

Valparaiso University

ValpoScholar

---

The Cresset (archived issues)

---

5-1972

## The Cresset (Vol. XXXV, No. 7)

Valparaiso University

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholar.valpo.edu/cresset\\_archive](https://scholar.valpo.edu/cresset_archive)



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), and the [Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons](#)

---

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Cresset (archived issues) by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at [scholar@valpo.edu](mailto:scholar@valpo.edu).

35  
1

May, 1972

# THE CRESSET

a review of literature, the arts, and public affairs



COVER: John Marin,  
*Marine Series*, 1931.  
 Watercolor, 15 1/2 x 19 1/2".  
 Sloan Collection.  
 Valparaiso University,  
 Valparaiso, Indiana.



RIGHT: Reginald Marsh,  
*Smoko the Human Volcano*, 1933.  
 Tempera, 36 x 48".  
 Courtesy of the Rehn Gallery.  
 Photograph: Geoffrey Clements.

## THE CRESSET

May, 1972

Vol. XXXV, No. 7

3 Don A. Affeldt ON BEING RENDERED UNTO CAESAR

5 Robert J. Hover ON SECOND THOUGHT

6 Ray C. Rist ON THE POLITICS OF POT

7 Charles Whitman THE MEANING OF LIBERATION

12 Claire A. Hardgrove GREEK AND MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS DRAMA: A PARADOX

14 Charles Vandersee LETTERS FROM AN OLD GROUCH WORTH KNOWING

16 Jaroslav Pelikan CONTINUITY WITH CHRIST

17 Bonnie McConnell NETS OF LAUGHTER

18 Richard Lee THE UNCHURCHED JESUS

19 William F. Eifrig, Jr. THE PEOPLE — SI!

20 Albert R. Trost A GUIDE TO LABELS

21 BOOKS OF THE MONTH

24 Maxine Mitchell OVEREXPOSED OR UNDERDEVELOPED?

26 Walter Sorell AN UNCOMFORTABLE RING OF NOWNESS

27 John Kretzmann THE ORGANIZATION MAN

28 John Strietelmeier ORTHODOXY VS. FUNDAMENTALISM

ALBERT G. HUEGLI, *Publisher*  
 O. P. KRETZMANN, *Editor Emeritus*  
 RICHARD LEE, *Editor*

### Departmental Editors

Richard H. W. Brauer, *Visual Arts*  
 Don A. Affeldt, *Current Issues*  
 Walter Sanders, *Poetry*; Walter Sorell, *Theatre*  
 Galen Gockel, John Kretzmann, *Urban Affairs*  
 Albert R. Trost, James Nuechterlein, *Political Affairs*  
 Theodore Ludwig, *Religion Books*  
 Kenneth Korby, *General Books*  
 William F. Eifrig, Jr., *Music*  
 Richard Lee, *Mass Media*

### Consulting Editors

Walter G. Friedrich, Norman Nagel  
 John Strietelmeier, Richard Baepler  
 Charles Vandersee, William Beilfuss  
 Arlin Meyer, Warren Rubel

### Business Managers

Wilbur H. Hutchins, *Finance*  
 Lois Reiner, *Circulation*

THE CRESSET is published monthly except July and August by the Valparaiso University Press, Valparaiso, Indiana 46383, as a forum for scholarly writing and informed opinion. The views expressed herein are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the preponderance of opinion at Valparaiso University or within the editorial board. Manuscripts should be addressed to the Editor and accompanied by return postage. Letters to the Editor for publication are subject to editing for brevity. Second class postage paid at Valparaiso, Indiana. Subscription rates: One year — \$2.00; two years — \$3.75; three years — \$5.50. Single copy 20 cents. Entire contents copyrighted 1972 by the Valparaiso University Press, without whose written permission reproduction in whole or in part for any purpose whatsoever is expressly forbidden.

---

---

## Comment on Current Issues

### On Being Rendered Unto Caesar

The April 17 income tax deadline has passed, but the painful wound inflicted upon our checkbooks, savings accounts, or household budgets still stings. Most of us are willing to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." But some of us also wonder: "Shouldn't something remain to be rendered unto *us*?"

The complaint is overstated, to be sure. Between the standard or itemized deductions and the adjusted net tax liability, *something* remains to be spent by the wage-earner. But increasingly he is wondering: "Is enough left? Am I paying too much in taxes?"

There is never *enough* left, no matter how much one earns or how little one pays in taxes. Whatever there is left can easily be spent with only a half-hearted effort; and if not spent, then saved against the future or for the sake of one's heirs. Increasingly, however, taxpayers are discovering that their net income doesn't stretch far enough to cover fixed expenses or reasonable and necessary outlays. With the hidden loss to inflation and the obvious spiraling tax-rate, persons on fixed incomes are rapidly losing ground. The very many others on nearly-fixed incomes are faring almost as badly.

The question whether one is paying *too much* tax is more difficult to answer. Like the term "enough," the phrase "too much" is relative — too much *with respect to what, compared to whom, and on what basis* is the judgment made?

The most common complaint is that one is paying more money, in dollar amounts or in percentage of income, than someone else who either is in roughly the same situation as the first man — except for his taxes — or else is in a much better situation even though he pays roughly the same amount of taxes as the first man. The problem here is one of equity or fairness in bearing whatever tax burden must be borne by tax-paying citizens.

There is no denying that the taxing practices of the United States result in some gross and many minor inequities between tax-payers. Milton Friedman recently noted that two salaried persons cohabiting paid much less in taxes than would the same two persons had they been legally married. Similarly, renters may not deduct from their income the portion of their rent which goes for property tax, though home owners can, even though the cost is passed on to the renter. And we have all

heard of the millionaires who through one exemption or another escape tax liability altogether, while families near the poverty line find precious dollars drained from their paychecks by the government.

The obvious solution to problems of inequity is to "close the loopholes" which create them. One should note, though, that loopholes also have another name: incentives. If renters, but not owners, received deductions for property taxes, fewer rental units would be built and rents on existing units would be hiked. This would probably result in an absolute shortage of housing — a social problem — as well as a decline in the construction industry — an economic problem.

Or, if the rich who shelter their plenty in tax-free municipal bonds were taxed on their earnings, low-interest municipal bonds would lose their attractiveness. The result might be that those with money to invest would not buy the bonds — thus cutting off a prime source of funds for civic improvements — or property taxes would be increased to cover the higher interest rates on the bonds. In either case, it is questionable whether the beleaguered average taxpayer would be any the better off for the change.

Similarly, tax credits to corporations strike many citizens as unfair favoritism. But tax credits have uses which benefit everyone. They provide an effective, speedy method of tinkering with the economy when help is needed in some sectors. And they have the special virtue of being able to influence corporations to adopt useful but expensive modifications of their practices — in pollution abatement, for example — without reliance on elaborate, expensive, and time-consuming enforcement procedures.

Even so, there remain loopholes in our tax laws which benefit only the special interests who managed to get favored consideration when the laws were enacted. These exemptions, amounting to outright subsidy for socially unnecessary goods or services, are the source of the genuine inequities in our tax structure. As a general principle, it seems plain that no one is entitled to special consideration just because he has the know-how or know-who to arrange it for himself. Exemptions should be granted only upon a showing of clear desert. Generalities aside, the tough question is which of the favored groups or persons deserve the generous treatment they are receiving?

Here the question shifts from one of *equity* to one of *value*. The value question has two aspects; personal and

For the year January 1–December 31, 1971, or other taxable year beginning \_\_\_\_\_, 1971, ending \_\_\_\_\_, 19

Place label on form you file. Correct name, etc., if necessary. Enter social security number(s) only if incorrect or not shown on label.	Name (if joint return, give first names and initials of both)	Last name	Your social security number
	Present home address (Number and street, including apartment number, or rural route)		Spouse's social security number
	City, town or post office, State and ZIP code		Occupation

social. The personal question might be put in this way: "Am I getting my money's worth for the taxes I pay?" The social question: "Is the society benefitting from my services roughly in accordance with the net income I extract from society?"

I have no doubt that there is a way to answer such questions "in economic terms" via the sophisticated statistical techniques of present-day economics. The answers, whatever they are, would no doubt be illuminating — about the economy, and about one's own function in it as a pea-sized ball-bearing in a machine of several billion moving parts. But these questions are *not exclusively economic questions*. Anyone who thinks they are has no hope of understanding the widespread unrest in our country over the tax laws. And, on a deeper level, he could not understand one of the factors most crucial in determining the happiness of individuals in society and the health of the society as a whole.

I am saying that these are not strictly economic questions. So saying, however, I enormously complicate questions which are difficult enough to deal with even in strictly economic terms. For example, expenditures for "defense" presumably defend everyone alike, rich and poor. But generally the poor man pays less (in dollar amount) than the rich man does for the same "amount" of defense. The welfare-recipient pays little or nothing in taxes yet receives cash subsidies from the state; the middle-income citizen pays a fair amount to fund welfare programs, yet receives no direct return at all for his money. A cliff-dweller in Manhattan may pay as much for super-highway subsidies as does the (real) cliff-dweller in Arizona; yet the latter may use the new roads extensively, whereas the former never leaves the city.

But even if it could be demonstrated — which it demonstrably could not be — that each of us alike receives approximately the same amount in dollar value of governmental goods and services as we individually pay in taxes, the value-question would still be asked. Then it would be a question of whether these goods and services have that value *to me*. "So I got \$8.45 worth of

moon-shot from my 1971 taxes. So what? I didn't want 5¢ worth of moon-shot! I would much rather have gone to three movies with that \$8.45, instead of watching about a half-hour of not-very-exciting television during the moon-shots!"

This, I think, is the heart of the current political problem regarding taxation. *Some* people simply cannot maintain their standard of living in the face of rising taxes; but *many* people are not convinced that their tax dollars are being spent for goods and services they *want*. The preferences vary widely, as we might expect. Some citizens begrudge even a penny of their tax dollars spent by the pentagon, while others begrudge every penny spent by anyone *other* than the pentagon. And so it goes. The only agreement is that a lot of *everybody's* tax dollar is being spent on something which he thinks is unnecessary, or at least less valuable to him than would be some other expenditure — or just simply letting him keep more of the money in the first place.

There is perhaps no total solution to this problem. If even husbands and wives are known for regular and sharp disagreement on allocations of family income, how can we hope that over 200 million citizens should find accord in the dispensation of the public purse? One speculates that such domestic accord as there is in this country is due in no small measure to general ignorance of the details of public expenditures. If we knew where all that money went, there would be domestic hell to pay.

One partial solution to public disenchantment with governmental resource-allocation does recommend itself, however. That would be to give each citizen a direct say in the distribution of some part of his tax dollar. For this purpose, the national budget would probably have to be divided into two categories: *necessary* expenditures and *contingent* expenditures.

For simplicity's sake, let us suppose that in planning the budget for the next fiscal year, the government were to assume that all current expenditures are indeed necessary. We further suppose that the budget-makers propose increments in those broad categories (such as de-

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this return, including accompanying schedules and statements, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it is true, correct, and complete.

<b>Sign here</b>	Your signature	Date	Signature of preparer other than taxpayer, based on all information of which he has any knowledge.	Date
	Spouse's signature (if filing jointly, BOTH must sign even if only one had income)			Address

fense, health care, recreation areas, welfare, education, etc.) in which additional expenditures seem most useful. Then, in filling out his tax form, the taxpayer would be invited to designate one or more of these categories to which his prorated excess tax monies would be allocated. Then, if education (say) received any of the desired increase, its budget could be raised accordingly. If it did not, no increase for education would appear in the next government budget.

Modifications of this proposal are doubtless required to facilitate planning, to avoid gross surpluses in some areas while other areas go begging, and to provide for congressional designation of funds for areas where "usefulness" has become "necessity" in spite of public disinterest. And if economic growth fails to generate more tax dollars, levies would need to be raised even though the destination of the funds remained unknown. But these complications seem solvable in principle, and in any case I wish only to add a word or two about the advantages of the proposal.

First, it would give the taxpayer the justified feeling that a considerable portion of his tax dollar was being spent precisely the way he wanted it spent. This would give hawks and doves, liberals and conservatives, cranks and cosmopolitans alike a chance for some gratification when tax bills fall due. Only the miser is denied pleasure.

Second, the proposal would democratize government precisely at the point where it most matters: determining who gets what. Socially inventive programs would be encouraged, for the people would decide whether or

not they were to be funded, and to what extent. Socially unpopular programs, on the other hand, could be speedily eliminated in the "tax vote" — provided they were not so locked into "necessary expenditures" that they never came up for the tax-vote.

In sum, the proposal promises to bring key governmental decisions before the public for yearly review in a manner more graphic and telling than any vote for "middle of the road" candidates — the only electable ones — could ever do.

The second question I mentioned — that of the value to society of one's paid services — is equally complex. Since I treated the question in individual terms in these pages a year ago, let me say now only that the question needs asking especially with respect to corporate taxes. Does the corporate tax structure truly reflect the differential value of corporations to the economy, or to the society as a whole? A Harold Geneen of ITT earning in excess of a million dollars a year in salary tempts us to conclude quickly that corporate taxes need revising. The question clearly needs careful discussion, but I would argue that not every product (and hence not every company) has equal economic or social utility. Thus some should be taxed more heavily than others — analogously, perhaps, to the graduated personal income tax.

Being rendered unto Caesar is painful enough when only the fat is burnt off. But increasingly the flesh is being burned. American taxpayers deserve better of their government.

## On Second Thought

By ROBERT J. HOYER

Theology, like any other human activity, twists and squirms to escape the burden of the grace of God. It is more successful in the attempt than most other methods, because its category allows it to use the language of God and grace while escaping.

We do not want the burden of a universal judgment, that there is no moral difference between us. Theology permits us to picture a god who distinguishes between the good man and the bad man, and punishes those who disagree with us. We do not want the burden of absolute grace with no merit or worthiness in us. Theology, paying lip service to the truth, yet restricts the grace of God. We must believe the proper truths, we must confess the major sins, we must respond with proper trust before the grace can operate. More particularly, we must avoid the evils currently decried by the theologian for which, he says, there is no grace.

