws the reader out from the mass. As a person reads a poem he defies all categories of response. Despite I. A. Richards' efforts in *Practical Criticism* to designate certain norms of response to literature, no one will ever explain the infinite varieties of aesthetic experience. In short, the reader who comes to Matthew Arnold's poem "Dover Beach" or to W. H. Auden's "Musée des Beaux Arts" experiences something afresh and uniquely individual.

This point needs to be made at the outset. All the generalizations one makes about a Faulkner novel, for example, are mere intellectual playthings if they are divorced from the reader's own psychic life.

In recent years we have seen both a philosophical and theological revolt against intellectual system-building. The nineteenth-century precursor of this revolt was Soren Kierkegaard who in *Fear and Trembling* asserted that "the individual as the particular is higher than the universal." What he called a "teleological suspension of the ethical" was his

way of reaffirming particularity as against the universality of ethics.

The same revolt against the world of abstraction can be seen in Tolstoy's story *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, a powerful affirmation that a person's own reality is not in the physical or social fact but rather in his own existence, separate from that of everyone else. It is this identification of self, not as a statistic nor as some abstraction but rather as a person whose realities lie within, that the study of literature demands of its reader.

Both the literary artist and the theologian are in revolt against scientism which reduces man to an object to be conditioned and manipulated. William H. Whyte, Jr.'s *The Organization Man* has become one of the monumental studies of contemporary man who is engineered, measured, and refashioned so that his own uniqueness will blend into the pattern of a larger group. An even more penetrating description of the depersonalizing forces within modern society is Karl Jasper's *Man in the Modern Age* which is, at the same time, a call to the authentic life in the face of standardized group-think and group-do.

That a person is not merely a conditioned animal

is a basic presupposition of literature. Granted that some writers—the late Mark Twain, Theodore Dreiser, Jack London—have attempted to depict characters as helplessly buffeted by willy-nilly fate. Yet even the reader perceives that such persons have been deceived by their own rationalizations and that, in truth, they did have at least limited freedom of choice and were, consequently, responsible for their acts. Certainly the greatest literature presents man as both free and responsible. One thinks immediately of Dostoevski's Alyosha, Conrad's Lord Jim, and Camus' Dr. Rieux.

A THEME concomitant to freedom and responsibility is guilt. Both the contemporary theologian and the artist recognize guilt in human experience. What must be made clear, however, is that guilt is not merely of the Freudian variety which comes from the repression of sexual drives. Freud, of course, has left his mark upon such writers as James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, and Sherwood Anderson. But the guilt described by a St. Paul or, today, by a Karl Barth is not Freudian. It is instead religious and is founded upon the incommensurability of earthly and religious aims. It informs one that reason's best-laid plans come to fruitless ends. As Reinhold Niebuhr has so often pointed out, it is expressed in St. Paul's confession, "The good that I would do, I do not do; and the evil that I would not, that I do."

No one has dramatized modern man's guilt so forcefully as Franz Kafka whose characters are, in one way or another, always on trial and are always found guilty. Although they try to get into a right relationship with God or with their conscience, they only blunder. What seems to them to be just by human calculation is wrong by divine edict. In both *The Castle* and *The Trial*, as well as in such stories as "The Judgment," "Metamorphosis," and "A Country Doctor," the smallest temptation leads to ruin, and the search for answers about good and evil, purpose, and an understandable sovereign power always comes to ruinous ends. "If you have strength to look at things steadily, without, as it were, blinking your eyes, you can see much," but Kafka adds that "if you relax only once and shut your eyes, everything fades immediately into obscurity." The last sentence of Kafka's "A Country Doctor" warns that "a false alarm on the night bell once answered—it cannot be made good, not ever." Our submission to inauthenticity and bad faith constantly subverts our best intentions.

Still another condition, even more desperate than guilt, is alienation or a sense of lostness in an indifferent universe. To Miguel de Unamuno, the Spanish philosopher and novelist, this condition is akin to what he calls the "agony of Christianity," the dark night in which one is first betrayed and

then forsaken. Experiencing the despair of alienation and the dread of nonbeing is a major theme in contemporary writing, analyzed by Rollo May in *The Meaning of Anxiety* and given artistic expression in such a work as Sartre's *Nausea*. It can even be said to underlie Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory*. The irony of Greene's title is that only through suffering and alienation can there be redemption. Greene deals with what for a Catholic is an unpardonable sin—the sin of despair. And he shows this condition in its extreme manifestation: in a man of God, a priest, who desperately and remorsefully says, "I don't know how to repent." As with Unamuno the hope for power and glory is born out of despair.

Alienation from God, community, and self echoes throughout modern literature. Yet literature itself rests upon the fact that alienation is never absolute. What I have in mind here is that to the artist things are never isolated in themselves; an object suggests a further dimension of reality never limited to its naturalistic chemistry alone. When Emerson wrote in his great 1836 essay, "Nature," that things are "emblematic," that "every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact," he was expressing the artist's faith that things are not what they rationally or logically appear to be. The artist perceives meaning in objects. One need only to remember what caves meant to E. M. Forster in *Passage to India*—or what the sea meant to Whitman, the desert to T. S. Eliot, a lighthouse to Virginia Woolf, and a mountain to Thomas Mann. In his *Autobiography* W. B. Yeats explained that landscapes hold images of "infinite emotion." "Birds, beasts, men, women, landscapes, society, are but symbols and metaphors," Yeats said, "nothing is studied in itself." To study nature only in terms of its naturalistic laws and physical properties is to become dryly intellectualistic and to lose touch with—to become estranged from—the intrinsic powers in nature.

Paul Tillich finds this estrangement in contemporary Protestantism which has witnessed the "death of the sacraments." In what is perhaps the pivotal chapter—"Nature and Sacrament"—in his book *The Protestant Era*, Tillich explains how modern secularism has weakened if not annihilated "the sacramental power within Protestantism." Our incapacity to discover the sacral power in nature has come about by our "rational-objective attitude" which regards nature merely as something to objectify and control. "No sacramental conception can find a root in this soil," says Tillich, "nature loses its power, the sacrament becomes arbitrary and insignificant." Man's alienation from the *elan vital*, the vital and creative power of life, means his own death. Mircea Eliade in *The Sacred and the Profane* suggests that nature sacralized is properly termed a cosmos; and nature desacralized or profaned, a chaos.

The literary artist refuses to objectify nature, just as he rejects any systematic construct of the human mind which would diminish its darkness, depth, and complexity. To artists such as William Blake or John Donne a grain of sand or a seemingly insignificant gesture may have cosmic dimensions. One might go as far as to say that the acceptance of the literary symbolist's ontology prepares the way for sacramentalism.

Extending literary symbolism leads one to delineate myth and mythic archetypes. Since Carl G. Jung, the Swiss psychologist, postulated the existence of a "collective unconscious," which he defined as an inheritance of "countless typical experiences" common to all men, twentieth-century readers have found archetypal patterns in both Holy Scripture and literature. One thinks of archetypal voyagers on both sea and land—Jonah, Ishmael, Odysseus, Jason, John Bunyan's Christian, and the shipload in Katherine Anne Porter's novel; or of archetypal heroes, saviors, magicians, and fools; or of archetypal objects such as garden, cross, wall, grave, altar, and cup. One thinks of prototypes of Jesus in such fictional characters as Faulkner's Joe Christmas, Stephen Crane's Jim Conklin, and Melville's Billy Budd, or of Hemingway's Christlike fisherman, Santiago, who lay "with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up." As seen in all this there is something within mankind, says the scholar Maud Bodkin, that "leaps in response to the effective presentation . . . of an ancient theme." Whether the theme be presented in the book of Genesis or in Camus' *The Fall*, and whether the person be named Adam or Clamence, something within each reader "leaps" in response.

What is fundamentally important to both the theologian and the literary artist is the word, whether in a dogma or in a poem. A clue to its importance comes in St. Paul's address to the Corinthians: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that the transcendent belongs to God and not to us." To regard words as the record of experiences pointing to archetypal patterns and to a reality beyond is, it seems to me, the only way great literature and great dogma can become meaningful. Words hold truth in suspension; they help bring reality into our midst. But if we mistake the letter for the truth, then as St. Paul admonished, "the letter killeth." To make the "earthen vessels" or words merely ends in themselves is idolatry, not unlike art merely for art's sake.

In St. Paul's terms, the dead are those who find security in words, in empty rituals, and in clichés. Perhaps another term for "dead" is "normal." Hannah Arendt recently pointed out in a series of articles for *The New Yorker* that psychiatrists certified at the time of his trial that Adolph Eichmann, who was later executed for his part in the death of six million Jews, was "normal." His "psychological outlook" was "not only normal but most desirable." That Eichmann scored well on his psychological tests was proof enough that he was normal; little matter that his moral sensitivities were dead. Interestingly enough, there was a time during his Jerusalem trial when Eichmann, this "normal" person, apologized for his inability to communicate effectively. "Officialese is my only language," he explained. According to Hannah Arendt, Eichmann was "genuinely incapable of uttering a single sentence that was not a cliché." Perhaps, as she suggested, his use of clichés indicated what the psychiatrists found to be so "normal," so "desirable." In short, empty words had protected him from both the reality of self and of his civilization.