Against God's climactic Word of judgment and grace, Jesus Christ, theology has been most effective. Because

we could not stand that Word, we took Him out and killed Him. And theologians have ever since studied to define the act in order to reduce or avoid the guilt. They have said that God's law required the sacrifice, and we acted as agents in the necessary rite. They have said that proud people killed Him, but we and our kind profit in imputed innocence. They have said that He did not need to die, we now understand and obey His word and would never kill Him. They have even dared to do battle with one another, testing which brand of theology most successfully escapes the burden of the guilt. The success is wealth and numbers, the flocking of the crowds to those hymns and prayers which most easily leave us unchanged by grace.

The Pharisee no longer stands in the temple and prays "I thank Thee, God. . ." His stance has changed. He now stands in the classroom and the public assembly to explain with ornate theology why he is different. But the publican still stands in the shadow saying "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

# In Luce Tua II

## Guest Comment on Current Issues

### On the Politics of Pot

It is neither new nor particularly startling to note that countless millions of white, middle-class, young people in the United States use or have at one time used marihuana. Public responses to "pot smoking" vary widely from advocating severe prison sentences to offering extensive drug education programs and establishing local clinics to provide medical care for those on "bad trips." While the hard line incarceration advocates see such measures as effective in repressing drug use, the more "enlightened" recent response has been to suggest that the drug be decriminalized and treated as a community "social problem."

This latter approach is taken by the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse, whose members unanimously advocated in their final report that all criminal penalties be eliminated for the private use and personal possession of marihuana. Though the Commission in its recommendations suggested that some penalties remain for pushing and public consumption, the trend and gist of the report is clear: personal marihuana use should no longer be a concern of the agents of social control in this society. It is a "crime without a victim."

What makes all this current flurry of activity over the presence of pot in American society disheartening is that the "concern" has arisen only when its effects have been felt in the more affluent strata. For those familiar with the slums and poverty stricken black areas of our cities, the presence of pot is neither new nor uncommon. As Claude Brown noted in *Manchild in the Promised Land*, the use of marihuana was an integral part of his youthful life of the streets of Harlem in the 1940's. Yet no national commission was formed to study the impact and consequences of drugs on the community and life of the poor blacks, or better yet, study why the urban black sought the use of drugs.

It should be noted that the present Presidential Commission concerned itself solely with the issue of marihuana use and abuse. The more fundamental dilemma which remains to confront the nation revolves around the destructive force of "hard" drugs — heroin and cocaine, for example. If the past be any guide, it is doubtful that the consequences of hard drugs on the fabric of this society will be examined until such drugs begin to creep out of the confines of the ghettos and appear in suburban and affluent areas.

The "containment approach" toward hard drugs succeeds only so long as stringent patrol and supervision of the central city black communities are continued. One of the many consequences of the white com-

munity's attempt to protect itself from the ravaging effects of hard drugs has been its willingness to condone the drug exploitation of the black community.

So long as the legal consequences of marihuana use could be safely avoided by the affluent, it was acceptable to allow decisions on its regulation to be made by "experts" rather than the community which is supposedly threatened. But with the movement of marihuana into the zones of affluence, it no longer suffices to allow outside experts to dictate social policy.

In 1937 the United States Congress first passed legislation designed to eradicate the use of marihuana in this nation. The process whereby marihuana became defined as illegal was one where a particular set of values was elevated into law that carried the sanctions of the state. But the massive current disregard for the marihuana drug laws by young, affluent whites presents a fundamental political protest against the very legitimacy of those laws. A democratic political system cannot exist through the stringent use of force and fear. For the system to maintain its legitimacy, the laws that are passed must have sufficient acceptance among the citizens so that voluntary compliance follows.

If one recognizes that the vast majority of black people in this country have existed as an internal colonial people, it becomes clear why white law-makers have been able to disregard the needs of the black community. The current concern over the presence of drugs has come only when the threat emerged to the legitimacy of the power brokers within the white community. So long as the "law and order" approach was sufficient for the treatment of the drug users within the black community, whites could remain complacent. In this instance, the presence of law has not insured justice, but only the perpetuation of injustice.

Colonized blacks do not represent a threat to the system so long as they are securely confined to their ghettos. But with young whites such confinement is not possible. Thus a political response is necessary to perpetuate the current systems of power. When President Nixon established the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse in 1970, he indicated that if the Commission recommended the decriminalization of marihuana, he would reject the recommendations. But believing him to be a pragmatic man in an election year, it will be interesting to see if he keeps his word.

By RAY C. RIST  
Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Portland State University  
Portland, Oregon

# The Meaning of Liberation

## An Essay in Psychology and Politics

By CHARLES WHITMAN  
Staff Writer in Divinity and Philosophy  
Encyclopaedia Britannica  
Chicago, Illinois

*Lib-er-ate.* 1. To give liberty to; set free, especially to free (a country) from foreign control. 2. Chemistry. To release from combination, as a gas. 3. Military Slang. To obtain by looting. (Latin *liberare*, from *liber*, free.) American Heritage Dictionary.

The Dictionary of American Slang. *Liberate*: to steal. To have sexual intercourse with, or take as a mistress, a girl native to an occupied country. World War II Army use in Europe.

A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English (E. Partridge). *Liberate*. To gain illicitly or deviously; to steal: Army: 1944 (Italy) and 1945 (Germany). By humorous euphemism.

Familiar Quotations (J. Bartlett). "We sure liberated the hell out of this place." (American soldier in the ruins of a French village, 1944; quoted by Max Miller, *The Far Shore*, 1945).

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. *Free*. Syn: *liberate* implies a setting at liberty, not only of a person under restraint, but a person or thing attached in some way to another.

The New Language of Politics (W. Safire, 1968). "Liberation of captive peoples — the promise of the Republican platform of 1952 and subsequently of the Eisenhower administration that the U.S. would help the people of the countries under communist rule gain their freedom." . . . "John Foster Dulles told a Senate committee that 'liberation does not mean a war of liberation.'" (pp. 232-33)

"Obviously, the meaning of the phrase depends on who is using it. Abraham Lincoln illustrated this dilemma in 1864: 'The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty.'" (p. 478)

Henry David Thoreau in *A Plea for Captain John Brown*: "I speak for the slave when I say that I prefer the philanthropy of Captain Brown to that philanthropy which neither shoots nor liberates me." (Bartlett)

The Oxford English Dictionary amplifies *liberare*: "to deliver." (As in: he doesn't deliver on his promises . . . deliver us from. . . delivery system. . . free home delivery. . . delivery ward. . .) But what does it mean to be liberated? What has freedom to do with responsibility (response-ability)? Can anyone be "free"? How so? And from what; for what? In *A Name for Ourselves*, former SDS president (1964) Paul Potter defines the state of love in terms of being "whole and free." Perhaps

the two define each other: being free means being whole. But what does that mean?

Dictionaries differ, and "liberation" has a mixed connotation-reputation. The gamut of the topic runs from slavery to anarchy. What do liberation movements want? Many listeners doubt that they have been clearly told.



### Kate, Norman, and the Rest of Us

All was relatively quiet on the western liberation front after suffragettes garnered extended civil rights until Kate Millett published *Sexual Politics* in 1970. Betty Friedan's best-seller, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), was tame by comparison. Millett rode the talk-show circuit, was damned and praised by reviewers, and ushered women into the movement in droves. But now Gloria Steinem, editor of the new magazine *Ms.*, shares the spotlight with "Germaine Greer, the other highly visible feminist." (*Chicago Daily News*, 1/22/72) Millett's demise was in part the doing of *The Prisoner of Sex*, Norman Mailer, whose book exposes the literary and academic follies of *Sexual Politics*.

Despite his florid prose Mailer's indictment comes across with clarity and a vengeance. Focussing on Millett's use of the ellipsis and out-of-context quotation of such authors as D. H. Lawrence and Henry Miller, he shows how she distorts fiction that treats women as people into fiction that treats them as things, with male characters as the culprits. ("Do you enjoy reading Henry Miller?" was later a question on the male-chauvinist-pig test in the *Village Voice* — cf. Cudlippe, p. 180). Mailer quotes Millett in tandem with several authors to show that she has altered the facts of fiction in her quest for male chauvinism. Mailer, of course, is a self-confessed archprisoner of sex who says women should be satisfied to stay home and wash dishes. Nevertheless, he contributed to liberation of both men and women by illuminating dark rhetorical corners, by calling plays as he saw them, by making clear that pot shots aimed at imaginary enemies aren't worth firing.

With me it happened this way: at a conference of mid-west anti-war groups in Milwaukee in July 1970, I tangled with a young woman over her stress on the de-meaning nature of that corporation habit in which executives coax coffee from flunkies mistakenly titled "sec-



retaries.” (How 'bout a little coffee, eh Valerie? . . . Ah, beautiful! You're a *doll!*) We had been discussing political strategies for corporations generally when the question of women's roles came up, and I said: “I hope you have a sense of priorities such that all of your energy won't go into strategies for eliminating symptoms of oppression like bringing boss his coffee when goals like equal-pay-for-equal-work don't get enough attention as it is.”

The display of fireworks that followed was without precedent in pyrotechnical history. For the next half-hour I was berated by every woman in the room. I protested I had been misunderstood; it was a pragmatic comment, I said — not a chauvinist one. Undoubtedly, I *did* say chauvinist things after the sparks began to fly — because I was angry. Of course, I had seen it work both ways: men not comprehending women's anger, women not comprehending men's anger. But for a time I was sufficiently cowed to keep silence, and whenever Women's Liberation confronted me, I suppressed all reactions — “chauvinist” or otherwise. One episode involved a male friend's reference to certain unnamed women as “gals” in the presence of a woman. After she objected, he changed to “ladies.” But that wasn't good enough (in fact, it was worse), and the woman reneged on her intention to sign a check as a contribution for an anti-war project.

## ♀♂ The Scarlet “A” and Crimson “C”

And then I came to my senses, beginning with memories of women oppressing me, using me, exploiting me. To women who damned me on sight as a chauvinist, I recalled my own oppression at the hands of women. Sometimes my response resembled the reaction older men often voice these days: “She runs the house, dotes on the kids, spends my money, smashes the car, watches television all day, wants to be taken out for dinner when I drag myself over the threshold of the house I'm paying for, and on top of everything else wants a mink coat and a Cadillac!” Who's oppressing whom? I wondered. Wasn't the pot calling the kettle black? After all, for every cartoon of the wife ramming the rear of the garage with the family Barracuda, there's one that maligns hubby as do-it-yourself plumber, standing in three feet of water with Woman perched supremely on the upper basement stairs casting down aspersions. Both caricatures are American institutions, both portray emasculation. But I, having been intimidated by the sheep in wolf's clothing, became the sheep myself. Women now had vim, vigor, and . . . virility; feminists were behaving like “men.” Yet because I was cast in their own former role, I learned what it was like. And then, without ever having been a supermasculine machismoist wolf myself, I passed through my six-month purgatory of *mea-culpa* penitence and emerged with insight into liberation and socialized roles.

All of us in those days — days of “Heartbreak Hotel”

and “Mr. Sandman, bring me a dream/Make him the cutest that I've ever seen!” — *all* of us had been playing roles. I came to see that men and women were both oppressed (as are gays and straights); analogies to the black movement became appropriate: just as blacks won't be free until whites are, so women won't be free until men are. Naturally, there were also women who participated in the same phenomenon that whites sometimes charged to blacks: reverse racism. In other words, female chauvinism. And there were the militant feminists who agreed with Leni Wildflower: “What is most real in my life is my hatred for men — all men.” (Potter, Preface) Indeed, struggles for equality easily become struggles for supremacy.

Then, too, women developed their own counterpart to the black insistence that whites “get out” of “their” movement. (What am *I* going to “get out” of the women's movement? — *myself!*) Both Wildflower and those homosexuals who profess hatred for straights recall that soldier's “We sure liberated the hell out of this place.” To Anne Koedt's derisive “Some Male Responses” (Morgan, pp. 254-55) I preferred Cudlippe: “Out of this confusion, one fact is clear. Just as there are degrees to women's liberation, there are degrees to male chauvinism. Just as women are not sure of what women's liberation is or can be, men are just as unsure of how to combat chauvinism, which they, like women, can't define with full clarity.” (p. 184) Or, as Dana Densmore wrote, “I think we will learn more about the origins of sexism, and what role men will play in the revolution that will destroy it, by watching how men deal with our call for liberation than by setting up *a priori* categories of enemy and ally.” (Stambler, p. 47). Otherwise, women get the male backlash (and homosexuals, the straight backlash): “All women are sexists! Manhaters! And (whisper pejoratively) *lesbians!*” The name of the game becomes one-upmanship — or one-upwomanship; one plays at playing roles. The scarlet “A” worn by women, newly angry, is turned inside out to show a crimson “C” emblazoned on the breasts of men — and men too turn to anger. But anger can only be a stage in liberation, it cannot be the destination.

To escape such a spiral of charge and counter-charge, to obtain my freedom from the bondage of roles, I emerged not as a wolf in sheep's clothing — which would be an insincere effort to masquerade as a “transvestite” — but determined to “take it all off.” I hoped neither to revert to earlier roles, nor to don the symbols of a stereotyped gender, but to embrace an absence of any deliberate masculinity/femininity. For transvestitism is liberation only if genuine; but transvestitism as an attempt to assume unfelt roles in order to satisfy social demands is fraudulent crossdressing; it is transvestitism squared, multiplied by itself. Whatever it means to be liberated, I found it necessary to break down imitations of social gods, to condone sexual iconoclasm, to abolish gender-distinguished roles. To seek instead to encounter persons. And, a la Mailer, to expose contorted arguments.

Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation intersect psychologically and politically; the lesbian personifies the intersection. Viewing them together highlights the central issue: sexism, or the reduction of persons to sexual aspects. Michael Durham declares: "To keep their liberation movement going, militants must present homosexuality as a normal, healthy, even desirable form of sexual outlet." (That is not true; laws are supposed to protect minorities whether or not their sexual outlets are "normal," and Gay Liberation need present itself only as an organization of people, of citizens, to keep going.) But Durham continues, "Yet there is endless dispute among doctors whether this point of view is sound." Here he is right — but what is the nature of the dispute?

One of these doctors, Evelyn Hooker, wrote a paper in 1956 called "The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual" that, according to Durham, "made her a folk hero to the liberation movement." In 1971 Arno Karlen's *Sexuality and Homosexuality: A New View* was published in a jacket touting it as "The definitive explanation of human sexuality, normal and abnormal." This blurb, together with the book's bulk (650 pages) and an excellent annotated bibliography, make it a formidable work. More significantly, Karlen's disagreement with Hooker is in the crucial area of psychological health, the fulcrum of Gay Liberation. Though such homophile causes as military service and employment security have been on the agenda for decades, the introduction of psychological health into the debate renders Gay Lib, unlike Women's Lib, a movement without precedent.

In his chapter "Cure or Illusion" (see footnote), Karlen writes of Hooker: "She suggested that homosexuality as a clinical entity does not exist. . ." But Hooker actually wrote: "What are the psychological implications of the hypothesis that homosexuality is not necessarily a symptom of pathology? I would *very tentatively* suggest the following: 1. Homosexuality as a clinical entity does not exist. Its forms are as varied as are those of heterosexuality." (p. 160) Karlen not only fails to italicize "very tentatively" but omits the phrase entirely, thus making her conclusions appear more final than she intended them to be.

What's more, she also wrote: "It comes as no surprise that some homosexuals are severely disturbed, and, indeed, so much so that the hypothesis might be entertained that the homosexuality is the defense against open psychosis." (p. 159) Now measure Karlen's passage, quoted in the footnote to this essay, against Hooker's words, continuing from "psychosis":

But what is difficult to accept (for most clinicians) is that some homosexuals may be very ordinary individuals, indistinguishable, except in sexual pattern, from ordinary individuals who are heterosexuals. Or — and I do not know whether this would be more or

less difficult to accept — that some *may* be quite superior individuals, not only devoid of pathology (unless one insists that homosexuality itself is a sign of pathology) but also functioning at a superior level.

But before we accept this hypothesis as a plausible one, we must look carefully at the limitations of the evidence. (p. 159)

Here Karlen fails to italicize her words "may"; he doesn't include "may be" in his quotation when he could have done so easily; he omits her sentence about "hypothesis." In short, he excludes *all* of her references to the provisional nature of her findings. For what reason might he have exaggerated Hooker's rigidity as a theorist, if not to set up a straw man (woman)? Could he be trying to denigrate the "folk hero"? Ironically, her own words make her less fitting a folk hero than Karlen's distortion. To a lesser degree, he also distorts Martin Hoffman's *The Gay World* by way of paraphrase; his deception is conceivably habitual and possibly deliberate. But with regard to Hooker, he has clearly taken exception to things she never said, and one cannot help wondering why he has put words in her mouth — or taken them out — especially when his own conclusions are as tentative as hers were fifteen years earlier.

Karlen does write: "It is equally indefensible for psychiatrists to argue that, despite every evidence of general adjustment, a homosexual is sick." But this seems to be merely a facile concession designed to balance his view of the Freudian dictum (see footnote); indeed, it contrasts sharply with his attitude toward Hooker. If we ask *why* this might be "indefensible," we will be easily drawn by his phrase "general adjustment" into answering precisely in terms of that Freudian dictum about "the ability to love and to work." And why *not*, Gay Liberation will inquire, take that dictum "literally"? Why *not* say that until a person is "subjected to certain stresses," he is healthy? Why count him (or her) among the "sickest," who "never go for treatment"? It is not, Gay Liberation will contend, the idea of psychological health that is nebulous, but the presentations by such careless authors as Karlen that are nebulous. Karlen appears to want it both ways, calling the idea of psychological health "nebulous" in order to call even the well-adjusted "some of the sickest." The response of Gay Liberation generally is not only to say "you can't have it both ways," but also, as Durham writes, to be "wary of psychiatry" altogether. "A whole segment of the liberation movement," he says, "argues that homosexuals' main goals should be ridding themselves of guilt and self-disdain." Life itself, then, provides a working definition of psychological health very similar to Freud's dictum.

Karlen's book is at best a definitive *survey* of various "explanations" that shows how little can be concluded definitively about either sexuality or homosexuality. Essentially, it confirms the gist of Hooker's research. Though neither Karlen nor Hooker "conclude" anything with finality, her tentative hypothesis is one he might accept: "That homosexuality is determined by a

multiplicity of factors would not now, I think, be seriously questioned. That the personality structure and adjustment may also vary within a wide range now seems quite clear." That was in 1956; Karlen's work shows how little has changed. Nowhere has Hooker's view seemed more plausible to me than at several meetings of a Gay Liberation-sponsored "Consciousness Group on Bisexuality" that I visited in the winter of 1972. That nothing definitive could be said — or was said there — either about etiology or about life styles — would be an understatement; very little can be said *at all*.

Whether social attitudes against homosexuality feed psychiatric oppression or vice-versa is a chicken-and-egg question. But Gay Liberation, regardless of faction, opposes *both* social proscription *and* psychiatric paternalism. Like women who object to put-downs by certain psychologists (see Dr. Naomi Weisstein's criticism of Dr. Bruno Bettelheim in "Kinde, Kuche, Kirche"; Morgan, p. 206ff.), homosexuals are resisting classifications and derogations that overstep the bounds of Hooker's wide-ranging hypothesis. The issue of psychological health has come to resemble the question of addiction to marijuana. Despite fervent disputes over "physiological dependency" and addiction, life itself provides the working definitions: there are millions of pot-smokers, and we have heard nothing to make us believe otherwise than that the vast majority are alive and well — and liberated. The same liberation — from an equally complex and befuddled debate, and from the notions of "experts" whether professionals or laymen — is a major goal of Gay Liberation.

## Psychology, Politics, and Mutualist Anarchy

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. Among other things, a time for psychology and a time for politics. And a time for both.

In an essay reprinted in Irving Horowitz' *The Anarchists*, British critic and historian Sir Herbert Read expounded his concept of "mutualist anarchy." Anarchy need not imply uncertainty and disorder; according to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, Pierre Proudhon (1809-65), "Father of Anarchism, advocated a social organization based on common ownership and free agreements." That comes close to the spirit of Sir Herbert's essay and to total liberation. Mutualist anarchy means involvement, mutuality, exchange, engagement. It expresses essentially what it means to be *engage* in an existentialist framework. It means Hegelian thesis/antithesis/synthesis. It means mutual respect for others' positions — but also mutual criticism, and thence mutual resolution. It means not only picking up someone who's down, nor knocking down someone who's up, but both. As I said to a friend, I want you to love me and I want you to fight me — then we'll both be free. (Braver Lutherans may even see seeds of a Law and Gospel dialectic here.) By means of interaction, escalating toward

the truth at fever pitch, mutual anarchists can arrive at free agreements. Thus mutualist anarchy is both a method and a model that organizes the meaning of liberation.

The essential meaning of freedom is the freedom to determine what freedom means. That is no more tautologous than "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." This basic meaning is one we begin with, one we take for granted in order to proceed with other questions. We begin amid a preexisting climate of mutualist anarchy. Liberation movements — whatever else they may say — seek to determine what freedom means. At times, of course, this includes determining the prior freedom — for political and psychological impediments are often imposed. But primarily they are at work defining themselves (thesis), producing reactions from the larger society to their proposals for program and policy (antithesis), and awaiting the resolution (synthesis). Mutualist anarchy is "live and let live" — but not in isolation, not in insularity, not in benign neglect; instead in intentional tension. It is an antidote to *laissez-faire* individualism.

The interaction of liberation movements with the larger society means engagement in three specific realms: between psychology and politics; between persons "liberated" and otherwise; and between persons and institutions.

When the assumption is made in advance that psychology and politics do not touch, they can never be integrated. Yet liberation from others is the opposite side of liberation from self; merely flip the coin. Roles are extrinsic/intrinsic. Every cameo has its intaglio. Bruno Bettelheim shows what psychology can do when it does not recognize politics as legitimate, in his *Realities* article "Redundant Youth" (12/70). He refers to Marshall Bloom, founder of Liberation News Service, who committed suicide at 25 in 1969:

Being a moral person he assiduously searched for what was wrong; and when he found it in himself, he drew tragically the ultimate conclusion. It need not have been so. If he had not been supported by his friends and public spokesmen who preach violence, who do not see that personal unhappiness causes student revolt, he might have sought help, and with it brought inner peace to his soul.

Such psychological reductionism ("personal unhappiness causes student revolt") does not permit politics a place; social evil does not exist; no other cause for protest exists except psychopathology. Peter Fisher, a homosexual, criticizes similar attitudes in *The Gay Mystique*.

At the other end, an opposing prejudice says politics is supreme; some (not all) Weathermen exemplify it. One need only change "the system," "the power structure," "the ruling elite," and need pay no attention to social attitudes that manifest psychological predispositions, or to one's own self-image, or to liberation from psychiatric oppression. Liberation movements are at their best when they have a heightened awareness of the interplay between psychological and political factors.

But when external life is severed from internal life, growth and freedom are stunted. One friend wrote me last year: "the intensity of overt political activity erodes the spirit and keeps people apart." He continued: "Don't you think that every male-defined institution . . . begins to erode us psychologically in very similar ways as it does women? I have been thinking very much of my entire past, everything that has molded me towards power and functional-mindedness, away from love and feeling." That is a persuasive statement. Yet "the emotional deadliness" of male-defined institutions need not mean avoiding political encounters. That was the central activist dilemma during the sixties; the difficulty lies in translating "love and feeling" (psychology) into "power" (politics). Yet the need for doing so remains.

The tendency of movements to become introverted means that internal criticism is usually displaced on external scapegoats, subsequently ostracized. Lack of acute self-criticism becomes hypercritical political activity. On the platform, rhetoric overwhelms sensibility. Thus I function less well with Women's Liberation in its more virulent strains than with liberated women of any faction: a liberated woman (or man) can say in private what dare not be said in public if the aggressive image of the movement is to be maintained: "I'm sorry" — for some unreasonable or oppressive demand. Public threats "for effect" or for "image-making" are exercises in exaggeration. "We have 53% of the population," Betty Friedan said in 1970; "we have the power to make changes. If we don't change institutions, the rage of women is going to be destructive." Yet a New York *Times* column (8/23/70) entitled "Women Surveyed on Equality" carried the subhead, "Most Feel They're Treated as Fairly as Men Are."

Friedan refers to "power" and "institutions." But that "power" does not exist; the women's movement is in the paradoxical position of trying to appear both as a majority (politically) and as a minority (psychologically). "Power" also raises the subtle distinction between enemy and ally that Densmore discusses. Much feminist rhetoric, like Friedan's 53%, obscures the possibility of men as allies, and overlooks the on-going process of their own liberation as persons. Thus movements do well to make the distinction Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton made in *Black Power* between personal and institutional racism (read: sexism). Men who become allied to Women's Liberation (and straights who abet Gay Liberation) will be liberated as persons long before institutions, as Friedan puts it, are "changed."

In childhood, for every pink bedroom there has been a blue one. In adolescence, for every female acnephobe there has been a male pimple pincher; the cosmetics industry has gouged us all. It is a matter of learned

roles. And men who begin to perceive their own "imprinting," the "stamping" on them of sex-defined social roles that oppress not only others but themselves as well, will begin to perceive simultaneously the same role-playing wherever it occurs — in men or in women. *Chauvinisme*, a la Nicolas Chauvin's maniacal devotion to Napoleonic service, will be resisted across the board. Liberated men will reject the chauvinism of women; liberated straights will reject the chauvinism of homosexuals. Symbols will yield to substance. Female protests against the utterance of "gal" will become dull and dated — unless the protesters prefer to hang the word like an albatross around the necks of men, who will then cry "female-chauvinist-pig" at all women who call them "guys."

## ♂♀ Getting Back Together

It is, as Robert Houriet titled his recent study of communes, a matter of *Getting Back Together*. Or, as in Schiller/Beethoven: "Alle Menschen werden Bruder." Or, in place of the "straight and narrow path," there will be no longer any mountain path to social acceptability, any *rite de passage*, but instead "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;/ The uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain." (Is. 40:4) Liberation means "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound." (Is. 61:1) Despite its "let us reason together," Isaiah knows war; Dulles to the contrary, liberation is always a war, always a struggle. As Isaiah knows, idolatry is bondage; and social roles are the idols. From roles to libelous labels, stereotypes slander the humanity of persons. But "He who is bowed down shall speedily be released." (Is. 51:14).

Yet this war of liberation of captive peoples is not a matter of wielding an impolitic sword. Rather, it requires the heightened anarchy of mutual encounter, all the way through to resolution. That includes confrontation between Millett and Mailer, Karlen and Hooker; distortion has no place in the making of free agreements. The synthesis won't be all that the thesis wants it to be, nor all that the antithesis hoped to preserve. But having no shepherd to mediate between the wolf and the sheep, we must rely on mutualist anarchy to keep us from each other's throats as we bait and rebait, buff and rebuff. Everyone needs to call the plays as he sees them, to be willing to be called on his call, to respond to the call to define, refine, and align, but not to submit.

As a member of the Brotherhood of the Spirit commune in Warwick, Massachusetts said to an initiate in 1970 (Houriet, p. 353), "I'm not asking you to give up your identity, just be more open and grow." In that remark, somewhere, is the elusive meaning of liberation.