Extreme as this illustration is, it was this same condition that Faulkner's Addie Bundren, in *As I Lay Dying*, knew so well. What dominated Addie's final thoughts was her awareness that terrible disparities exist between words and deeds: "Sin and love and fear are just sounds that people who never sinned nor loved nor feared have for what they never had and cannot have until they forget the words." Though Faulkner devotes but one chapter to Addie, she is always at the center of the novel's tensions and her thoughts, especially those at the conclusion of this chapter, undergird the whole novel. Referring to Cora, her neighbor, Addie's final utterance in this chapter describes the vacuity and deadness of life made up of hollow words: "She prayed for me because she believed I was blind to sin, wanting me to kneel and pray too, because people to whom sin is just a matter of words, to them salvation is just words too."

Words, however, may also be symbols and as such





CHRIST'S CROWN

STAINED-GLASS WINDOW DESIGN

MATHIA

they may open levels of truth which otherwise are closed for us. In his book *Dynamics of Faith* Tillich says that symbolic words may do even more: they may unlock "dimensions and elements of our soul." A great play such as Ibsen's *Brand* may open not only a new vision of the human scene but also our own hidden depths. So too do religious liturgies, affirmations, and prayers. T. S. Eliot reminds us in *The Four Quartets* that prayer "is more than an order of words," more than "the conscious occupation of the praying mind," and more than "the sound of the voice praying." Prayer, he says, is "tongued with fire," Eliot's symbol for divine love.

Remarking on T. S. Eliot's poetic language,

Stephen Spender has called attention to what he calls transparency in *The Four Quartets*. Spender says that "the language . . . moves on two levels: one is the creative level of poetry in which images and delightful objects are created which give us pleasure, the other is the level of philosophic thought. These two levels are sustained throughout, and thus the language has a kind of transparency." Here is another clue to the importance of religious and poetic language. The earthen vessels may in themselves be delightful and give pleasure, but they point to another realm which does not belong to us. They provide what Eliot has called "only hints and guesses." The rest, he says, is "prayer, observance,



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MEXICO

discipline, thought and action." Elsewhere he has written that in reading poetry we are "intent on what the poem *points at*, and not on the poetry." The profound quest common to both art and religion is "to get *beyond poetry*, as Beethoven, in his later works, strove to get *beyond music*."

A NOVEL which may serve to illustrate all these considerations which bring literature and theology together is Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. It is replete with both contemporary and archetypal themes and images and also illustrative of the artist's effort to "get beyond" language. On one level the work appears to describe chaotic emo-

tions and meaningless, estranged lives. With incredibly entangled style, Faulkner takes his reader into a labyrinth of insanity, hate, suicide, and desolation. Amid this dead land of cracked earthen vessels there comes a sound *in the fury* toward which the novel finally points. Even though Faulkner's "hints and guesses" appear inseparable from the fury, they point beyond to another dimension of theological import.

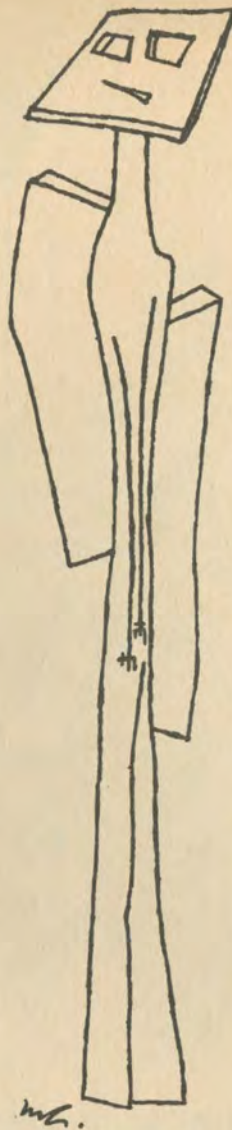
The novel's fury involves the Compson family: Mr. and Mrs. Compson and their four children—the girl Caddy and her brothers Benjy, Quentin, and Jason. There are also the Negro slaves, one in particular named Dilsey. Among them all Faulkner

penetrates the depths of consciousness beyond verbal schemata. And because the issues are no longer abstract but personally recognizable and existentially concrete, the reader finds himself in the dark labyrinth not only of the Compsons' condition but of his own.

Here is the furious condition, says Faulkner, and unless the reader relates himself to it, then all the world's theological polemics are only forlorn echoes of dead words. What Faulkner and any great writer does is to show the reader his own condition to help prepare him, as Luther said, for "the grasping of sacred truth."

Specifically, this novel deals with sin. The central sin is the girl Caddy's, and around her the Compson house falls. What Faulkner depicts is the fallen Compsons, the archetype of fallen man, the most central fact in Christian orthodoxy. Caddy has lost her innocence, her honor, her purity; and she now flees from the house. The book develops out of this fact and describes three ways to confront it—that is, to confront man's fallen condition.

The first way is Jason's. Jason represents the thoroughgoing rationalist and materialist to whom the greatest sin is in failing to exploit others to one's own purpose. Jason is an organizer, always planning ways to organize other people to his own advantage. He hates those who refuse to fit into his plans. Moreover, he hates anyone who doesn't minister to his needs or who claims an independent existence apart from him. Rather than feeling compassion for Caddy, he feels socially disgraced. Momentarily, his respectability has been endangered, but he is far too "other-directed" to allow this disgrace to interfere with his plans to get on with his ultimate concern. He sees that through devious planning he can manage to have Caddy's fall serve his own ambitions for power in the city bank. To him Caddy's sin was not sin at all; for there to be a sin, there must be a God against whom to sin. Jason would rather call it a mistake in social engineering.



The second way to look at the human condition was Quentin's. It ended in suicide after his freshman year at Harvard. Quentin had seen through the sham of his brother Jason. What Quentin was seeking was a universal standard, a moral order, in which good and evil could be distinguished. If he failed to find this, then life would signify nothing and indeed be full of only sound and fury. Quentin Compson had to discover universal certitudes; he had to know that man was not an inconsequential accident. Existence which was merely automatic, drifting, choiceless, self-indulgent was intolerable. In short, he had to know that what one did really mattered not merely according to one's cultural language but according to a transcending moral order.

More dreadful than anything to Quentin was the vision of a neutral universe devoid of God, order, or meaning. But always at his back he hears his father's sterile words: "All men are just accumulations dolls stuffed with sawdust swept up from the trash heaps where all previous dolls had been thrown away the sawdust flowing from what wound in what side that not for me died not." Mr. Compson saw nothing in the Incarnation nor in life itself. "A love or a sorrow," he said to his son, "is a bond purchased without design and which matures willy-nilly and is recalled without warning to be replaced by whatever issue the gods happen to be floating at the time." Quentin could not continue under these circumstances. Waiting and struggle had become unendurable. He wanted peace.

All this seems to me very, very old in our religious tradition. Did not Elijah fit this same description? If ever a man yearned to withdraw from the struggle, that man was Elijah. He had been riding high, enjoying the struggle, until Jezebel the queen got after him. Then Elijah fled into the wilderness and finally said, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life."

Quentin's haunting dread was that whatever one did didn't really matter. Finally convinced of this, he concluded that life did not matter. The struggle to find meaning gave way to the wish for peace. And so he went to sleep—at the bottom of the Charles River.

The third way was Benjy's and Dilsey's. Benjy was an idiot—a 33-year-old idiot—who was celebrating his birthday the day before Easter in Chapter I of the novel. Unlike Jason who always calculated with such care, Benjy could never hope to draw up a master plan to control people. Unlike Quentin who thought answers were to be found in Harvard's library, Benjy could not read nor write and, in fact, could communicate only through tears and lamentations or through what Faulkner called "his sweet blue gaze." But while Benjy is innocent of the man-eat-man world of Jason or the senseless world of Quentin, he can distinguish good from evil. He knows what happened to Caddy; he knows that once to be near her was sweet—she smelled good—but that now to be near her was lamentable. What Faulkner is saying through the Christ-figure of Benjy is that moral truth transcends one's tribal or intellectual methods of reaching it. How more dramatically could Faulkner have made his point than to have the vision be Benjy's to whom this world's knowledge indeed signified nothing but to whom was revealed a truth which exceeds all human knowledge and reaches beyond all human language.

Most significant was the fact that by Benjy stood Dilsey, the Negro servant, the grandest figure in all Faulkner's fiction, the last in the Compson household who was to be the first, the person whose destiny Faulkner described simply as "They endured"—Dilsey, and all those who like her are regal in their common clay.

To return for a moment to Elijah—we remember the story about the wind that "rent the mountains,"



the earthquake and the fire, the sound and the fury, and then the "still small voice" that asked the prophet, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" And after Elijah had made his lame explanation, the voice commanded, "Go, return, on your way." Suddenly Elijah heard not sound and fury but he heard a sound in the fury. And it said, "Go, return, on your way." Elijah returned to the same struggle, no longer weary, no longer wishing for the final peace.

Dilsey heard the "still small voice" on Easter Sunday as she sat in a simple church and with Benjy beside her. She heard the preacher say, "I sees de resurrection en de light; sees de meek Jesus sayin Dey Kilt Me dat ye shall live again; I died dat dem what sees en believes shall never die."

Benjy sat wordless, "rapt in his sweet blue gaze." Dilsey wept.

And as they left the church together, "Dilsey made no sound, her face did not quiver as the tears took their sunken and devious courses, walking with her head up, making no effort to dry them away even."

Here in this novel an artist has described our condition and thereby has prepared the way for the reader's "grasping" sacred truth. In achieving this Faulkner stands with Melville, Dostoevski, Milton, and all great artists in whose works the worlds of art and religion coalesce.