(See next page for Footnote and Related Readings)

FOOTNOTE

Karlen's passage reads:

"Hooker concluded that homosexuals may be 'very ordinary individuals, indistinguishable, except in sexual pattern, from ordinary individuals who are heterosexual. Or . . . that some may be quite superior individuals, not only devoid of pathology (unless one insists that homosexuality itself is a sign of pathology) but also functioning at a superior level.' She suggested that homosexuality as a clinical entity does not exist; its forms may be as varied as those of heterosexuality, and compatible with good adjustment in the rest of life. (pp. 593-94)

"The idea of psychological health (or maturity or any of a dozen other such terms) is nebulous. Freud's dictum that health is the ability to love and to work contains a solid kernel of truth, but it cannot be used literally. Some very paranoid people enter highly competitive professions and, because of their very disorder, become worldly successes. Many people go through life deeply neurotic or even on the edge of psychosis, yet hold jobs, maintain a family life and never become 'mental patients' -- at least as long as they are not subjected to certain stresses. Hooker and others are unjustified in arguing that psychiatrists see only the sick homosexuals, for some of the sickest never go for treatment." (pp. 595-96)

In the last sentence, the parts separated by the comma have no logical connection. It might sensibly be altered to read: "Hooker and others are unjustified in arguing that psychiatrists see only the sick homosexuals, for they also see the healthy ones." But that's ridiculous. By writing "see the only sick homosexuals" instead of "see only the sick homosexuals," Karlen could easily support a different case: that Hooker would be mistaken in saying psychiatrists see the only sick homosexuals -- after all, there are many millions in America who are homosexual; how could she see all of the "sick" ones? But that too is ridiculous; Hooker never makes such a claim.

By elimination, the only point Karlen can seem to be trying to make is this: that Hooker says that there are a lot of well-adjusted homosexuals out there who don't come for treatment, but she's wrong. And why? Because "some of the sickest never go for treatment." The logic of Karlen's proposition is appalling: to show that none of those who don't go for treatment are well, he asserts some are sick.

RELATED READINGS

- Cudlippe, Edythe. *Understanding Women's Liberation*. Paperback Library, N.Y., 1971.
- Durham, Michael. "Homosexuals in Revolt: The Year that One Liberation Movement Turned Militant," *Life*, December 31, 1971.
- Fisher, Peter. *The Gay Mystique*. Stein and Day, N.Y., 1972.
- Hooker, Evelyn. "The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual," *The Problem of Homosexuality in Modern Society* (ed. Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek). E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., N.Y., 1963 (paper).
- Horowitz, Irving L. (ed.) *The Anarchists*. Dell Books, N.Y., 1964 (paper).
- Houriet, Robert. *Getting Back Together*. Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, N.Y., 1971.
- Karlen, Arno. *Sexuality and Homosexuality: A New View*. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., N.Y., 1971.
- Morgan, Robin (ed.) *Sisterhood Is Powerful*. Vintage Books, Random House, N.Y., 1970 (paper).
- Potter, Paul. *A Name for Ourselves: Feelings About Authentic Identity, Love, Intuitive Politics*. Us. Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1971.
- Stambler, Sookie. *Women's Liberation: Blueprint for the Future*. Ace Books, N.Y., 1970 (paper).
- Ware, Celestine. *Woman Power: The Movement for Women's Liberation*. Tower Publications, Inc., N.Y., 1970 (paper)

# Greek and Medieval Religious Drama: A Paradox

By CLAIRE A. HARDGROVE  
*Assistant Professor of Speech and Drama*  
*Valparaiso University*  
*Valparaiso, Indiana*

One similarity between Greek and medieval drama — both are closely bound up with religion — points to a dissimilarity. The great religious drama in Greece completely disintegrated and left little in its place. On the other hand, when the medieval religious drama ceased, it was followed by the rise of Elizabethan drama which, ironically enough, rivalled the Greek religious drama in grandeur and scope.

No doubt there are many reasons for this dissimilarity, but one of the most interesting can be found in the material of the drama itself and its relation to the political structure of the day. Both the drama of the Greeks and the drama of the Middle Ages had their foundations not only in a popular religion but in a governmental structure which gave it protection. However, when the Athenian polis and its religion fell, the drama declined. When the English feudal system and the Roman Church lost its hold in England the drama flourished.

The Greek polis was built on political and religious foundations forming a taut community of almost tribal exclusiveness and bears little resemblance to Tudor or even Plantagenet England. The Athenian polis was more than a group of citizens united for protection. She was governed and protected by a specific set of gods.

Patriotism found expression in religion — particularly in the religion of the great dramatic festival of Dionysus. It is not surprising that the average man in Athens

was pious and would not allow criticism of the gods who gave Athens its empire and on whose behalf such splendid festivals were celebrated. On the other hand, as Martin Nilssen says, ". . . patriotism in that age could find expression only in religion; but it robbed religion of its power and indwelling value; it became a apantage of patriotism and the individual's piety had but a narrowly restricted place in this collective and patriotic worship."<sup>1</sup> Respect for the gods, pride of the conqueror, and delight in the cultural achievements of the city ran high in the Athenian heart. They mingled in the worship at each of the yearly festivals and in some of the finest drama the world has known.

The medieval Englishman lived in a tiny community, often much smaller than the smallest Greek polis. But the English community, as close as its internal ties might be, was not an entity unto itself. The medieval man's over-lord was an under-lord to some duke or king. He owed his allegiance to his lord and, as the ties of the monarchy became stronger under Henry II, to his king as well. But this was not his only allegiance. He owed his allegiance to that over-lord of his religion, the pope, who held court far away from the tiny English village or the towns of Chester or Wakefield or even London. He was a member of St. Swithin's parish, for example, but the intellectual and religious community to which St. Swithin's belonged had its center a thousand miles

away. As England grew more nationalistic, the feudal system weakened and collapsed. The scholastic theology which had given the medieval religion its structure came into disrepute with the humanists. It was no very difficult thing when feudal ties had been broken to break one more tie with the continent — the religious tie.

In the Athenian polis each citizen lived close to the Acropolis. This proximity kept each Athenian trained in self-government and close to the cultural and religious center of his world. It gave him the opportunity to participate directly in the religious and political life of his own day. If he were wealthy he might be chosen archon for a play; if he were not, at the very least he might be in the theater for the awarding of the prize or see Sophocles in his office of priest offer sacrifice.

On the other hand, the English country farmer or town burgher was far away from the center of learning. Even if he had lived on the doorstep of a monastery, the undemocratic political structure of his society and the convolutions of the philosophical theology of the Schoolmen would have militated against his real participation in the system either politically or religiously.

The Greek drama, based on the worship of a Cretan deity and still redolent of the Egyptian passion plays of the god Osiris and his sister-wife Isis, grew up from the necessity to offer sacrifice to the gods. This ritual moved from formalized worship into mimesis and finally into the structured drama of the Golden Age of Athens.

The Christian religious drama also participated in the sacrificial or prayer spirit but grew out of the highly organized monastic system rather than folk worship. The early *Quem Quaeritis* involved a barely discernible mimesis which was the simple acting out of the miracle on the day of liturgical celebration.

The Greek priest who took upon himself the character of Dionysus and the medieval cleric who took upon himself the character of Mary Magdalene or an angel followed similar paths in producing their religious drama. As their drama developed, however, differences became apparent. The Greek drama, even in its highest development in the Periclean Age, still held to the purpose of its inception: the worship of the gods. The medieval drama, as it expanded in content and form, flung off its initial importance as a part of the liturgical celebration and became a palatable means by which the uneducated could be schooled in the Bible stories and theological concepts.

The Greeks did not use their drama for theological explication. The simple theology was based in the community, and "its component parts; state, clan and family" were developed, as Edith Hamilton says, not by priests ". . . but by poets, artists and philosophers."<sup>2</sup> Homer was the Bible of the Greeks, and it had "the same power over the Hellenes that the Bible had when no one thought of doubting it."<sup>3</sup> Every school boy had heard or read Homer. He needed no special explanation. The medieval Bible, the Latin Vulgate, had to be

clarified for the English villager.

It is these facts which undoubtedly contributed to a different handling of religious stories and myths in Greece and England. The first was a democratic governmental form, the other was authoritarian. The Greeks used their plays as worship as well as to teach. The medieval plays tended to be solely didactic.

Now for some of the stories themselves. A good example is the transformation of the meaning of the Agamemnon story from Aeschylus' *Oresteia* to Sophocles' *Electra*. The myth is concerned with Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, who is sacrificed to the goddess Artemis before the battle of Troy. The winds fail when the Argives are on the island of Aulis, and Artemis demands the sacrifice of the young Argive princess before she will allow the merciful winds to carry the ships from the island.

In Aeschylus we find the goddess is a merciful deity doing all in her power to avert the terrible war. In Sophocles she is a despot who punishes grandly for small offenses. In the *Oresteia* the Argives are stranded on the island without wind to carry them to Troy. Artemis gives Agamemnon two choices: he can return to Argos and forget the war or he can sacrifice his young daughter and move on Troy with Artemis' unwilling assistance. When he chooses sacrifice it is his will over the will of the goddess and he must pay the penalty for it. When he returns he is murdered by his wife Clytemnestra, who can be seen as the instrument of the god destined to bring divine vengeance on the murderer of her child. Aeschylus' play is god-centered. He is concerned with the will of the gods and the divine retribution for hubris.

### The World of Man and God as a Stage

Sophocles' *Electra* written thirty years later changes the story a great deal. In *Electra* Agamemnon has no choice. He is stranded on the island. There will be no wind to carry him to Troy or return him to Argos. Unwittingly he has killed one of the deer dedicated to the goddess, and the sacrifice of Iphigenia is an atonement for the deed. Like Oedipus, he is not morally responsible for his action. But he will be punished none the less. When Clytemnestra kills him, then, she is not acting as a hand of the gods but an angry mother and, more than that, a wanton in love with her paramour. The point of emphasis in these two plays has shifted from the divine to the human and it will shift even more in Euripides when the stress is social criticism. The myth, as we have seen, is the same but the dramatists' interpretations are different.

In the medieval drama changes in the Biblical stories were impossible, although the stories could be supplemented with other dramatic or comic materials. Let us examine in a cursory way two plays dealing with the Ark — one from Wakefield and one from Chester. In both plays the characters are: God, Noah, Noah's wife

and, very much in the background, Noah's sons and their wives. The main events of the play are exactly the same. Noah is ordered to build the Ark; he does so with the help of his family; they board the Ark; the deluge ensues. When he finally sends out the dove and finds dry land Noah offers sacrifice (Chester) or thanks God for his deliverance (Wakefield).

In Chester the play begins and ends with speeches by God, the first concerning the reasons for the deluge, the second concerning the promise never to destroy the world by flood again. In the Wakefield play the first and last speaker is Noah who makes for God many of the complaints God had made in the former play. At the end Noah speaks a prayer of thanksgiving for deliverance.<sup>4</sup> It is obvious, of course, that Mrs. Noah's lamentable wifeliness is not part of the Bible story but was added simply to excite the interest of the unsophisticated audience. The rest of the play is very much the story of *Genesis*.

The tendency to leave the Bible story intact was followed throughout the Middle Ages. Even the delightful "Second Shepherd's Play" does not tamper with the birth story of Christ. It merely sets the stage for its

serenity with the rollicking Mak plot. "The Sacrifice of Isaac" in the Brome manuscript, though it has many emotional moments, still carefully follows the Bible story and is closely akin, as Joseph Adams says, to the "Abraham and Isaac" of the Chester cycle.<sup>5</sup>

The verb commonly used to describe the later course of religious drama in England and Greece is decline. As a matter of fact the verb is correct only in the latter instance. The religious drama of medieval England did not decline; it merely, for all practical purposes, ceased to exist.

The Protestant Reformation in England eventually created a state church, strengthening English internal political ties without a loss of religious belief. Though Henry VIII tried to hold to most of the old traditions, separating himself only from papal authority, two of his children, Elizabeth and Edward, became militantly Protestant. Orders went out during both of their reigns forbidding performances of mystery plays on the grounds that they taught popish dogma. The last mystery cycle at Chester, a town which held out stoutly for continuation, was played in 1600. The York plays were suppressed long before in the year 1549, though they were pro-

## See - i n g

---

### *Letters from an Old*

Next September, if this monthly column resumes for a fourth year, there is going to be a change in the non-existent dateline from Charlottesville to Boston. (And maybe also — environment being a potent influence on a person's thinking — a change in point of view from easy-going small-town Southern conservative to the flinty moral earnestness of a New England radic-lib.)

Whatever happens, two organizations are at the root of it all, my own University of Virginia and the American Council of Learned Societies, which have come up with enough money for me to put aside teaching and deaning for a year in order to work on an edition of the letters of the historian Henry Adams.

Further accomplices are the Harvard University Press and the Massachusetts Historical Society. They have managed to get as editor-in-chief of the Adams letters Professor Ernest Samuels of Northwestern University, who has already written a three-volume Pulitzer Prize biography of Adams. He in turn has decided he needs an associate editor, and after some thoughtful consideration extending over perhaps a half second I decided to take him up on his offer for this post.

We have proceeded as far as some preliminary calculations — meaning impressively-phrased hunches and intuitions — and have told the Harvard Press that something like six or seven large volumes will be needed to

accommodate over 4000 letters. Now the Harvard Press at last reports was using more red ink than black, and in my mind's eye I see a good number of *Cresset* readers nodding understandingly and wondering, "Who is this Adams, and why would anybody want to buy and read 4000 of his letters?"

Consider. Henry Adams came to manhood as the Civil War was ready to break out, and he died just a few months before the World War I armistice. Much was going on in the United States in this era, even besides those two numbing wars: a botched Reconstruction, the virtually hysterical business expansion of the Gilded Age, the settling of the West and the end of the frontier and the Indian, the McKinley-Roosevelt experiments with imperialism. Adams took time to watch all this very closely from the sidelines; being a wealthy man of leisure, he never had to hold a job of any kind in business or professional life and was never offered one in government.

He was essentially a philosophical historian, and he gave us what is still the best account we have of the Jefferson-Madison era. Probably his most admired book is a highly personal view of medieval French architecture and theology, *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*. His most important book, *The Education of Henry Adams* (1918), is called by its publisher "quite simply

duced in a sort of underground as late as 1569.

The religious war in England deeply affected English drama. To understand the effects one must keep in mind that the belief in God remained constant, the religious war merely separated England from the rest of the continent, and the morality play was raised to ascendancy because it could be used by both Protestants and Catholics to teach morality or as an instrument of propaganda. When the morality play came into its own the drama was only a step away from the Elizabethan theater. In the morality play God was not forgotten, but the emphasis was not so much on God's communication with man but man's communication with God. This is the same sort of emphasis one finds later in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama.