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ESKIMO ART

BOUND inseparably to a hunting life from early times, the Eskimos have produced an art that, like their philosophy, their poetry, and their daily conversation, is redolent of the spirit of the chase. Various phases of this art may be distinguished. Archeological specimens, for example, prove that the artistic flair of the Eskimos is ancient. Elaborate, curvilinear designs ornament the hunting weapons of the Old Bering Sea culture of about 2,500 years ago. Stylized figurines and carved animal forms are found in some of the later stages. The acquisition, at least a thousand years ago, of iron from Siberian tribes influenced the engraving of bone in the Punuk period, producing abundant "compass-drawn," circle-and-dot-designs. The eastern Eskimos, in turn, received iron from the Norse, probably as early as the twelfth century A.D. But it was apparently not until early Russian traders encouraged the production of hunting scenes in walrus ivory that such subjects became a characteristic form of Eskimo art. Realistic figures in stone, like the ones shown on these pages, came even more recently. They depend for their execution on a varied supply of scrap metal—the castoff files, saws, and other implements of Western man.

A single man has played a prominent role in stimu-

BY EDWARD M. WEYER

Dr. Weyer, for many years editor of *Natural History*, is a well-known authority on Eskimo culture. This article used by permission of the author.

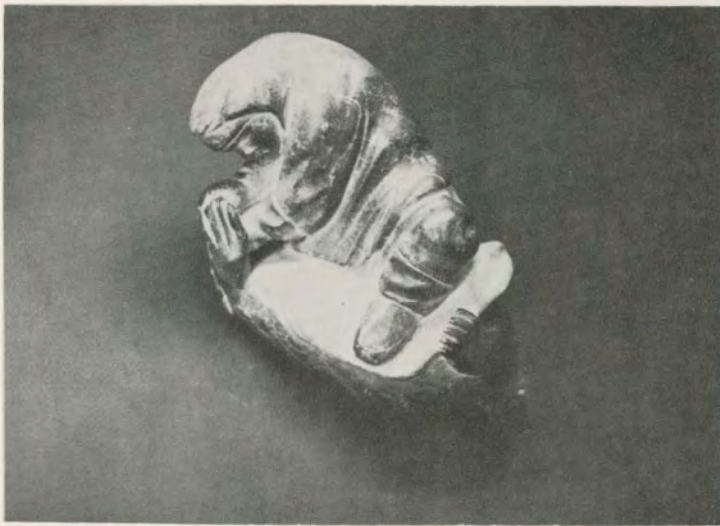
lating the Eskimos to produce this type of art. Returning from the east coast of Hudson Bay in 1948 with a representative collection, James Houston was encouraged by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, a non-profit organization, to procure enough pieces to test their appeal on the general public. The next year, Houston brought out about a thousand objects, and a one-week fair was arranged in Montreal. All the pieces were sold in the first three days.

Eskimos all the way from Hudson Bay to Ellesmere Island in the far north were encouraged to carve, and a majority, including youngsters in their teens, responded. By 1954, sixteen traveling exhibits had been organized and about 25,000 pieces sold. The income received by the Eskimos has provided an important cushion against the economic difficulties they have suffered in their adjustment to contact with civilization. And they enjoy the work.

ESKIMO FAMILY IN THEIR SUMMER HOME



NORTHERN AFFAIRS PHOTO



HUNTER TYING SEAL
COLLECTION, MARGARET RIGG, NASHVILLE, TENN.

STEATITE STONE

SCULPTOR UNKNOWN

Give the seasoned hunter a broken file and a piece of steatite or serpentine, and let him reminisce. As his mood conveys the images of his memory to his strong and facile hands, the stone takes shape. Sometimes he holds the work with his feet, the better to use his hands on it. In time, a caribou, musk ox, or walrus emerges, and the artist smooths the figure with another stone and with stone dust. When he wishes to drill a hole in a pendant or to inlay an antler or an eye dot, he uses the prehistoric bow drill—twirling the shaft in a socket clenched between his teeth while manipulating the carving in his free hand. He soaks the finished piece in seal oil for a few days and finally rubs it to a satiny luster with his hands. By his shaping, the Eskimo artist has made one of the less resisting materials to be found in his resistant world respond to his concept of something beautiful, significant, humorous, or awesome; something to be displayed when relatives visit.

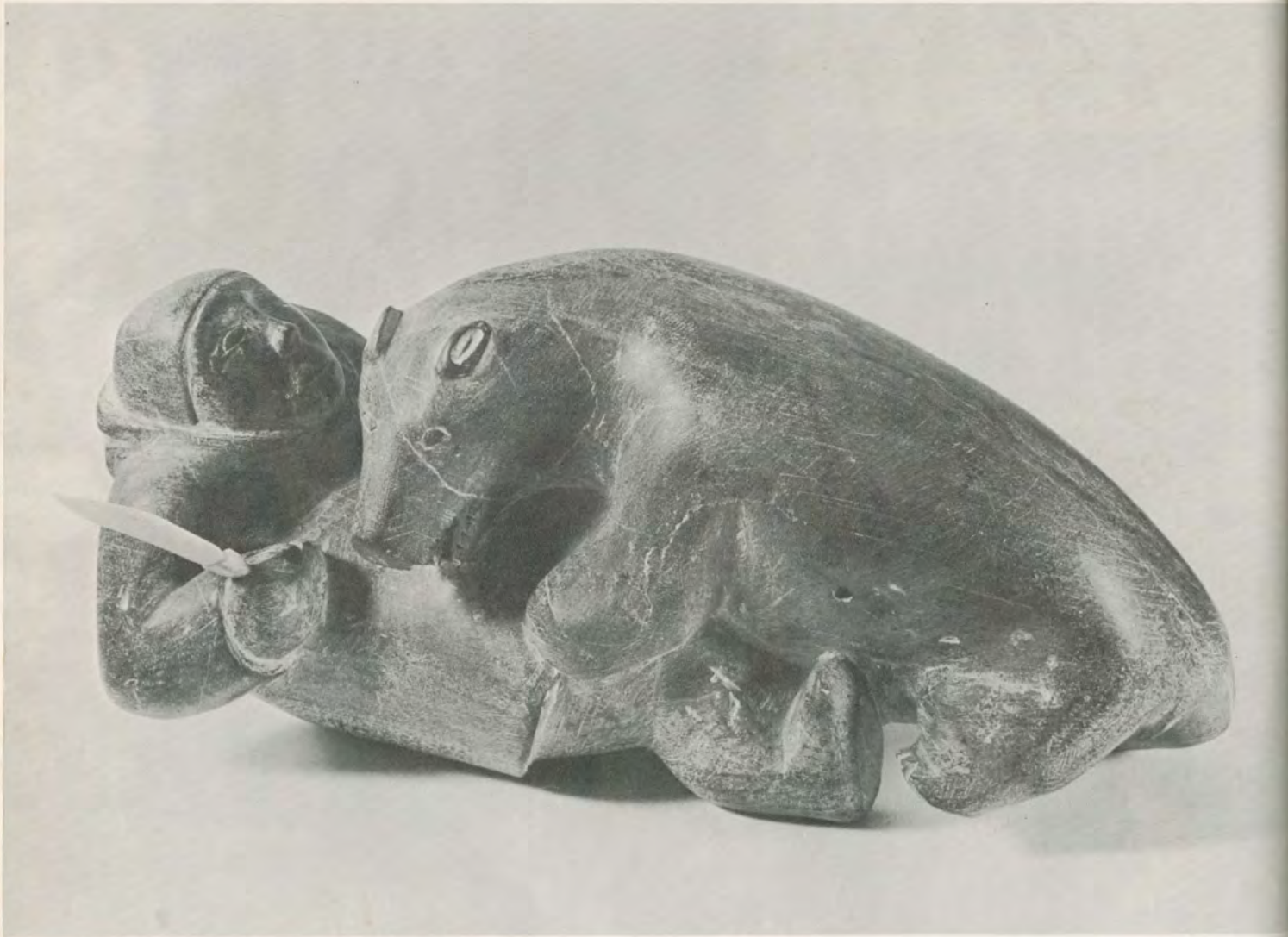


CARIBOU AND WOLF

STONECUT PRINT

ANNI MIKPIGAK

Every effort is made to keep the artistic tradition of these artists free from alien influences and mass-production pressures. But complete success in this can hardly continue for very long. Fortunately, the native artist shows disinclination to make two objects exactly alike or to copy his neighbor's work. But there is a temptation to grind out "souvenir" pieces. In one locality, Povungnituk, the better artists have formed a group to preserve artistic standards. They hope to sculpt a series of salient scenes from Eskimo mythology.



HUNTER STRUGGLING WITH A BEAR

STEATITE STONE

SCULPTOR UNKNOWN



HUNTING BEAR STONECUT PRINT
COLLECTION, MARGARET RIGG, NASHVILLE, TENN.

JOE TALIRUNILI

The Eskimo artist is apt to display extreme modesty about his ability, saying that a given piece is hopelessly bad or that no one should think of giving anything for it. But payment is always made—even for the lesser creations—and no one else need ever know what evaluation was written on the chit the sculptor received. The Eskimo artist may seem careless when he stuffs the slip of paper under his furs, but it is said that not one chit has ever been lost.

There are variations in quality, but it is no wonder that many modern Eskimo carvings are valued highly. The finest of them proclaim their individuality with a noble economy of line and display the creative verve that is a delight to all true lovers of the arts.

Most of these stone carvings are of a size easy to handle. In aboriginal times, heavy stone was a handicap during seasonal migrations, and the art of the Eskimos was probably inspired largely by religious motives. Small pieces were worn under the clothing as amulets, and miniature replicas of useful objects were placed at the grave of a departed relative to serve his spirit in the future life. Small figurines may have been used as dolls and toys.

But these modern carvings are intended to be handled and enjoyed as works of art. They reflect the personality of the artist, although they may arouse thoughts of a well-liked legend or memories of an episode in daily life. Many of the pieces shown here were exhibited in New York through the courtesy of the Canadian Government and sold at St. James' Episcopal Church to benefit Eskimo mission activity.



ARTIST UNKNOWN
STEATITE STONE
BOOT MENDING



HUNTER RETURNING FROM FISH HOLES WITH HIS CATCH
STEATITE STONE, POLISHED ARTIST UNKNOWN



OTTER

Collection, Margaret Rigg, Nashville



FISH

Collection, Mr. & Mrs. B. J. Stiles, Nashville



BIRD

Collection, Margaret Rigg, Nashville, Tenn.



ESKIMO MADONNA

STEATITE STONE

ARTIST UNKNOWN

ESKIMO SONGS

as translated by Tegoodligak, South Baffin Island

I

*I think over again my small adventures
When with the wind I drifted in my kayak
And thought I was in danger
My fears
Those small ones that seemed so big
For all the vital things
I had to get and to reach
And yet there is only one great thing
The only thing
To live to see the great day that dawns
And the light that fills the world.*

II

*The Great sea has set me in motion
Set me adrift
And I move as a weed in the river
The Arch of sky
And mightiness of storms
Encompasses me
And I am left
Trembling with joy.*

MESSAGES FROM THE PAST

BY MARGARET RIGG

JUST before the hunt at Povungnituk, Kopeekolik, the hunter, carved for himself a superb walrus in steatite stone. It was a tribute to the walrus. It might bring good hunting fortune. He hid it away to be treasured quietly. He called himself a useless and clumsy carver, and only with reluctance would he produce his art. When asked to carve another, Kopeekolik was perplexed. After a long silence he exclaimed, "You see that I can carve the likeness of a walrus! Why would you want another one?" He had proved himself a carver of walrus, and that was enough. But the idea of carving a caribou was suggested to him and he immediately became excited. He had yet to prove himself as a carver of caribou.

And he went to find some stone.*

Hidden away in Eskimo homes today are unnumbered carvings of museum quality, treasured privately until they are finally given up for sale in a world the carver will never see.

The carving itself is a kind of special occasion—an avocation, true, but a prized one. In the smoky seal-oil lamplight a choice stone, found along the

water's edge in the summer's thaw, is turned and turned in the carver's hand until a form reveals itself from within the stone. A carver, like Sheroapik, finds the sleek lines of the weasel and sets it free with his tools. Another carver such as Sarkee captures the sullen treachery of the bear. Fully aware of an infinity of detail they will discard all but the essence of the powerful form. In quiet moments they remember, and carve what they see beyond the Arctic night. They carve without pretension and without self-consciousness, as a primitive profoundly attuned to

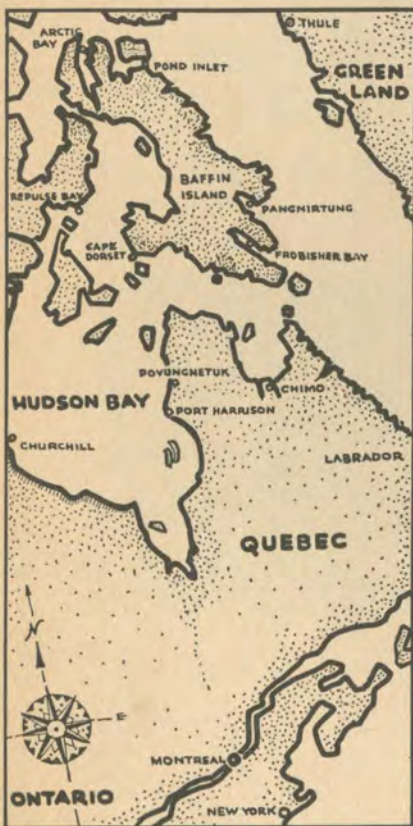
the reverberations of life around them. Memory, meditation, skill and humor bring life to the stone. The spirit, caught and held, lives on in the stone—man thus taking his dominion over the animals; his victory in the hunt is celebrated, but also the power and spirit of the animal is celebrated.

The human being, though, is at the center of the Eskimo's art. And here the carver celebrates all the activities of his lonely, communal and family life. No act is too small to be rendered in stone. No part of living is too menial or trivial to be celebrated by the carver, so that all may take fresh joy in their daily work, or fresh courage to meet danger.

Perhaps these carvings unite all Eskimos beyond time or death or change. Cape Dorset, where so much of the art comes from, is one of the oldest settlements in North America. Eskimos were living there nearly 3,000 years ago. And today, their descendants live out their lives in almost the same ancient ways. In the icy bleakness they contemplate and refine their art.

Since 1948, when Jim Houston went there and was captivated by their carvings, the Eskimos' art has provided a third of their income, and museums and collectors all over the world have grown more eager for it yearly. By 1960 Houston had built Eskimo carving and printmaking into a business that grossed \$150,000 per year. Quite naturally the Eskimos enjoy the increased income. Fears have been voiced that this would lead to a degeneration in the art form, but this has not been the case, nor is it likely to be. The Eskimo himself has already set standards for his art which he must maintain to command not only a market, but more important, the respect of his fellow artists.

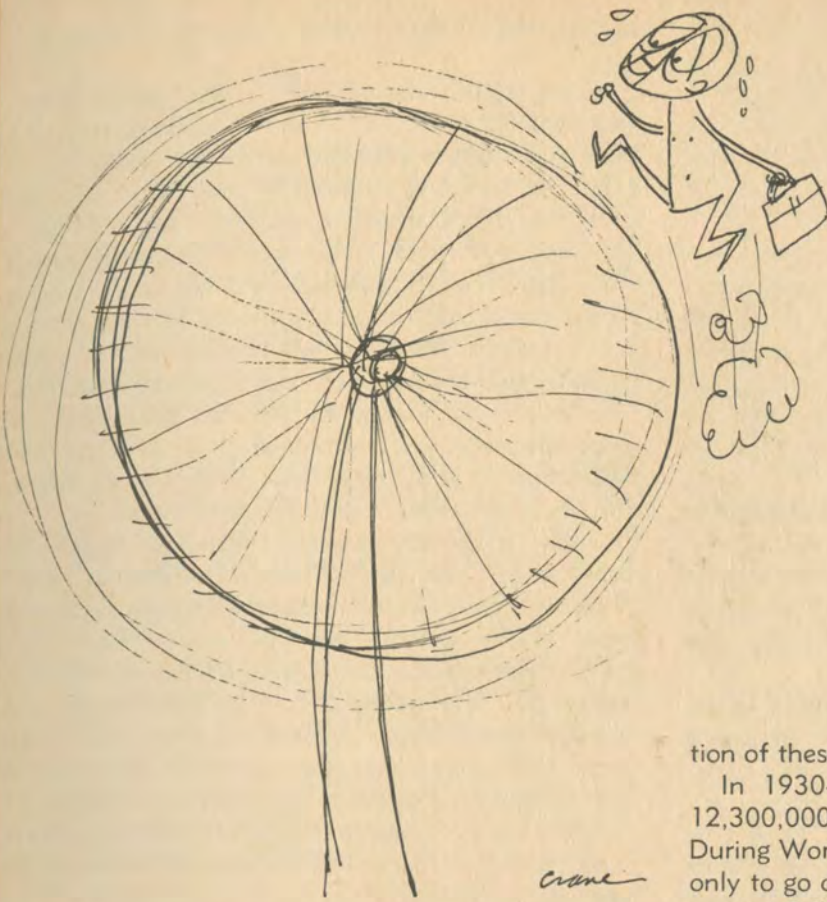
Yet one wonders, with our encroaching "civilization," whether successive younger generations will be capable of maintaining the same vital intimacy with raw life in a forbidding land, which produces the carvings and prints coming to us today. Will the full glare of the mechanized twentieth century burn out the connecting roots between these roving huntsmen and their expressive impulse? Time will tell. But until then, we have an art that sings, that laughs, and dances, that communes and dares danger and formulates powers which we ourselves knew and felt once—and may begin to sense again through this art. For this is an art of the sacred, or of a sense of the sacred, evoked, from dynamic oneness with life forces, into significant form.



* Material gathered from: *Canadian Eskimo Art*, issued by The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa, Canada.

some therapy for theater

BY TOM F. DRIVER



tion of these ills and suggestions for their treatment.

In 1930-31 the Broadway audience numbered 12,300,000. By 1933 it had dropped 35 per cent. During World War II it climbed back to 11,500,000, only to go down again later. It now holds its own at around 8,300,000. On the other hand, since 1930 the population of the country has increased by 45 per cent.

What happened is clear: the audience that was lost during the Depression did not return, and neither the younger generation nor the affluent society has provided a new audience.

The causes usually mentioned to explain these facts are:

- 1) the high cost of tickets;
- 2) the inconvenience of buying tickets, getting to the theater, finding a babysitter, and so on;
- 3) competition from other kinds of entertainment, especially TV and movies;
- 4) alternative ways of acquiring "culture," such as records and paperback books, which make the theater less obligatory for people who want to "keep up with what's going on."

There is also the hypothesis that plays are not as good as they used to be. It is true that they are not impressive, but this fact is best regarded as a symptom, not a cause, of the theater's troubles. A healthy, popular theater does not require a bill of consistently good material. In the theater's "good old days" there were lots of bad old plays. They helped pay for the good ones.

Of the four factors enumerated, the second, third, and fourth deserve most attention. The first, the high cost of tickets, is important, but almost nothing can be done about it. In any case, the big hits prove

THE theater is shrinking. A smaller proportion of the population than ever before goes to fewer theaters to see fewer plays. At the same time, interest in drama has probably never been higher among students and the rest of the reading public. Something is obviously wrong.