The "decline" of religion in Athens was indeed a decline. Edith Hamilton in her essay, "Athens' Failure," comments on Plato's teaching that "the best laws were mere forms unless the people obeyed the laws of God within them."<sup>7</sup> The Athenians neglected this deeper obedience. Their fate came not from without but from within — from a pride that was close to hubris. No longer was Athens the darling of the gods, but a god

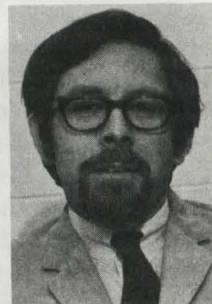
herself. When she attained that peak of pride she declined into self-seeking,<sup>8</sup> and the Greek stage was not fed like the burgeoning English stage with new ideas and an abiding faith in God.

The paradox is unmistakable. The Greek mind, freer and deeper than the medieval mind, found itself floundering once it had flung off the gentle strictures of religious belief. The Elizabethan mind, though it had rejected one of the most elaborate and comprehensive bodies of theological thought the world has known, gave imagination free play against a background of belief. Though we have always thought of the Greeks as the most serene of people, the Elizabethans, more than the Greeks, seemed able to find a middle path. For the Elizabethan the world of man and God was a stage.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Martin Persson Nilssen, *Greek Piety* (Tr. Ross, Oxford, 1948), p. 66.
2. Edith Hamilton, *The Great Age of Greek Literature*, (New York, 1932), p. 285.
3. Nilssen, p. 2.
4. Joseph Q. Adams, *Chief Pre-Shakespearian Drama*, (Cambridge, 1924), pp. 150-158.
5. Adams, p. 117.
6. Edward Eyre, (ed.), *European Civilization*, (Oxford, 1936), p. 354.
7. Edith Hamilton, *The Echo of Greece*, (New York, 1957).
8. Nilssen, p. 65.

By CHARLES VANDERSEE



## ch Worth Knowing

the greatest autobiography in American letters," and I think this is right.

That book is an account not only of his life but of an obsolete dynasty and of the failure of the nation's ideals. Henry Adams was the fourth generation of a political dynasty that included Presidents John and John Quincy Adams, his great-grandfather and grandfather. The ideals were those of a New World nation that hoped to avoid Old World duplicity, chicanery, tyranny, and superstition, and permanently establish a society of honesty, democracy, statesmanship, and common sense. Even Henry's dour great-grandfather, with all his skepticism based on the corruption of human nature, had believed the American system would be something new and quite wonderful.

In some ways it was, of course, and is. But to Henry Adams the historian and observer, what transpired in America between 1800 and 1900 was essentially a disillusioning story. And as for the future (our own times), Adams, who had some rather accurate insights into the problems of a technological society, thought things looked rather gloomy as well.

His books and articles tell only part of what he was thinking — the part he was willing to put before the public. For the rest we have to go to his letters. Some of these have already been published, in expurgated

and selective chunks, and in them we find how utterly exasperating an individual Adams was. If burgeoning America was bizarre, so was this cranky little man who had the gall to throw up a brick mansion directly across the park from the White House where he could keep his eyes on all the Presidents who one by one failed to reach his ancestors' stature — as he knew they would.

Scholar, social butterfly (he also kept a flat in Paris), professional pessimist, and political cynic — this was Henry Adams. He also traveled incessantly, commissioned the finest creation by America's greatest sculptor, wrote the memoirs of the Queen of Tahiti, and courted platonically a much younger married woman for thirty years.

He is, in short, a full education in himself. Anyone trying to understand him needs to learn a great deal about history, politics, science, and human nature. Part of the reward is a great deal of quiet entertainment, because he had a way with words and a delightfully perverse sense of humor.

All of which is to say that while working intensively with him over the next year I will probably be unable to resist a few reports along the way. And if you want to enter a standing order for the final product you can probably start setting aside \$20 per volume and count on delivery commencing about 1977.



## Continuity with Christ

By JAROSLAV PELIKAN  
Sterling Professor of Religious Studies  
Yale University  
New Haven, Connecticut

The entire Christian church, with all its institutions and doctrines, is involved today in a deep crisis of continuity. Ideas and practices cherished for many centuries are being challenged or discarded, but more far-reaching and more paralyzing than any such individual challenge is the numbing sense that the very continuance of the Christian faith may itself be in jeopardy. As a historian of Christian doctrine, I am, of course, concerned professionally as well as personally with the nature of continuity in the church, and hence with the crisis of continuity today.

The story of the confrontation between our Lord and Peter at Caesarea Philippi in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew sets forth several answers to the crisis of continuity, answers that have also figured prominently in the search for continuity throughout Christian history. There is, first of all, the continuity of doctrine in the confessional tradition: "Now when Jesus came in the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do men say that the Son of man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

In one form or another this confession has been declared to the church and to the world by Christian believers in every generation. Each of the terms in it has been the subject of careful philological analysis and philosophical explanation, each of them has found its way into some part of the creedal formulas of the church. Whatever else it may mean to be a Christian, it ought to mean some reaffirmation of this confession. For Luther, therefore, this was the central point of this story. Peter speaks here for the entire orthodox Christian community, identifying the Jesus of life, death, and resurrection as the Chosen One of God and as the Son of God. It is some distance, but not an unbridgeable distance, from Caesarea Philippi to the Councils of Nicaea and of Chalcedon; and in the repeated affirmation of the confession of Peter, together with that of the 318 fathers of Nicaea, much of orthodox Christianity has found the guarantee of what Eusebius, the first church historian, called "the successions of the holy apostles."

Yet Eusebius's very use of that phrase calls to mind another guarantee of continuity set forth in this text, and the one that is the most celebrated: "And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter,

and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell [powers of death] shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ."

Inscribed in unforgettably glorious letters around the dome of St. Peter's, chanted by obsequious bishops, and expounded in endless detail by papal theologians, the words of Christ to Peter form the charter for a theology of continuity that finds it in the succession of the church's institutional structures from the apostles to the present. Whether this succession be thought of episcopally or papally or even congregationally, it does mean that we are to look to the institutions of the church for the assurance that there will always be a Christianity and that the Christianity we now have is indeed one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. The Papacy is, after all, the oldest monarchy whose persistence can be documented historically; the church is the oldest continuing cultural force in the Western world; and the gates of hell, from Nero to Stalin, have failed to destroy its continuity. It is a source of reassurance just to know that it is still there.

Or is it? The dome of St. Peter's, big as it is, does not seem to have had room for the whole story of Caesarea Philippi. After the confession of Peter and the promise of Christ comes the portentous paragraph: "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, 'God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you. But he turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men.'"

"On *this* rock I will build *my* church"? Some church! Some rock! The orthodox creed just affirmed has suddenly become a sign of apostasy and of discontinuity. For Peter says that Christ is *Kyrios* and says "God forbid" to the message of the cross. Not everyone who calls him "Lord, Lord" will enter into the kingdom. The affirmation of who he is, which is the central content of the creed, becomes a hindrance unless it includes the affirmation of what he came to do: "go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Thus it has been that for entire ages of the history of the church her confession, orthodox enough in its formulas, has been a "hindrance" to Christ and to contin-

uity with him, being not on the side of God but of men, so that the bold confessor of Christ becomes Antichrist.

But the continuity that is rooted in the structures of the church is no greater a source of reassurance. Leaving out all the historical debates since the promulgation of papal infallibility in 1870, the history of the institutional church of every denomination is anything but an unbroken succession of faithfulness to Christ and to his gospel. It is a tragic series of moral and religious defeats, of capitulation to the world without and to the tempter within. More often than any of us would like to acknowledge, the rock on which Christ has been obliged to build his church has been the Peter of "God forbid, Lord!" rather than the Peter of "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." If this is to be the church's continuity with Christ, we had better fasten our safety belts.

But the story does not end there. Peter's confession of the doctrine of the person of Christ is followed by Peter's heresy on the doctrine of the work of Christ, but both of these are followed in turn by the charter of continuity with Christ: "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?'"

This summons to self-denial and invitation to discipleship are the abiding element amid what the Book of Common Prayer calls "the changes and chances of this present life." Even those church fathers and modern theologians whose speculations constituted a threat to the confession of the orthodox faith managed somehow to hear the summons and to heed the invitation. Origen, the greatest genius of the ancient church, might have had difficulty being recognized as orthodox even by the standards of American Protestantism, but his life and spirituality were consecrated to taking up the cross and following his Lord. Adolf von Harnack, the greatest theological scholar of his time, could not even be ordained; but his persistent question was, "How do I manage to become his disciple?" And that same Harnack saw, in his famous lectures on *What Is Christianity?*, that the constant force in Christian history, across theo-

logical conflicts and denominational rivalries, has been the call of Christ to discipleship. It still is.

Yet the greatest danger is to sentimentalize the call to discipleship or to equate its content either with the Boy Scout law or with some particular scheme for social reform. At this moment, here and now, it is not only proper but necessary for Christians, in their discipleship, to develop patterns of personal morality and strategies for social justice; even American Lutheranism has finally discovered this. But the continuity of the faith does not lie there. Finally, when discipleship has been probed to its depths, we must ask not only Harnack's question, "How do I manage to become his disciple?" but his other question as well: "Is the Divine that has appeared on earth and reunited men with God identical with that Divine which rules heaven and earth, or is it a demigod?" And when we have answered that question in faithfulness to our vocation as disciples, the answer will surely come close to Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi — and, I would, add to the confession of the 318 fathers at Nicaea.

Nor is it enough to let such a confession fly off into the air and then to wait a generation or two so that faith may "happen" again. Faith may indeed be a "happening," although I have difficulty imagining the German theologians, who say it is, participating in present-day "happenings." But it can happen only because between the happenings and between the times there is a community that remembers and celebrates and expects, an ecclesiastical structure, if you please, that cannot live up to its foundation but cannot forget its Founder — and cannot let anyone else forget him either. The point of discipleship is not the disciple but the Master; the content of confession is not theology but Christ; the life of the church is not her institutions but her dying and risen Lord. In him is her life — and ours. In him is the continuity of discipleship, of doctrine, and of structure. And so, as T.S. Eliot reminds us,

There shall always be the church and the world,  
And the heart of man  
Shivering and fluttering between them, choosing and  
chosen,  
Valiant, ignoble, dark and full of light,  
Swinging between hell gate and heaven gate.  
And the gates of hell shall not prevail.

## ***Nets of Laughter***

---

The wry wind scudded us  
into the carnival field  
and we were bounced to and fro  
in nets of laughter.  
Victory whistles pointed us  
toward the slickered guy  
whose catcher's-mask-face  
received the burst of balloon  
splashing three-cent water

hurled by my small imp's  
glee of revenge.  
Racing back again  
to the squared-off board,  
hands filled with pennies  
to pin down a prize,  
she pranced away  
with balls and puzzles.  
Popcorn frothed her

into a sky-kicking swing,  
while I leaned on wind,  
accepting invitations to return.  
A much tireder wind  
shoved us across the pebbled time  
into our home schedule  
of goodnight.

**BONNIE McCONNEL**

## The Unchurched Jesus

By RICHARD LEE

Odd, isn't it? While the churches are now producing less for the mass media, the world is singing more songs and telling more stories about Jesus in them.

Maybe it's not so odd. The churches' present retreat from the media can be grasped under a few headings. Mountainous production costs which faith alone will not move. Some distrust of the media themselves by the man-in-the-street and the man-in-the-pew. Some suspicion of the distant administrative centers of the churches which control the massest media productions. Dwindling assured audiences — always excepting the enduring sects — for conventional productions. Less social pressure upon the media to provide "public service" time and space for "religion." The nettlesome theological difficulties of putting Jesus as the Christ before a secular society amusing itself with this and that transcendence-of-the-month. And, not least, the squabbles within the churches which render them unfit hospitals for sinners — much less fit for any mission through the mass media to the world.

I do not discount the wholesome possibility that some churches are taking a sharper look at some over-investments in the mass media and discerning more of the limitations of the media for the gospel. The gospel, after all, is not an "image" but a person, and those whom the churches would reach are not "markets" but persons too. We must always pray that God will not let his churches be the last to distinguish between the work of persons to persons and the work of machines.

Also, maybe it's not so odd for the world to mount the Jesus story in the media. All the liveliest elements of entertainment are in it, and it certainly isn't novel to sell it as well as tell it. Probably one of the first film rip-offs was a life of Jesus, shot by Americans in Bohemia, and falsely promoted at home as the Passion Play of Oberammergau. The year? 1897. The present crest of Jesus plays, songs, and films has at least 75 years of momentum behind it.

Perhaps the most pivotal and piously intended Jesus film is nearly as old, *From the Manger to the Cross*, shot in 1911. It's worth digging out of a film museum if only to see the epicene Jesus film as it was fixed almost as a formula over sixty years ago. Eerily, Jesus is played by R. H. Bland.

Since then Jesus films have come and gone, a few adequate, many awful, some exploiting the subject and some well-meaning. I haven't, of course, seen them all, but it strikes me that the older the film the more likely it is to be an exploitation. Filmgoers who were taken ill in the last decade by *King of Kings* (1962), *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965), and *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (1965) really owe themselves a museum

viewing of Cecil B. DeMille's silent *King of Kings* (1927). Jesus films have, in fact, been gaining on honesty. Older readers will forgive me if I tell younger readers that much of the first *King of Kings* is given to Mary Magdalene played as a gorgeous courtesan and to her lover, Judas Iscariot! The obligatory bath scene, as I recall, takes more footage than the last supper.

Jesus films are not, of course, only about Jesus. Oblique references to him appear in films like *The Robe*, *The Silver Chalice*, and *Ben Hur*. If Jesus seemed squeezed into the sword-and-sandal spectaculars of the 50's, he was more likely to disappear altogether in the 60's — and reappear as a "Christ-figure." Now, Christ-figures tend to be where one finds them (The category often invites absurd claims, like currently christening John Wayne in *The Cowboys*), and I tread lightly here. But probably the most painfully obvious Christ-figure film of the 60's was *Cool Hand Luke* (1967). Certainly the most ironic one was *Whistle Down the Wind* (1962) in which an escaped convict, sheltered by a neighborhood of little children, is finally moved to "give himself up for them" because they believe him to be Jesus.