The weakness of our commercial theater ought to concern every person who cares about the cultural life of America. As long as it continues, it tends to make all our high-flown analyses of drama by critics, theologians, sociologists, and psychologists sound a little hollow. Is there, as Horatio said, "any good thing to be done?" I believe the answer is yes.

A complete explanation of why the theater is shrinking would amount to a cultural history of the past hundred years. As often happens with cultural histories, it might lead to pessimistic conclusions. Let us try something simpler.

For practical purposes all we need see is that the American theater is suffering from a near-fatal combination of two maladies. Neither one without the other would be so bad. Together, they are disastrous. Let us call them obsolescence in the box office, and confusion of genres. What follows is a descrip-

that people are willing to pay high prices if the show seems worth going to.

The second factor, inconvenience, is part of what I call obsolescence in the box office. The third and fourth have to do with confusion of genres.

Obsolescence in the Box Office

Theater is always going to be a comparatively inconvenient entertainment. It cannot be seen at home like TV. It cannot be mass produced. Since reserved seats are required and "continuous performances" don't exist, the spectator must be at a certain place at a certain time ready for a certain kind of experience. Therefore, it must make the most of its festival and occasional nature.

For this very reason, it is fatal for the theater to be encumbered by inconveniences that are not intrinsic to it but are only needless bother. The trouble one takes in going to the theater should belong to theatergoing. It should not be an obstruction the management could remove if it tried.

The great needless barrier that now stands in the theatergoer's way is, *mirabile dictu*, the act of buying a ticket. I know whereof I speak. Since I, as a critic, go to the theater regularly (carefree on passes sent me in the mail), I am frequently asked, "How does one get tickets to a play?" The questioner seldom means, "Can you get me in free?" He hardly ever means, "What do I have to pay?" He means, "Where are tickets on sale for blokes like me?"

Sometimes he asks out of sheer ignorance, but more often it is from a feeling that the theater is strange. He feels one has to be initiated in order to approach it. One wonders how a business that depends on attracting a new public and is supposedly well supplied with public relations experts allows this psychology to flourish. Actually, the theater encourages it by spreading the notion that tickets to any show worth seeing are impossible to obtain.

Then man in the street may know that the way to buy a ticket is to go to the box office or to write a letter, but he is afraid of having to walk fruitlessly from one theater to another, or resents having to wait days for his check to come back so that he can send another to his second choice. He thinks there

ought to be an easier, quicker way. And he is right.

There ought to be a bureau in the theater district that sells tickets to all the shows in town. It should have in it a window for each attraction and a central office for handling requests by mail. The customer visits one office or writes one letter and his ticket-shopping is finished. Hotels and a few other agents throughout the city should have direct phone service to the ticket bureau, with authority to write tickets on the spot, as the agent in a London hotel may do.

Other brokers and their fees should be abolished. The way to do that is to take the ceiling off the price of seats in the front of the orchestra. The ticket bureau and theater box office should charge for these whatever the traffic will bear.

There is already a great, illegal fluctuation in ticket prices. The rake-off from it is known as "ice." It comes mainly from the expense-account trade and from wealthy persons who do not care what they have to pay in order to see a certain show on a certain night. This traffic should be made legal, and the take should come directly to the treasury of the show. Outlawing ticket speculation has been proved useless since the practice is so difficult to detect. If theaters were allowed to charge whatever the tickets would bring, the incentive for speculators would be radically undercut.

Big-money demand for tickets applies only to the best seats in the house. Therefore, seats in the rear of the orchestra and in the balcony should continue to sell at a fixed price, perhaps lower than the present scale. A few seats should be reserved for sale on the day of the performance, as is often done at drama festivals and as standing room is handled. In this way, the person on a modest budget is protected.

In March of 1962 the League of New York Theaters promised "a wholehearted effort to find a solution to the problem" of ticket distribution. So far, however, no significant improvement has been made. Admittedly none can be made without inconvenience to producers and theater owners. Cooperation by state and city officials is also necessary. At stake, however, is the audience, which has already demonstrated that it will not lightly endure the



sort of inconvenience caused by box-office obsolescence.

Confusion of Genres

High prices and outmoded selling practices would not by themselves keep the audience away if the customer were content that the theater offers him a distinctive kind of entertainment. But he will not rob his bank account and make the laborious pilgrimage to the theater only to find there the same brand of amusement he can get elsewhere. Obsolescence in the box office is bad enough. Combined with confusion of genres, it is more than he will take.

Buying his ticket weeks (or months) in advance, the customer plans his trip to 45th Street as if it were a journey to the moon. If, when he arrives, he sees *West Side Story*, he may decide it was worth it. But he is also likely to see *The Tenth Man* (to choose another hit). It is pleasant and well performed, but on the way home he becomes dimly aware that it would have been just as good on Channel 4. Next time he stays at home. He has rebelled against confusion of genres.

Broadway is losing sight of the difference between theatrical experiences and experiences afforded by other forms of entertainment. More and more its plays come from novels, short stories, autobiographies, TV scripts, and old movies. New plays are more and more written with an eye to film and TV sales. Publicity and advertising become indistinguishable from the ballyhoo for movies and hair cream. The theater tries to keep up with its competitors by imitating them. It strains to become what it never can be—one of the mass media.

Consider, for instance, the plan to send live Broadway performances on closed-circuit television to theaters in other cities. Dynamic Theater Networks, Inc., initiated such a "service" in 1961, offering *Gideon* to Rochester, N.Y. It was declared a "success," opening the door to more of the same.

Discussion of the pros and cons of this innovation has been revealing because it has been almost entirely beside the point. The principal objection brought forth is that the telecasts will hurt the New York box office. Maybe, or maybe not. But in any case that is not the real threat the system poses. The real threat lies in the assumption, which almost no one has questioned, that a show designed for stage presentation is, *mutatis mutandis*, suitable for an audience watching a big TV screen. The awful truth is that in three cases out of four at present the assumption is valid. This is a measure of how far our theater is from really being theater.

It ought to be known, on aesthetic grounds, that what is right for the stage is wrong for the camera, and vice versa. The media are not interchangeable. Each has its own stylistic demands, its own form,



YOUR
Twilight
Theater
STAIRS

its own manner of presentation, and these strongly affect the proper content of each. This point is so obvious that many persons think it a truism not worth considering: yet it is ignored all the time, with the result that the audience is losing its appreciation of what genuine theater is like.

People ask me: "Why do you work in the theater when you could work in TV, which reaches a much bigger audience?" As if that were the only difference. It is like asking, "Why do you grow orchids when with the same effort you could grow acres of poppies?" One does not have to despise poppies in order to see that there is no comparison. The theater is itself responsible for this kind of confusion.

If the practice of televising stage shows were to become widespread, the art of writing plays would be further corrupted. That is not to say that TV itself is corrupt. The mixing is what corrupts. Writers will write, even more than they do now, with one eye on the stage and the other on the camera. Attempting to serve two masters, they will serve neither well. They will invite aesthetic bankruptcy.

We are entitled to these observations because so many adaptations from other genres have reached the stage betraying a lack of knowledge (and feeling) about what makes theatricality. In principle there is nothing wrong with adapting material from one genre to another, as long as the genres themselves are not confused. The Greek tragedians borrowed stories from epic poems. Shakespeare adapted from *novellae*, history books, old plays, pamphlets, and ballads. Priandello used his own short stories. Adaptation is all right if you know what you are doing. But today's adapters, borrowers, and option-purchasers forget that an adaptation should not be a rearrangement but a re-creation. A readable novel like *The Devil's Advocate* becomes an overgrown monstrosity on the stage. A moving autobiographical story like *A Death in the Family* retains its honesty and tenderness as *All the Way Home* but does not by any stretch of the imagination become a play; all the while one watches it he thinks what a good book it was. And this failure in form, this failure to recognize what cannot be improved upon by dramatization, is honored with a Pulitzer Prize! The same year, the Drama Critics' Circle Award goes to *Carnival*, a warmed-over musical that cannot hold a candle to the movie it came from.

These examples are deliberately chosen from

among the "best." Shall we also mention *Bravo Giovanni*, *Camelot*, *I Can Get It For You Wholesale*, *Subways Are for Sleeping*, *Passage to India*, *The Aspern Papers*, *Daughter of Silence*, and *The Affair?* Even *My Fair Lady* and *How to Succeed*, though they provide happy evenings, are not likely to make one feel that the theater is indispensable. The recording of *My Fair Lady* contains 90 per cent of the show's charm, and the mugging of Robert Morse in *How to Succeed*, so much like Mickey Rooney's, will be better on the screen.

The best recent example of adaptation to musical form, about the only one that really justifies itself, is *West Side Story*. If Jerome Robbins and Arthur Laurents had sought merely to make a "musical version" of *Romeo and Juliet* they would have accomplished little. Instead, out of Shakespeare they made something new. Where Shakespeare's play pits youth against age in a political situation dominated by the authority of the Prince, *West Side Story* pits youth against anarchy. There is no civil authority worth speaking of. Adults are either excluded from the play or their authority is shown to be nil, even (or especially) that of the police. The plot thus becomes a parable of the breakdown of law and value throughout modern life. The theme of *Romeo and Juliet* is ironically inverted. In addition, Jerome Robbins replaced Shakespeare's poetry, which of course had to go, with a poetry of dance finely consonant with his ironic material. The entire work is a transmutation of the original, betraying no confusion between the genre of tragedy and that of the modern musical.

Until the movie version of this show came out, I thought Jerome Robbins was a master of form. Now I suspect he was just lucky. For the film of *West Side Story* is not a new creation in the manner that should belong to film. It is simply a photographed musical. It is too close to the Broadway show for its own good. Not because some of us had seen it already but because the same material, transferred without a radical reworking to the screen, communicates something different and inferior, since the screen equivalent of the stage show's vitality was not found. The movie is ten times heavier, much less ironic, much less believable than what we saw on stage.

The invention of new entertainments always forces the older ones to find their essential excellence or else to disappear. The novel killed the market for narrative poetry, forcing poetry to intensify its lyric quality, wherein it has no real competition. Photography drove painting out of the business of scene-depiction and into the task of expression, which had always been its *forte*, even

if people forgot it. Movies are now forcing the stage back to theatricalism, and TV is forcing the movies into more experimental and sophisticated ways. It is all to the good, provided the lessons are learned in time.

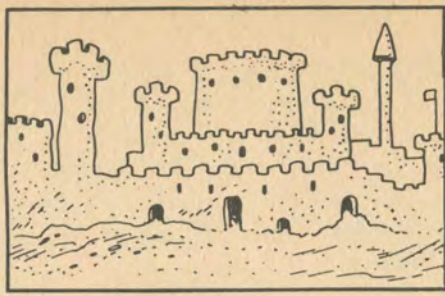
If going to the theater were inexpensive and convenient, if it were the only popular form of audience entertainment, confusion of genres would not be so important. In present circumstances, however, theater can survive only by offering what its competition does not. Fortunately, there are examples that point the way.

Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* is conceived and executed in totally theatrical terms. No other medium will ever give us the particular flavor, tone, and force that it has on the stage. Tennessee Williams' *Night of the Iguana*, though flawed here and there, belongs only to live actors before a live audience. Whatever may be said against Williams, his imagination is deeply and rightly theatrical. His plays almost never go well onto the screen. It is his theatricality the public loves, not, as is often charged, the sensational subjects he chooses. Also Edward Albee. He makes egregious mistakes, but they are all theatrical mistakes. And of course there is the modern French theater, headed by Beckett and Ionesco, the German-language theater of Brecht, Frisch, and Duerrenmatt, the English theater of Pinter and Osborne, and so on. But we are concerned mainly with Broadway.

Let us then praise *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* because it has not been ashamed to learn from that old man of the theater, Plautus, nor to dip into that old trunk of stage business, vaudeville. Let us applaud Richard Rodgers for using the orchestra in *No Strings* in a way that only theater could use it, setting up a sort of game between actors and musicians in which the stage is the playing-court. Off Broadway, where the pickings of this sort are usually better, we can find on occasion *Oh Dad Poor Dad*, *Brecht on Brecht*, *The Premise*, *The Second City*, *The Blacks*, *The Fantasticks*, *The Hostage*. If we did not have the theater we could not have the special joys these works give us, and so they teach us the way that theater must go.

It is time for the theater, like the Prodigal Son, to "come to itself." All who work in the theater must help revitalize the public conception of what going to the theater means. To most nowadays it means very little, and when that is so, even the work of exceptional merit pays the price. Reform in the church often goes under the slogan, "Let the church be the church." I preach a similar reform: "Let the theater be the theater."

"Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock;



and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.



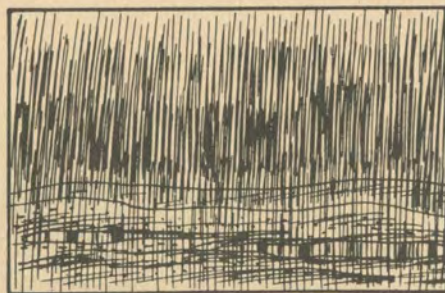
And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand;



and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house,



and it fell; and great was the fall of it."
— Matthew 7:24-27



the penultimate peanuts

BY ROBERT SHORT

THERE are plenty of "lessons" to be learned throughout *Peanuts*, but most of us are not always sure what these lessons are. As Lucy has characterized this predicament, after practically using a magnifying glass to read a book of stories, "No matter how hard I try, I can't read between the lines!" Most of these lessons are basically "theological" in nature: to use the comment of Linus (when he discovers that his "own sister" wishes he'd "never been born"), "the theological implications alone are staggering!"

The following commentary should in no way be understood as an attempt to prove or demonstrate that Charles Schulz, the creator of *Peanuts*, had these ideas—or anything remotely close to them—in mind when he did his cartoons. Any resemblance between our contentions and Schulz's intentions is purely hypothetical. Too often Christian critics of art tend to sell short their cause, as well as the cause of art, by attempting to nail down the point of view behind a work of art. There's some question as to whether this can be done. The feeling—and it's a very understandable one—seems to be that if we can just prove that ol' so-and-so—the famous author, painter, composer, screen-writer, or cartoonist—is really a Christian in disguise, we've struck an everlasting blow for Truth. But art, like religion, involves a basic element which is extremely personal ("existential," if you prefer). Proving what's

in an artist's mind is as problematic as proving the existence of God.

The basis for a Christian criticism of art is the same as the Christian criticism of anything—witness. The job of the Christian art critic—pro or amateur—is not so much to tell us what the artist is “saying” as it is to tell us what the artist has said to *him*—and why. It may be that the critic's vision of the work of art coincides precisely with the artist's vision. Then again, it may not. Take, for instance, the following bit of dialogue between an artist and a critic in *Peanuts*:

Lucy: I've decided to go into political cartooning. I'm going to *ridicule* everything!

Charlie Brown: I understand, Lucy. By the use of ridicule you hope to point up our faults in government, and thus improve our way of life.

Lucy: No, I just want to *ridicule* everything!

In other words, who can say for sure? Even though the question of the artist's intentions is irrelevant to our present purposes, every reader is free to judge the truth of our observations for himself. As Linus has wisely pointed out, “religion is a very touchy subject.” And if there be those who love *Peanuts*, but can't stand religion, or vice versa, we'd hate to spoil either for anybody.

There seem to be certain theological motifs which run throughout *Peanuts* and appear with almost clockwork regularity. The most frequent of these themes concerns the human side of the divine-human encounter, best described as the doctrine of Original Sin. T. S. Eliot has said about his work, “I doubt whether what I am saying can convey much to anyone for whom the doctrine of Original Sin is not a very real and tremendous thing,” and the same statement is surely true of *Peanuts*. For it is easy to see that Charlie Brown, with his t-shirt of thorns and his globe-like head, can represent a sort of comic, microcosmic, twentieth-century Everyman, and that all his troubles somehow seem to be tied up with his origin, that he is an heir to original or “birth sin,” as it is called in *The Book of Common Prayer*.

It's also obvious, and true to the nature of Original Sin that Charlie Brown's “trouble” is not moralistic nor dependent on anything he has done wrong. Rather the trouble lies deeper in the motive or origin behind everything he does. The trouble stems not from what he has done, but quite literally from *who he is*:



Original Sin means that originally, in every individual, human nature just isn't what it ought to be. It's simply not in man's nature to come on the scene worshipping God or with built-in faith. For this reason, it's not enough for a man to be born only once in a lifetime; he's got to be born twice—or “born again” as Christ put it. This is why genuine change in human action and attitudes is so extremely rare apart from this radical break-through in human nature. Also, “Your age has nothing to do with what I'm talking about. There are no big changes between ten and twenty—or ten and eighty, for that matter,” as Zoey Glass says to Franny. In *Peanuts*, this view of human nature is expressed in the following way—and at least once a year:



motive

Lucy's "bonded word," then, ends up looking more like what the Reformers called "the bondage of the will." Indeed, if she'd been around, St. Paul undoubtedly would have found a real sympathizer in Lucy when he said in *Romans*, "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it."



In the same passage, Paul goes on to say, "For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see within me another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to this law of sin which dwells within me." Lucy also sees this "war" taking place—sees it so clearly, as a matter of fact, that she can out-Paul Paul by drawing a two-sided heart on the fence for her brother's edification:



Incidentally, we think it's interesting to note that this view of human nature expressed by the children of *Peanuts* almost forms a light and comic counterpart to the same view terrifyingly dramatized by the children in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. There seems to be a greater willingness to learn from the equivocal honesty of youngsters. However cruel this honesty may be, there are far-reaching implications for all of mankind, as Linus indicates in the following conversation with Lucy:

Peanuts has been called a "child's garden of reverses." And it is so because it not only is concerned with sin, but also with the inevitable wages of sin, which is spiritual "death"—in one form or another. Again, "sin" is not to be moralistically understood here, rather it is simply as the worshiping of, or having an "ultimate concern" for, that which is not God—which, of course, can include anything. All of the characters in *Peanuts* have this type of "tragic flaw," which inevitably spells doom for them. Even Lucy, the last of the great rugged individualists and an incurable optimist, is reduced to nothing before the absolute dedication of her heart's desire, Schroeder, to his piano. Schroeder, in turn, has been known to die a thousand deaths in forgetting the birthday of his idol, Beethoven. Charlie Brown, whose heart is constantly set on winning, has yet to win *anything*—whether in terms of friends, baseball games, or kite-flying contests (always between Charlie and the kite). But perhaps the most vulnerable of all the cast is the sensitive Linus, who has trammled up his heart in his blanket (with which, no doubt, he would like to cover a multitude of sins). But even the "portable security" of Linus' blanket is subject to the precariousness and ambiguities of existence. Snoopy, Lucy, and Linus' "blanket-hating grandma" remain constant threats. At one point Linus' blanket—made into a kite by Lucy and accidentally released—was actually seen orbiting the globe several times before it was finally recovered. And if the reader should have any doubts that all these struggles are the most profound spiritual struggles in which the outcome actually means being lost or saved, he only needs to witness the following scene:



But it is important to understand that the dreadful "sickness unto death" which is the inevitable accompaniment of sin does not always wait to occur with the collapse of particular idols. Perhaps it more often rises to the surface of consciousness as a type of nameless anxiety or fear of everything, making it infinitely more horrible and impossible to deal with. Charlie Brown has allowed that the one particular location in which he always feels himself to be out of place is—"the world." A recent *Time* article listed the technical names for some of our more particular fears, but explained that those fears were only "neurotic symptoms" acting as defenses against a deeper anxiety. This view, as *Time* also mentioned, is certainly in agreement with what a great deal of contemporary theology has been telling us. And there are others who would agree. For instance, exactly

two months after the *Time* article was published, a similar conversation took place in *Peanuts*, using the same terminology and—in its own way—driving the same point home.