What lies ahead? As the fascination for Jesus peters out in popular (not country) music, something should be panning out in film. (Popular music leads the fashion in popular culture as a whole — unless it's a packaged deal like *Love Story* of film, song, and paperback at once.) Norman Jewison aspires to direct *Jesus Christ Superstar* "on location" in the "holy land" this summer, and the less said about that the better. Franco Zeffirelli is now scripting *The Assassination of Christ*, focusing on the trial, and that sounds more promising. And we shall surely get at least one out-of-the-way film on the "Jesus Freaks." A fanzine forewarns me of the scenario of one now in the works, *The Lovin' Man, Jesus*, but it is not discussable in this journal.

At this writing (Holy Saturday, 1972) an intriguing new Jesus film has just played TV. Mixed in the usual holiday fare (In my market area: re-runs of *Barrabbas*, *The Silver Chalice*, and a PBS re-broadcast of last year's praiseworthy, if boring, *Passion Play for Americans*) was a new work, *The Crucifixion of Jesus*.

*The Crucifixion* will likely run again next Eastertide and I commend it to all of faith and unfaith alike. One of a series of films Wolper Pictures is shooting for CBS's "Appointment with Destiny" series, *The Crucifixion* is filmed in the style of a documentary. It is as if news of the events of holy week were reported like a presidential trip to China or, better, the trial of Daniel Ellsberg. The hour production (The sponsor, Timex, mercifully does not interrupt *The Crucifixion* with commercials for wristwatches) is tautly paced, arousing suspense for a

story everyone already knows.

The basic elements of the documentary are (1) scenes from the public life of Jesus, as if videotaped by mobile camera crews; (2) narration by John Huston as "anchor-man"; (3) man-in-the-street interviews (an Essene, a Zealot, a soldier, faceless others); and (4) still shots, as if mounted in a newspaper morgue. A final (5) element is most effectively used — longer, relaxed interviews with "insiders" on the event to achieve some "in depth" analysis long after it has passed. Particularly insightful here are interviews with Caiaphas, Pilate, a Greek physician and several disciples to present the views of a kept church and imperial state, reason and faith.

Strange to say, none of the retrospective interviews mention resurrection, and the book is preferable to the film on that point. (There is some slight mention of resurrection in Huston's narration, but he makes it sound like a liberal cliché.) The film, however, doesn't wallow in that sentimentality which believes nothing good ever happens; it simply treats the story of Jesus more as thanatography than biography.

The director, Robert Guenette, of no religious abode, says he took "the historical view rather than the traditional one." Such a view of history is, of course, naive. *The Crucifixion* — while assuredly not the traditional *From the Manger to the Cross* view of Jesus — is probably no nearer to history than other Jesus films. It is more properly called a view of Jesus in the "modern tradition," with all the historicism the term implies. It is that view of Jesus reflecting the bias of the questions the world in our time is capable of asking the past.

The newsreel format to focus on "the facts," interviews to add "the interpretation," the use of the old city of

Jerusalem for the ancient setting (avoiding, of course, those ghastly 19th century shrines), the consultations with theologians to get the Essenes and Zealots "right," and other historicist devices merely add contemporary preoccupations to the story.

All of which is not to say that *The Crucifixion* isn't a good story. It is not only a very good story, but enough of a Christian story that it is possible it could call forth faith, or enough curiosity to send out seekers.

Jesus is played by a sensitive amateur, a young Jewish theological student, Ronald Greenblatt. His voice is unheard in the film and he performs totally with his considerable spiritual presence. His is a quiet, deeply moving performance of Jesus as an eastern holy man — a man, say, who would embrace the leprous without loathing, see the poor as persons rather than the proletariat, and spend himself listening to the ignorant without condescension. His Jesus is more holy man than ethical man, more guru than rebel, more *Bodhisattva* than prophet. It is a distinctly 1972 Jesus.

It is also a worthy complement to orthodox views which tend to deny Jesus an individual personality and see him as a sacrifice going somewhere to happen or as the *Logos* on its way to a manifestation. This Jesus, in short, will seem slightly strange to viewers in our country where holy men on the streets are rare and where Jesus of Nazareth is too quickly dissolved into some doctrine in the churches. In that strangeness lies an attraction to Jesus which could make Satan uneasy in his present power.

Since one cannot always say that for the churchd Jesus, this unchurchd Jesus is possibly uncovenanted grace.

## Music

### *The People — Sil*

By WILLIAM F. EIFRIG, JR.

I intend to write about Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*. The time between hearing *Gerontius* and this time of writing about it has been enough to find me in the first instance in Royal Albert Hall, London, and in the second instance on the Spanish Mediterranean coast. The delights of Spain have not erased the memories of the English music. They have only made it seem so very foreign.

In Spain my ears relax as my whole being relaxes under clear skies and a benign sun. All is so silent here. The narrow passages between the ancient buildings permit only pedestrians and are very quiet. Voices are filtered through the louvers of shuttered windows. Somewhere a canary is caged and bursting his heart with a song one can barely hear.

On the street the nearest music is the Spanish voice.

It is low-pitched, uttered in *fortissimo* tempo, and depends upon total inflection for communication. A small circus moves through the streets, and the acrobats and clowns take up trumpets with ease as if every boy in Spain must learn that instrument from infancy.

The Spanish are musical, no doubt of it. But they care little for music as a separate, self-conscious activity. Trumpet playing is part of a circus act. A procession in Holy Week requires a band. Radios and record players are used when suitable to the atmosphere and mood but are not used continuously to set the atmosphere and mood. A guitar belongs to a serenade.

*Gerontius* is for a people devoted in numbers to making music as though nothing else is more important at the moment. The work — Elgar did not like to call it an oratorio — requires a large orchestra, double choir

with semi-chorus, and soloists. The audience is expected to sustain attention for two hours (with one interval) while the long poem is presented.

Elgar's music for Newman's poem is as contradictory as the English character itself. A Roman Catholic creates a national monument for an Anglican country. Wagnerian musical techniques are put to work for religious ideas the German master abhorred. But *Gerontius* is a towering achievement for all that.

Part I is as flawless an expression of thought, feeling, and narrative as any Englishman or Spaniard could want. The dying Gerontius prays that his friends will pray for him when he has no more strength in himself, and that prayer will move the hearts even of Christians for whom prayers for the dead are suspect.

If Elgar falters, it is in Part II when he calls upon his art to bring heaven to earth. But it is noble in its aspiration if not always in achievement. Newman's God is not a kindly old grandfather who says "Let bygones be bygones," nor a gentlemanly gamesman who decides "All

the outs in free." The pain of purgation and the agonies of divine justice are felt in Elgar's music. It is not the sound of an easy hope.

Elgar, a self-taught musician, suspected academic musicians his whole life. Perhaps his fear was that music accredited by a guild may not speak the heart of a whole people. "Land of Hope and Glory" was intended to "knock 'em on their ears." He intended the same effect with *Gerontius*, although the audience for the former may be larger than the audience for the latter. The musical beliefs of both are identical, however, and all music, for Elgar, is popular art.

A band accompanying the procession of holy images in Seville played the Chopin funeral march. I should not be surprised to hear it, on another occasion, play Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory." Popular masterpieces cross cultures as common coin.

*Gerontius*, though, is a religious experience too self-conscious for Spanish hearts. And the Spanish sun does not shine in Royal Albert Hall.

## Political Affairs

### A Guide to Labels

By ALBERT R. TROST

American political rhetoric in recent years has been riddled with the terms "left" and "right," conservative, liberal, radical, and moderate. These terms frequently bear the modifiers, "extreme" and "far." Even the Democratic Party's candidates in recent presidential primaries have been strung along a spectrum from Shirley Chisholm on the "far left" to George Wallace on the "extreme right."

These terms are somewhat out of place in American politics. They overstate the importance of ideology in the electorate, and they suggest greater differences among parties and candidates than actually exist. The terms are seldom used for self-identification. They are most frequently used to brand one's opponents as standing outside of the mainstream of American politics.

Left, right, conservative, liberal, radical, and moderate have their origins in European parliamentary politics. The terms left and right, for instance, have their origins in the seating arrangements of the continental European houses of parliament. The chambers of the legislature are commonly in the shape of a semi-circle, and legislators sit in the chamber according to their position on the ideological spectrum.

A typical seating of parties is that of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Scanning the chamber from left to right one sees the Communists, the Socialists (left-wing then right wing), Republicans, Christian Democrats, (approximately in the center), Liberals, Monarchists, and Neo-Fascists. The full range of American electoral politics could be placed within the three parties of the

Italian center, the Republicans, the Christian Democrats, and the Liberals. Even in these three Italian parties there is more ideological diversity than exists in the United States.

The terms "conservative" and "liberal" also originated in Europe and were used to refer to different views of central authority. Conservatives favored strong central authority, usually personified in a hereditary monarch, although Napoleon Bonaparte would also be accepted in the tradition. Conservatives also tended to take the organic view that the state's legitimacy was independent of individual consent to the rule. It is this latter view which conservatives in Europe shared with their neighbors on the right, the Bonapartists and Fascists.

Liberals were those who opposed the centralizing tendency in European government and championed the rights and dignity of the individual against the central authority. The Whigs in England are an example of this liberalism which had much more acceptance in the British Isles than on the continent of Europe. The name of John Locke is usually associated with this tradition.

A third political tradition originating in Europe is most accurately called communitarianism, but it would scarcely be known by that name in the United States. Where liberalism emphasized the individual, communitarianism stressed the importance of community and moved toward the organic view of the conservatives. However, communitarianism is like liberalism in its

basis of the legitimacy of the state on popular consent and citizen participation in government. For some of the founders of this tradition, like Rousseau, the community is located in the expression of majority will, and legitimate government is based on such expression. Others in this tradition associated community with class, and legitimate authority was that exercised on behalf of the class of destiny. In the case of the Marxists, for example, legitimate government was that exercised in the name of the working-class.

With the exception of Britain and possibly Norway, modern European political parties represent the conservative and communitarian tendencies, with the liberal tradition all but squeezed-out. This last tradition is upheld by the tiny Free Democratic Party in Germany, the Radicals in France and the Republicans and Liberals in Italy.

In the United States, there are some who argue that there is only one political tradition: liberal. It is certainly true that the earliest immigrants to this country believed only that government legitimate which protected the rights of individuals to life, liberty and property. This early immigration was largely from a politically-motivated dissenting middle-class from Northern Europe, and it was in this tradition that the American Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights were written.

It is possible to see this liberal tradition as the thread running from Madison and Jefferson through Thoreau and Emerson to Sumner and the "social Darwinists." It runs today through the thought of men as varied as William Buckley, Justice William Douglas, Justice Hugo Black, the early S.D.S. and Eugene McCarthy. This contemporary range of claimants to the liberal tradition indicates how encompassing it is in American politics. It takes in a figure of the "right" like Buckley and a figure of the "left" like McCarthy.

The communitarian tradition has also found its way

into American politics, especially in times of mass discontent. In times of crisis, strong presidents like Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt have stressed community, and their administrations have been less notable for protection of civil liberties. Populist movements in America also favor the communitarian tradition in their appeals to remedy the plight of "the little man," or "the silent majority," or "the people." The principles of equality and majority rule are comfortable in the communitarian tradition, but they collide with the principles of minority or individual rights in the liberal tradition.

The communitarian tradition entered the United States with the founding fathers, especially in Jefferson's fascination with the French Revolution. It did not, however, vie with the liberal tradition in political rhetoric and practice until Jackson's presidential campaign and administration. Immigrations from central and southern Europe where the communitarian tradition was strong furthered this tradition in America throughout the nineteenth century. In modern times the communitarian tradition has dominated movements as far apart as the New Deal and the "right-wing" Christian fundamentalists like Carl McIntire and Billy James Hargis. There is also a large dose of communitarian appeal in the Nixon-Agnew campaigns as well as those of Hubert Humphrey and George Wallace.

Most American politicians embody both the liberal and communitarian traditions. Few are conscious of the inconsistencies. The low level of support for the more consistent spokesmen of the two traditions like William Buckley and Americans for Democratic Action suggests that the American people are unclear about (or do not care about) their own positions on the political spectrum. The labels "left," "right," liberal and conservative, as they are currently used in American political rhetoric, only serve to confuse. It would be better if the labels were removed.

## Books of the Month

### ***To Make Some Sense Out of the Old Testament***

LITERARY CRITICISM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Norman Habel. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971. \$2.50.

FORM CRITICISM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Gene M. Tucker. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971. \$2.50.

TRADITION HISTORY AND THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Walter E. Rast. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972. \$2.50.

In the Fortress Press series, *Guides to Biblical Scholarship*, these three volumes represent the Old Testament series, edited by J. Coert Rylaarsdam. Fortress Press also

has three companion volumes on the literary criticism, form criticism and redaction criticism of the New Testament. Although these volumes tend to be expensive (\$2.50 for an 80 page paperback), this series will fill a gap in communication between biblical scholars and general readers of the Bible — a gap that in some circles has become a real credibility problem with serious consequences for the church.

The authors of these three volumes are all competent biblical scholars: Norman Habel of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, Gene Tucker of Emory University, and my colleague Walter Rast of Valparaiso

University. They are well-qualified to present the methods of biblical scholarship in an understandable way for non-specialists and, in addition, to point the way toward the pressing future tasks of biblical research.

There are a great many books on biblical studies written for the non-specialist — general surveys, introductions, etc., informing the reader of the more important and interesting results of current biblical scholarship. But few of these popular treatments introduce the reader concretely into the methodological procedures and problems of such scholarship. As a result, often the non-specialist has little conception at all of the critical approach

to the Bible, or he has misconceptions of the nature of such scholarship. Debates are still carried on, for example, about the historical critical method as if Wellhausen were still the main representative of biblical scholarship. These Guides to Biblical Scholarship will help to solve this situation by making available to all students of the Bible concise, clear discussions of the critical methods being used by scholars.