It is, then, through this "holy terror" of spiritual death that one learns the dread of sin. It's through fear that one learns to remember God's own Christmas program of salvation. But men have constantly revolted against this harsh manner of teaching, just as Job did in the Old Testament. At one point, for instance, Job cries out against God: "Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposeth thyself against me." But it is also Job who finally comes around to telling us to "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." Our friends in *Peanuts* illustrate exactly how this comes about:

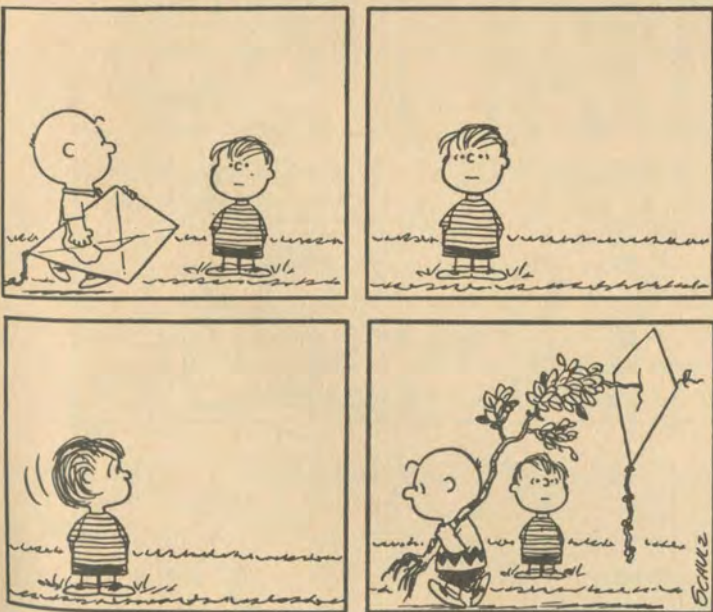


The author of Ecclesiastes has told us that all of man's hopes and dreams and efforts—apart from his fear of God—are, as he puts it, "vanity and a striving after wind." Well, certainly all of Charlie Brown's hopes and dreams and efforts seem to be vanity and a quite literal "striving after wind," for they all seem to be summed up in his kites, none of which has he ever quite gotten off the ground. Why? Because they always meet with the inevitable barrier of the tree—also an interesting symbol. The tree, traditionally, has been used as a literary and biblical representation for the cross or crucifixion. And quite obviously this symbol can be extended to the death of hopes, dreams, efforts and illusions. Charlie Brown's kites meet with every kind of tree imaginable: tiny miniature trees placed outside Violet's doll houses, the Christmas tree Schroeder is trying to bring home, the innocent little sapling Linus and Lucy have just planted. In a desperate effort to fly a *single* kite, Charlie Brown once tried flying four kites at one time, but each became hung on a separate tree. Charlie Brown would probably have a real appreciation for Paul's statement, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree," because there does seem to be some kind of curse on Charlie Brown as he himself "hangeth" upside down on a tree, hopelessly entangled and bound to his arch foe, like Melville's Ahab, by his own kite string.

However, it is interesting that for Charlie Brown, just as for the Christian, the tree, which is first met as the arch enemy by both, has the transforming power of becoming the central support and refuge in time of trouble. Take for instance the following discourse on trees by Lucy, as she explains to Linus (who also has had frequent run-ins with trees):

Trees have many uses, Linus. They prevent erosion, their wood is used to build beautiful houses, they provide shade from the sun, protection from the rain. And [as she observes Charlie Brown sorrowfully leaning against a tree] when life gets too hard, they are very good to lean against.

But if the central tone or keynote in *Peanuts* is "good grief," where is the redemptive aspect that makes grief good? What is the element which transforms the tree from foe to friend? As we might expect, it is Snoopy for whom, as a dog, the tree is always a friend. Snoopy is certainly more "lowly" than the others, and at the same time maintains an outward distinction, perhaps representing an infinite inward difference. As the hound of heaven, Snoopy's job seems to be to "afflict the comfortable and to comfort the afflicted." He comes like a thief in the night to snatch away the false security of Linus' blanket, and yet when Linus is on the verge of "a nervous breakdown" because Lucy has hidden his blanket for two weeks by burying it, Snoopy is the one who finds it for him. Obviously Lucy didn't remember Eliot's advice in *The Wasteland* to "keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men/ Or with his nails he'll dig it up again." Many critics have understood this "Dog" to be Christ, but we'd be reluctant to give that name to Snoopy. At best he can probably be seen as "a little Christ," a Christian, as he possesses a few more foibles ("character traits," as he refers to them) than we would expect of divinity. But when Charlie Brown falls on the ice and can't get up, it is Snoopy who pushes his helpless friend home. He is a "peculiar dog," as Charlie Brown says of him, which sounds a bit like a New Testament reference to Christians—"a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The discussions within the *Peanuts* patch revolving around Santa Claus and Linus' imaginary "Great Pumpkin," who is going to "bring toys to all the good little boys and girls" every year at Halloween time—but thus far has failed to show up, frequently take on theological proportions. Charlie Brown replies, "I refuse to get involved in a theological discussion," when he's



asked if he thinks Santa Claus really exists; Linus admits he has "been guilty of heresy" when the "Great Pumpkin" fails to show up for the fourth consecutive year; etc. But the classic advent experience in *Peanuts* occurs when "the expected one" appears, and is actually not the one expected. For Snoopy, like Christ, must know how it feels to show up in an obscure little plot of ground, as only a rather miserable token of the one expected.



Snoopy frequently undergoes other humiliating experiences, not the least of which is remarkably similar to the following passage in the Gospel of John:

Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."



This is why the dog is often used in the Bible and literature as a symbol for faith—and it's a good symbol. For man must become as a dog before he can become a Christian. He must take on the dog's watchfulness, his lowliness of obedience and loyalty at the feet of his master and his service to others. But Snoopy knows this lowliness also means beatitude. It means being one of the elect, one of the lucky ones—as he here observes:



These are just a few of the theologically suggestive themes we see running through *Peanuts*. There are many more, but by this time the reader will either want to seek his own interpretations as he tries his hand at "reading between the lines," or else forget the entire enterprise and simply enjoy *Peanuts* for its wealth of vital humor. And again, Christians are notoriously prone to see "sermons in stones and good in everything." Usually they can't help it; the particular glasses they wear necessitate this kind of vision. Also, we still don't have the foggiest idea about Schulz's own intentions relative to his cartoons. In this regard, he probably feels very much like good ol' Charlie Brown when confronted with a question of literary interpretation:



But whether Mr. Schulz pretends to be a student of prophetic literature or not, and regardless of his intentions in his cartoons, he does a bang-up job of creating an art form both prophetic and greatly entertaining.

fellini 8-1/2: capability and culpability

PARIS, AUGUST.

In the Studio-Publics cinema on the Champs Elysées, each seat has a metal plate on its back inscribed with the name of someone who has made a distinctive contribution to film art. My seat was marked Jean Vigo; around me were seats memorializing Carl Dreyer, Louis Delluc, Howard Hawks, Greta Garbo, and Fred Zinneman. I failed to find the name of Federico Fellini on any of the seats, but no matter: on the strength of his new film alone, he will be remembered as a master of film art, a creator of depth and honesty.

Fellini's new film, which has already been lauded at Cannes, is entitled *8 1/2*. The slightly cryptic title derives from the fact that this is his eighth-and-a-half film. The opus number is appropriate to the film's expressionistic style; it also indicates that the film is meant to relate intimately to the life of its creator, Sgr. Fellini. For *8 1/2* is a film about the making of a film, as seen through the eyes of its director. Fellini has said himself that all of the subject matter for his films comes out of his own life, and research into his past by Toby Goldberg at Boston University, confirms that more than any other contemporary director he has been concerned with making a *personal* statement in each of his films. His subject matter has always been distinctly autobiographical.

The director-hero in *8 1/2*, played superbly by Marcello Mastroianni, is named Guido. He has created a highly successful and controversial film, and now is floundering about after a subject for his next effort. He is disturbed by conflicts and misunderstandings with his wife, his mistress, his script writer, and his actors, but he is most threatened by the fear that he has nothing to say. For Fellini, awash in the turbulent wake of *La Dolce Vita*, the personal identification is clear and complete. The director must find his own direction.