### The Oral Setting of Authorship

These three volumes represent the three main disciplines of current critical study of the Old Testament (tradition criticism and redaction criticism, sometimes treated as separate disciplines, are here discussed together in the volume on *Tradition History and the Old Testament*). Literary criticism is of course basic for any analysis of a given portion of the Old Testament, distinguishing as it does the literary structure, style, and perspective of the author or authors. Form criticism is important for analyzing the literary genres, their structures, intentions, settings and functions. And tradition history criticism attempts to synthesize the literary and form critical studies in order to trace the formation and development of the various traditions in all their stages from the first forms to the final redaction. In a sense these three methods stand as separate disciplines, but the interrelationship between them is important, as Rylaarsdam points out in his Foreword. A good discussion of the relationship and interdependence between the disciplines is given by Tucker in his description of the role of form criticism.

One wonders, however, why it was necessary for these three introductions to be issued as separate books, when they might have constituted one nice-sized volume. Besides adding to the cost of purchase, the fact that there are three volumes will no doubt lead some readers to be content to study only one or two. Yet one of the important values of the series is that three different scholars have presented the three different but complementary methods of studying the Old Testament, in contrast to presentations that tend to be more one-sided (cf., e.g., Klaus Koch's *The Growth of the Biblical Tradition: the Form-Critical Method*). It is the interaction and the mutual stimulus of the three methods of study which has helped to produce much of the freshness and creativity of current biblical scholarship, and the reader will miss that value if he does not work through three presentations.

Norman Habel's presentation of literary criticism is especially important because the literary analysis of the Old Testament is generally felt to have been discredited with the rise of the methods of form analysis and tradition history analysis, stressing as they do the pre-literary development of the forms and traditions. Habel demonstrates that, on the contrary, literary criticism remains primary in the analysis of any book or literary segment of

the Old Testament. This method of study now has a whole set of new challenges and questions to work on; in contrast to literary criticism in the past, this analysis must now take account of oral literature, cultic contexts, communal authorship, and the history of the development of the text.

It is well that, for the purposes of this series, Habel chose to omit a discussion of the history of the method of literary criticism in favor of a direct textual approach. There are many other books which discuss literary criticism as practiced in the past; Habel wisely devotes the major portion of the book to actual literary investigations of selected Old Testament writings. As the reader follows Habel's masterful uncovering of the literary styles, terminologies and perspectives of the two main literary traditions in Genesis 1-9, important insights into the various motifs and theological messages are discovered as well. His analysis of the basic programme of both the Priestly and Yahwistic sources in the Pentateuch will greatly aid the reader's attempt to make some sense out of the Old Testament literature.

An important dimension of literary criticism in many disciplines has to do with hermeneutical issues, with questions as to the nature and role of language, etc. Habel, reporting on current Old Testament scholarship, omits any discussion of this dimension. Partly because the literary analysis of the Old Testament has been eclipsed by other methods, this discipline has apparently lost touch with literary criticism as it is being developed in other fields. However, Habel does note the importance of hermeneutics and the philosophy of language for the future task of Old Testament scholarship.

Gene Tucker spells out very clearly the basic principles, goals and procedures of form criticism, showing both its basic importance in the study of the Old Testament, but also warning of its limitations. There has been some tendency to assume that analysis of the forms in the Old Testament literature will solve all the problems of interpretation. But Tucker rightly insists that categorization of the literary forms is useful only insofar as it serves the purpose of recovering the living literature of Israel in its setting in their life and culture. In fulfilling this purpose, form criticism must work closely with the other methods of study.

Tucker helps the reader understand the methodology used by form critics by referring to examples from contemporary life. Then he illustrates the method by analyzing the literary forms used in two biblical sections: Jacob wrestling at the Jabbok, and the prophetic literature (examples from Amos). In this way the reader can comprehend clearly the basic steps of form analysis: determining the structure, the genre, the setting in life, and the intention.

Tucker's discussion of form criticism shows the heavy debt which Old Testament scholars owe to Herman Gunkel, the pioneer in form critical studies. But here is also perhaps a

weakness of current Old Testament scholarship: it has been difficult moving beyond Gunkel and his presuppositions. His categories are still used, even though some of them are clearly inadequate and lead to difficulties and misunderstandings. The category of "myth," for example, is very misleading when used as a category of literary form, especially when scholars (like Tucker) use this category as a way of distinguishing Israel's faith from other cultures of the ancient Near East. One hopes that Old Testament form critical scholarship, which has become highly sophisticated and successful in many ways, will begin to move beyond Gunkel and find alternate models in research that is being carried on in other disciplines also.

An unfortunate omission in Tucker's lucid presentation of Old Testament form criticism has to do with the cultic setting of many of the basic forms. Neither in his presentation of the methodology nor in his examples of its use does Tucker pay much attention to the basic cultic orientation which is an important aspect in the development and transmission of the forms. Another weak point in his presentation is his failure to demonstrate the importance of oral tradition in the development of the forms; although he rightly lists the oral setting as a basic principle of form criticism, he does not carry through on this point in his discussion to any great extent. Nor does he attempt to show the theological implications that result from the application of the form critical method — which, of course, is not demanded in the purpose of the book but which would be helpful to the general reader.

### The Transmission of Traditions

Fortunately, Walter Rast's presentation of tradition history research fills in some of these weaker areas of Tucker's book, just as Tucker's description of form criticism provides an important supplement to the discussion of tradition history. Rast shows by theory and example the importance of investigating the transmission and the formative development of the Old Testament traditions, up to their redaction in their present form. He points to the necessity, first of all, of understanding the dynamics of the transmission of traditions in general — using such examples as the Homeric epics and the Gilgamesh Epic. In this connection, the great significance of oral transmission of traditions is stressed. Rast wisely presents both sides of the oral versus written transmission debate, suggesting that it is in the interplay of both oral and written transmission that the formation of the traditions actually took place. Some of the Scandinavian scholars of the so-called "Uppsala School" are given recognition by Rast for their important contributions in tradition-historical researches.

Rast sketches out a useful methodology of tradition history analysis which involves determining the group which transmits the tradition, the locale, the socio-cultic setting,

and the basic themes. Then he illustrates this method by investigating the Jacob-Esau and Jacob-Laban cycles. At this point it is especially clear how closely form criticism and tradition history analysis are interrelated; it is interesting to compare Tucker and Rast in their respective analyses of the saga of Jacob's wrestling at the Jabbok, noting the different foci of the two methods.

Rast also has a useful discussion of the history of the traditions represented in Second Isaiah, showing how rooted this prophet was in the cultic traditions of creation and the exodus. In general, Rast shows a deep sensitivity to the rootedness of the Israelite traditions in the cultic life of the people.

A special value of Rast's book is his insight into the theological significance of the tradition-historical method of research. He follows von Rad in finding a central characteristic of

Israel's faith to be its openness to the creative reinterpretation of the traditions of the past in the context of present realities — and the expectation of future activity of God that exceeds past and present understandings. Of interest in connection with Old Testament theology is Rast's insistence that von Rad's important *Old Testament Theology*, which is strongly based on tradition history research, should not be passed off as merely a history of Israelite religion; Rast prefers to call it "a historical theology of the Old Testament." Finally, Rast shows how research in the transmission of Old Testament traditions helps to clarify the relationship between the testaments, the whole concept of revelation, and the task of the theologian in the contemporary world.

These three volumes should prove to be useful contributions to the understanding of

current Old Testament scholarship. There are weak spots, especially if the separate volumes are taken in isolation. There is a remarkable continuity, however, if the three volumes are studied in the sequence of the historical development of the three disciplines: first literary criticism, then form criticism, and finally the more wholistic tradition history analysis. Fortunately, when read in this manner, the three books give a good perspective on the methodological theory of the three disciplines and, in addition, a sustained immersion into the actual investigation of the Old Testament text itself.

I would recommend these volumes for careful study by students, pastors, professors, and any serious reader of the Old Testament.

THEODORE M. LUDWIG

## Worth Noting

LITURGY AND LITERATURE: SELECTED ESSAYS. By Allen Cabaniss. University of Alabama Press, 1970. \$6.00.

POETRY OF GRACE: REFORMATION THEMES AND STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH SEVENTEENTH CENTURY POETRY. By William H. Halewood. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970. \$7.50.

Here are two short, recent, notable books on the relations of literature and religion.

*Liturgy and Literature* consists of reprints of some of Professor Cabaniss's short articles from learned journals. I like the modesty of the presentation of his research. Consider, for instance, this statement in discussing "Shakespeare and [the Possible Influence of] the Holy Rosary":

Once the possibility of an association between Shakespeare's sonnets and part of the liturgy or a derivative of it arises, an initial inspection reveals a certain resemblance between the structure of the poems and the Holy Rosary. From mid-sixteenth century onward the Rosary has consisted of one hundred and fifty-three Hail Marys divided into fifteen groups of ten and one of three, each group now introduced by Our Father and concluded by Gloria Patri. It is quite impressive therefore to observe that there are one hundred and fifty-four sonnets in the Shakespearean sequence, the last two being variants of the same theme. A second datum of some importance is the prominence of the word *rose* in the sonnets. (pp. 122-123)

Soon afterwards the writer asserts: "These two rather obvious points, however, prove nothing; they merely emphasize the suspicion that requires still further inquiry." And he proceeds in that inquiry as modestly in the rest of his intriguing essay.

Some other liturgical motifs discussed are "Christmas Echoes at Paschaltide"; "Al-

leluia: A Word and its Effect"; and "*Beowulf* and the Liturgy." Because this last essay contains an easy illustration of the direct manner of appeal which is the trademark of Dr. Cabaniss, I quote it as an example of both the style and substance of his thought:

We have therefore, in the account of *Beowulf's* encounter with Grendel's mother, a strong central reminiscence of Christ's harrowing of hell that widens to include recollections, next of the deluge, and then of creation. We may now inquire where else we have the same complex of ideas. The answer is to be found in rites associated with Christian baptism. (p. 103)

William H. Halewood's *The Poetry of Grace* is a sensitive and sensible analysis of Reformation themes and structures in seventeenth century literature. Slow in starting, with both a Preface and an Introduction to sets its stage, the literary tempo accelerates after the first major chapter sharply focuses upon the fluctuations — opposition and reconciliation — of emotion and reason in the literature, especially the poetry, of that epoch.

Man's determination to go one way is negated by God's determination that he shall go another, and the decisiveness in the poems of God's determination is a dramatization of his reconciling power. This point is not contradicted by the vigor of human assertiveness in the poems, which discovers itself in the end to be both doctrinally justified and a necessity of dialectic strategy. The assertion, the almost antic busyness of human will, gives a challenge to the divine power to bring quiet. . . . and the power to bring quiet manifests itself in response. The end of Herbert's poem *The Collar* is perhaps the clearest possible example: 'Me thoughts [sic] I heard one calling, *Child!* And I reply'd, *My Lord.*' (p. 24)

This is a remarkable poetic affirmation of II Corinthians 12:9. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in [your] weakness." Perhaps this pattern of contraries (to use the author's favorite phrase) is best illustrated in his chapter, "The Tradition of Grace"; herein he offers an illuminating exposition of John Donne's metaphysical poem, *Good Friday, 1613, Riding Westward*.

Professor Halewood shows that both the Reformation and Puritan poets share in the Reformation view of redemption as a miracle of grace in which God's mercy extends itself in love to cover human dereliction. Halewood focuses on the clashing opposites and sudden reconciliations in the poetry as literary affirmations of the Reformation doctrine of man's willful opposition to the eternal will of God; God's disinclination to prefer the virtuous to the sinful; and the energy of contradiction required of divine benevolence.

Separate chapters provide detailed readings of additional poems by Donne, Herbert, Marvell, Vaughan, and Milton — all with a new appreciation of the Augustinian attitude concerning grace and the self. The book's final chapter is devoted solely to *Paradise Lost* and is a potent climax to the whole work. The sum of the book is perceptive and winsome literary criticism of those poems which affirmed grace in the seventeenth century and do so even unto this day.

What pride, ambition, and self-assertion put apart, however, love can put back together. Thus God and man merge through divine love in the person of Christ. . . . And the blessedness of the paradise within is achieved by Man's suppression of self in social love. (p. 164)

I know of few places in literature where the notes of Christian humanism sound more clearly, and Halewood helps us immeasurably to hear them again.

HERBERT H. UMBACH



## Overexposed or Underdeveloped?

RICHARD H. W. BRAUER

By MAXINE MITCHELL

In the past few years, apparently, I've been overexposed to the art of the 60's and 70's at museums and galleries throughout the country — in New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Mendocino, Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, Santa Fe, Taos, and most recently, at the opening of the new Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. I realized this overexposure right away when I viewed the show put together by my friendly, local museum director, Richard Gregg, and his staff of the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha. It was "The Thirties Decade: American Artists and their European Contemporaries."

As I sauntered leisurely through this exhibit, I discovered, to my horror, that I'm a throwback to another decade. There I stood in my contemporary jumpsuit and my luggage lizagators, peering through my granny glasses, and realized that I didn't belong to the 70's at all. Not even to the 60's. But to the 30's. The 30's, my spiritual home!

When I visit the galleries, I'm accustomed to having the contemporary art work do something other than just hang there on the wall or sit there on the floor, as these works from the 30's were doing. Art works of the 60's and 70's vie with one another for my attention. Quite often they twirl, whirl, whiz, whir, wheeze, spin, spit, beep, bang, or go bump in the night.

Sometimes the works invite me to become actively involved with them. Most recently, at the Walker, I found myself racing frantically under a canopy of light bulbs, skipping the light fantastic on wires embedded in the floor, all the while keeping one eye on the canopy to catch the pattern of the blinking lights. If it hadn't been for my extraordinary sense of balance, I'd have managed to get my luggage lizagators and my granny glasses hopelessly entangled. Then there are others that beckon me to come on inside their womblike selves. Then when I'm feeling all cozy and warm, they forthwith abort me. Or they invite me to peer into an opening inside of themselves, and instead of seeing them, I see me gawking out at me.

The art that I've experienced of the 60's and 70's is frenetic — its canvases, sculpture, watercolors, etc. are oversize, overstated, hysterical, distorted, disturbed, schizophrenic. Like our contemporary society. So I have no quarrel with the *artists*. I think they've done a very good job. They have captured our world and have tried to stuff it into a museum. That it does not fit into the more human proportions of most museum build-

ings, is not their fault. Their realization of and comment upon our age has been so successful that there are times, as I stroll through the galleries, that I must grab hold of a wall to steady myself and gain reassurance that I am, indeed, in the protected environment of a museum or gallery, not in the factory district, nor the tenderloin district, nor even out on the noisy street where I may be run down at any moment by taxi or motorcycle.

Because these artists have captured and commented upon contemporary society so well, I do not like their work. I did not like the 60's, and as far as the 70's have gone, I'm not feeling exactly warm and cozy in them, either. I feel aborted and alienated. This is not to say that I'm unsympathetic with the social protest of these artists. Generally I am. It's just that I realized, as I said, to my horror, that intellectually I belong to the 70's, emotionally to the 30's.

I had been viewing "The Thirties Decade" for an hour when the realization seeped through to the surface of my consciousness of what a tranquil, serene experience I was having. The canvases were not huge nor twisted into grotesque shapes, nor did the sculptures bop me on the head or beep at me as I walked by. They just hung or sat there calmly, benignly, waiting for *me* to discover *them*. I was free to look and consider as I chose. I was in no way bombarded or intimidated.

Most of the art that I considered that day — works by Benton, Curry, Wood, Davis, Hopper, O'Keeffe, Shahn, Calder, Braque, Miro, Mondrian, Picasso, Kandinsky, Klee — I had some understanding of. Not that I sure what Kandinsky, Klee and Miro were up to, always. Nor do I have any real understanding of what Mondrian meant when he stated that everything that needs to be said can be said with the flat surface and the straight line. But, emotionally, I can even relate in some fashion to these three exceptions. I feel comfortable in their presence — their dimensions are *human*.

I paused and sighed. But as I crept back into the 70's, I promised to treat myself to one indiscretion, at least, when next I find myself in a gallery viewing a contemporary exhibit. When I'm accosted by a work of art, as I surely shall be, I shall give it/her/him a most unlady-like kick in the shins.

Maxine Mitchell is on the faculty of Midland Lutheran College, Fremont, Nebraska, in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. Her stories for children have been used on national ETV and published in *Highlights for Children*, *Jack and Jill*, *Presbyterian Life* and other magazines. At home in Nickerson, Nebraska, Mrs. Mitchell is rearing "one boy, a German shepherd, and a Siamese cat."

Grant Wood, *American Gothic*, 1930.  
Oil on Beaver Board, 30 x 25".

Collection of The Friends of American Art  
Photograph: Courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago



## An Uncomfortable Ring of Nowness

By WALTER SORELL

The question of the longevity of plays has always puzzled me.

Tragedy is weightier than comedy, of course, but comedy also endures. The long shadows of the giants of tragedy like Shakespeare, Sophocles, and Euripides may give the impression that only tragedies survive their own times. But Aristophanes does not do badly today, and Moliere towers over Corneille and Racine.

George Lillo's (1693-1739) *Merchant of London* was a turning point in the development of the theatre and ushered in the bourgeois drama; so we were taught and so we are teaching. But Lillo's play is buried in history books while John Gay's (1685-1732) *Beggar's Opera* is still most enjoyable in performance.

The Chelsea Theatre put on a new and delectable production of this satire on a period in history full of corruption and robbery. It has an uncomfortable ring of nowness. The justification for doing Gay's play today lies in its unfortunate timelessness as Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill well understood in the twenties. The Sir Robert Walpoles are still very much alive in Washington, and the Peachums — he may now be disguised as a corporation lawyer — in the lobbies of that city are not to be pooh-poohed.

The ballads of the *Beggars Opera* are fully realized again in their recreation by Ryan Edwards. The original, early eighteenth century satire against the Neapolitan school of opera is of course no longer of interest, but the Hogarthian scene makes up for it with its fun. Gene Lesser stages this play as if he had experienced the London of those days — when in fact he had only the advantage of studying contemporary New York City where mugger Macheath still knows how to get away with murder.

Michael Weller's *Moonchildren* were launched at London's Royal Court and headed toward New York via the Washington Arena Stage. The play landed on Broadway and died after sixteen performances. Weller is about thirty years old and a very gifted, yet not quite mature, dramatist. The scene of his play is an attic near an American university, where five boys and two girls share the apartment. In spite of the humorous undercurrent, the play shows the tragedy of our youth, their inability to understand what is happening to all of us and to them in particular. They are unable to accept reality as real. They try to beat reality by playing roles of their own invention and creating their own meaning for meaninglessness.

The *dramatis personae* are an amalgam of characters the author must have known, and therefore the play has all the earmarks of an autobiography. He experienced the very same situation he wrote about, having lived with young people who did not understand one another. They don't in the play either. Whatever one person does baffles the other. The author admitted in a *New York Times* interview that he is still baffled by the characters too and "the play is perhaps a description of a puzzle."

There's the rub. The weakness of the play lies in the author's lack of aesthetic distance. One cannot dramatize the "description of a puzzle," especially not by pretended and protracted improvisation. The playwright who would look life in the eye, eyeball to eyeball, better get his distance first. Then he is better fitted to sharpen the focus and to know exactly how to interpret what he sees.

I never thought highly of Clifford Odets' *The Country Girl*. It was an old-fashioned play in 1950 when it was new. The only thing that has changed twenty years later is our desperate nostalgic feeling for everything that once was. That's also the situation in the play: a drunken actor, who lengthened his lost weekend into lost years, is trying to make a comeback.

The play has good parts and is adroitly cast. Jason Robards is familiar with down-and-out characters by now and does the role of the actor famously. George Grizzard is splendid as the young, cock-sure director who isn't really quite so sure of himself. Maureen Stapleton as the country girl and wife of the actor performs her part with great intelligence and all the right nuances. John Houseman stages the play as a vehicle for the actors, and Douglas Schmidt mounted a set which expresses the mood of the play and its desperate characters.

Yet, after the audience lofted its last bravo, I could not help feeling a kind of void. It was that letdown you experience when you have faced impressive mediocrity, brilliance over really nothing, a commonplace situation with a bit of melodrama, a touch of vulgarity, and a dash of obvious cleverness. Odets may have had too much feeling and not enough poetry. I know that the heart of the matter is always a matter of the heart. But more than the heart is needed to make a play, and heart-beats alone are not poetry. Between the beats there must be a bit of mystery, the makings of a dream, something to wonder about when the heart is quiet. They're all there in this play, and yet they aren't.

## The Organization Man

By JOHN KRETZMANN

"Don't analyse — Organize!" So goes one of the informal "rules for radicals" which continue to emanate from the old high priest of organizing, Saul Alinsky.

To trace Alinsky's career over the last four decades is to touch on most of the major social issues which have bedeviled our cities, and indeed the nation as a whole, during that time. From his earliest experience in trade union organizing, Alinsky has attempted various strategies, with varying degrees of success — all of them aimed at gaining political, economic, and social leverage for groups of people with little or no "clout" to begin with.

From the late thirties through the fifties, Alinsky concentrated his organizing talents in working class communities. Beginning with his first turf-based, neighborhood organization — the Back of the Yards Council in Chicago's packinghouse district — Alinsky remained basically true to the labor movement's constituency.

But beginning in the late fifties in city after city across the north, the community organizing movement emerged as the urban response to the essentially rural southern civil rights movement. The Woodlawn Organization, set in the heart of South Side Chicago, became the prototype for literally dozens of Alinsky-style community organizations in the black inner-city.

Throughout these efforts, it has been a major tenet of Alinsky-style organizers that one's aim is to work oneself out of a job. That is, an organizer's task is to uncover and encourage the emergence of indigenous leadership. An organizer is emphatically not a small-time empire-builder.

As a direct result of this policy, we are blessed (or cursed, depending on your stake in the *status quo*) with a large and still growing number of immensely talented and increasingly self-confident local community leaders in our cities.

In addition, Alinsky himself has trained literally hundreds of disciples in the tactics and strategies of organizing. Many of these trainees, like Cesar Chavez and Nicholas von Hoffman, have moved out to establish solid reputations of their own.

With all this behind him, and with old age creeping up, can there be anything ahead for Saul Alinsky?

Yes, indeed. In the last three years, the "old fox" has embarked on an entirely new strategy. This new course, which has drawn criticisms from both the left and right, points to the middle class as the major constituency for Alinsky-style organizing.

This emphasis on the American middle class as a catalyst for social amelioration is not, to say the least,

a very orthodox view among those interested in social change. Sure, Charles Reich and others have pointed to some basic questioning of values going on in middle America, but few who are very hard-nosed about how change happens have taken Reich very seriously.

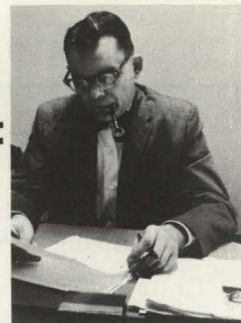
So why does Alinsky, who has shown himself to be nothing if not pragmatic, suddenly place his hope and his organizing abilities at the doorstep of the one group of people who are supposedly the most self-satisfied and politically complacent in all the land? The answer is, of course, that Alinsky doesn't think the vast middle class is all that quiescent. The middle America Alinsky sees is on that is squeezed financially by inflation and rising taxes; one that is reacting against paying the price, in lives and money, for the country's high-handed foreign policy; one that is increasingly upset with shoddy corporate products and services and with corporate shyster advertisers; one that is tired of watching industry foul the air they breathe and the water they drink.

This is the stuff of which organizations are made. Articulate the grievances, transform them into public issues, organize support around various tactical approaches and presto — a network of middle America advocate groups appear who are ready and able to do battle with those who hold political and economic power.

This is the current Alinsky game plan. It has its parallels in numerous other manifestations of middle class unrest, including Naderism, the consumer movement, the revolt against new taxes, the successes across the country of independent politics, and even the respectable showings of the Georges, Wallace and McGovern.

As a long-range strategy for significant social change, however, the emphasis on middle class organizing has its drawbacks. The principal one involves the temptation to divert attention away from the seemingly intractable problem areas of racism and poverty. Much as we would like to sweep these back under a carpet of benign neglect, they simply will not disappear. Unless Alinsky's burgeoning new middle class constituency can begin to make contact with groups in the poverty neighborhoods and regions, and begin to define together issues where the self-interest of the middle class and the poor do in fact coincide, then what we are witnessing is simply one vast series of distractions.

One's hope is that Alinsky and his organizers, as well as those involved in other movements with a middle class base, can keep in mind their even greater responsibility to America's have-nots.



## Orthodoxy vs. Fundamentalism

The Ehlen case at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, has demonstrated once again how close liberalism and fundamentalism are to each other and how radically both differ from orthodoxy.

Liberalism refuses to take seriously the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the Word of God. Thoroughgoing Liberals tend, as a matter of fact, to be somewhat embarrassed by the whole idea of a written revelation which can speak an authoritative "Thus saith the Lord." So the Scriptures become a kind of record of man's spiritual adventure, the story of his quest for the divine, rather than the record of God's disclosure of Himself to man. The Liberal has, and can afford to have, a completely open mind on the question of the Scriptures as literature; nothing ultimate depends on his reading of a particular Scriptural passage because the writings of Gandhi or Martin Luther King, Jr. or Albert Schweitzer or any other noble soul of the present are as "inspired" as those of David or Isaiah or Matthew or Paul.

Fundamentalism refuses to take seriously the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the *Word* of God. The remarkable set of theological guidelines issued by Dr. J.A.O. Preus several weeks ago for sniffing out heresy in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod may or may not leave any scope for serious theological work within the church; they certainly leave no place for any kind of responsible literary criticism of the sources which God has given man for understanding His mind and will. These guidelines have about them a literalistic simplicism which is much more Mormon than Lutheran in tone and character. And this is characteristic of fundamentalism, for the fundamentalist is unable or unwilling to believe that God would choose to reveal Himself in ordinary words which, by their very nature, admit of variant readings, actually change meaning over periods of time, mean one thing in one literary form and something quite else in another literary form, and may pass through many minds and hands before they finally achieve a kind of documentary stability in one text.

Against both the liberal and the fundamentalist, orthodoxy asserts, as a declaration of faith that the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament are the *Word of God*. As words they come to us in all of the contingencies of words. They are capable of many kinds and levels of

meaning. They have ancestries, some of which are fairly easy for the scholar to trace, others of which are still unclear. And as the Word of God, they participate in the nature of Him Who made them and Who chooses to use them, i.e., they conceal at the same time they disclose, they are the wisdom of God to the man of faith and they are foolishness to the man of unfaith.

The present struggle within the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is a struggle between orthodoxy and fundamentalism. Dr. Preus, at least as far as he may be judged from his public utterances, is a fundamentalist. And let it be said also that, like many fundamentalists, he has a record of quick and total compliance with his understanding of the will of God as he reads it in the Scriptures. In our present distress at his bull-in-a-china-shop treatment of the Seminary, we may forget that years ago, when many other leaders of the church were pussy-footing on the race issue, Dr. Preus took a bold and Scriptural stand for which many of us had reason to be very grateful. But, of course, past truth is no guarantee of present truth, as witness the behavior of St. Peter at Antioch where it became necessary for St. Paul to withstand him to the face.

What the outcome will be is, at this time, hard to say. Fundamentalism, like liberalism, is a kind of theological reductionism and therefore mightily attractive to the kind of lay mind which is content to be told what to believe without being required to do any genuine searching of the Scriptures itself. Unquestionably Dr. Preus speaks for the overwhelming majority of those clergy and laity in the church who are fundamentalists. It is not inconceivable that The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod will go the way of the Southern Baptists and other fundamentalist sects with whom, as a matter of fact, many of our leaders and people have felt more at home than with brethren of our own theological tradition. In that case anxious warnings about the danger of the Seminary losing its accreditation can hardly affect the outcome seriously. Nor should they. For what is at stake far transcends questions of institutional accreditation.

What is at stake is the soul of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. On that Dr. Preus is clear and right. And the battle will not be fairly joined until we who oppose him accept battle on the field of theology rather than that of institutional politics.