As his films have over the years become more and more personal in tone, so Fellini's style has moved from neo-realism, to episodic abstraction, to surrealism. Such a deep personal preoccupation will inevitably take an antitheatrical form, dissolving at every turn into private, surreal excursions, seemingly

tangential to the main direction of the film and cut in at a bewilderingly fast pace. Far from being such a deliberate tour into obscurity as *Last Year at Marienbad*, the complexity in *8 1/2* is both appropriate and necessary. Guido is an amazingly complex and confused individual, and each seemingly irrelevant sequence serves to strip off another of his many masks. There is no classical crisis-to-denouement movement, but rather an inward and downward spiraling search for the truth about one man. That the technique works, and even leads us to new insights about ourselves, is the supreme tribute to Fellini's genius.

But, ironically, the question of genius is irrelevant to Fellini himself—at least as he reveals himself in *8 1/2*. His candor is as humbling as it is overpowering; Guido's expressed desire to make an honest film—"to tell the truth without making someone suffer," as he at first expresses it—is Fellini's achievement. He fears suffering so deeply that he would rather lie than risk causing suffering.

Fellini's humane concern is shockingly honest in that he harbors no messianic illusions about man, no expectation of great changes in a man as he learns to live with himself save that he emerge from his internal torment. The glory of Fellini's art—it was inherent in his early neo-realistic films, with their redundant overtones of social protests—is in the realization that the ordinary man is capable of extraordinary insight and action, and the weathering of extraordinary crises, yet he remains not one whit less ordinary afterward.

8 1/2 is the pinnacle of Fellini's career, exhibiting more visual beauty, cinematic style, and power of imagination than anything he has done before. The unsurpassed quality of the film blends with the highly personal theme in the mind of the viewer, giving the heavy impression almost of a final testament—and the thought is disturbing. But the conclusion of the film belies the fear that Fellini may have outdone himself. Guido is no different, no "better," a man than he was before, and the labor of creating films will be no less a hell. Fellini is far from finished in his film art, and this, his most original and powerful film yet, proves it.

—ROBERT STEELE

african books

Several exceptional African books are now to be had in limited supply. Written, illustrated and printed by Africans, they represent the first such productions of the works of contemporary African poets and artists to be made available in the USA. These books present the works of sophisticated intellectuals who have returned to Africa after having studied, traveled, and endured a long search for what is authentic for them in the most individual and creative sense. Will Americans be able to fully appreciate the power, honesty, and individuality of these artists? Their creations are forged out of a confused and suffering past, out of a rich, demolished heritage of ritual, mystery, and refinement. These works distill all that is past and gone—along with all that is future and possible to them as nations, as artists, as human beings! Aside from these Africans, perhaps only the young, disillusioned postwar Japanese artists are doing this same immense task so well through art.

To understand new Africa one must get beyond the stereotypes; through these excellent books, the vestiges of stereotypes may be shattered finally.

Northwestern University Press is the American distributor for these books, which are originally publications of *Mbari*, an organization of the most creative writers and artists in Africa today. Their headquarters are in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Among the Ibo of Eastern Nigeria, *Mbari* refers to an act of worship done in mud. This act consists of erecting an earthen temple dedicated to the earth deity, filling it with mud sculptures, and then permitting that structure to be returned by rain and wind to the mud from which it was made.

As agent of cultural leavening, *Mbari* is worthy of this symbolic significance. Spearheaded by an Africanized European (Austrian Ulli Beier), the organization is in close association with Africans like Ezekiel Mphahlele (*Down Second Avenue*, a novel and *African Image*, a book half literary history and half polemic) who is now affiliated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, in Paris. *Mbari* has one center at Ibadan and another at Oshogbo, Nigeria, where there are accommodations for lectures and discussions, space for work, and gallery exhibits. Although publishing activity is found here and there in Negro Africa, largely dedicated to political affairs, *Mbari* is the only indigenous publisher of serious proportion. *Black Orpheus*, a magazine published by *Mbari* and devoted to all the arts and their criticism, now scheduled to appear three times a year, will also be distributed by Northwestern University Press. *Black Orpheus* is a handsome, valuable magazine whose place in the rapidly emerging literary history of black Africa will most certainly be pre-eminent.

From the former British colonies of West and southern Africa come the most significant literary activities of the black area south of the Sahara. Except for a few periodicals featuring political and critical articles, book reviews, and a few short stories and verses, little is done in Tanganyika, Kenya, and Uganda.

The bibliography of contemporary African writing is small indeed, and for all purposes (save those of the most dogged literary historian) may be said to date from the close of World War II. With the exception of short stories, all the significant literary forms are represented in this collection. The list is as follows:

Alex La Guma, *A WALK IN THE NIGHT* (\$2.50)

Since La Guma is under ban and house restriction by the government of South Africa, the manuscript was smuggled out of the country. This novel, when compared with those from



West Africa (the work of novelist Chinua Achebe or Cyprian Ekwensi), appears highly "melodramatic" in the classic sense in that actions develop from external agents, not from the nature of the characters. La Guma thus reflects what is in fact the condition of existence in South Africa, where practically all aspects of the native's life are governed by forces alien to his race and experience.

J. P. Clark, *POEMS* (\$2.50); *SONG OF A GOAT* (a play) (\$2.00)

The drama has been performed in Nigeria, and at the 1962 Writers' Conference of Makerere College in Kampala, Uganda. Clark is now in the Graduate School at Princeton.

Christopher Okigbo, *HEAVENSGATE* (\$2.00)

Okigbo is roughly the same age as Clark (in his late twenties). He represents Oxford University Press in Nigeria.

Rabearivelo, *POEMS* (\$2.50)

Leon Damas, *SONGS* (\$3.00)

These two translated collections are notable in that they both express the French African "philosophy" of *negritude*, a complex of mystical and racist attitudes which attributes special kinds of innate feelings to Negroes (warmth, emotionality, richness of intuition, etc.). This notion was first defined by Aime Cesaire as a kind of sentimental longing for the time and the continent where his ancestors were not slaves but kings. The cause was taken up after World War II chiefly by Leopold Sedar Senghor, now president of Senegal, and Rabearivelo (of Martinique) whom Jean-Paul Sartre has called one of the best poets writing in French. Leon Damas, of French Guiana, is also of this persuasion.

Ibrahim Salahi, *DRAWINGS* (\$2.50)

Okeke, *DRAWINGS* (\$2.50)

Ibrahim Salahi received his formal art training in London. He later incorporated into his work Arabic calligraphy and decorative patterns from baskets and calabashes, the only artistic stimulus in Khartoum. The sensitive handling of line in Salahi's graphic work delineates figures not representational in intent nor derivative in style, but drawn from a fantasy of the artist's mind.

The source of Okeke's drawings is Ibo folklore, which he has collected and written down. However, the work contains a great deal of plasticity not implied by its model. Both artists feel an understanding of tradition is necessary in asserting their African identity.

—MR

motive

debtors' lane [with drums & ogene]

Two Poems from Modern Africa

(from *Black Orpheus* #11, by permission)

A & B: THIS is debtors' lane, this is
the new haven, where wrinkled faces
watch the wall clock strike each hour
in a dry cellar.

A: NO heavenly transports now
of youthful passion
and the endless succession
of tempers and moods
in high societies;
no blasts, no buffets
of a mad generation
nor the sonorous arguments
of the hollow brass
and the copious cups
of fraudulent misses
in brothels
of a mad generation.

A & B: HERE rather let us lie in a new haven,
drinking in the air we breathe in
until it chokes us and we die.
Here rather let us lie with wrinkled faces
watching the wall clock strike each hour
in a dry cellar.

B: THERE was the tenement
in hangman's lane
where repose was a dream
unreal
and a knock on the door
at dawn
hushed the tenant humped
beneath the bed:
was it the postman
or the bailiff with a writ?
And if the telephone rang
alas, if the telephone rang . . .
Was he to hang up his life
on a rack
and answer the final call?

A & B: HERE rather let us nest in a new haven
awaiting the tap tap tap on the door
that brings in light at dawn.
Here rather let us lie with wrinkled faces
watching the wall clock strike each hour
in a dry cellar.

—Christopher Okigbo

a fistful of news

The hills hunch their backs
and leap above the marshes
that wash about the calabash
of the Great Soul
Rumors of treason spread
like burning swords
the veins of the earth
swell with nourishing blood
the earth bears
towns villages hamlets
forests and woods
peopled with monsters horned and tentacled
their long manes are the mirror of the Sun
they are those who when night has come
direct the regiments of bats
and who sharpen their arms
upon the stone of horror.
the souls of the guilty
float in the currents of air
on the galleys of disaster
paying no heed to the quarrels of the earthbound
with fangs of fire
they tear from the lightning its diamond heart

Surely the scorn is a gobbet of smoking flesh
surely the spirits recite the rosary of vengeance
but like the black ear of wickedness
they have never understood a single word
of the scorpion's obscure tongue:
stubbornness
nor the anger of the snake-wizard
nor the violence of the throwing-knife
can do anything against it.

—Antoine-Roger Bolamba
translated from the French
by Gerald Moore



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contributors

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ROBERT HODGELL

SOMEDAY IS NOW

*we shall overcome
we shall overcome
we shall overcome someday
oh deep in my heart i do believe
we shall overcome someday*

There was a time when the church was very powerful. It was during that period when the early Christians rejoiced when they were deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. . . . Wherever the early Christians entered a town the power structure got disturbed and immediately sought to convict them for being "disturbers of the peace" and "outside agitators." But they went on with the conviction that they were "a colony of heaven," and had to obey God rather than man. . . .

Things are different now. The contemporary church is often a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the arch supporter of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's silent and often vocal sanction of things as they are.

But the judgment of God is upon the church as never before. If the church today does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authentic ring, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century. I am meeting young people every day whose disappointment with the church has risen to outright disgust.

—MARTIN LUTHER KING

Letter From Birmingham Jail