

LIVING LITERATURE

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**Year's Magazines, Presses
Poetry, & Why: Views**

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**Autumn 1964
Thirteenth
Year**

54

JAMES BOYER MAY

TRACE

EDITOR

TRACE

No. 54

Living Literature

Essays & Articles · Poetry · Reviews

Autumn 1964

Edited by James Boyer May

A CLEAN READING EDITION

Advertisements, subscription promotions, the front cover and blank leaves have been omitted, as has the running trade directory ("The Chronicle") and its capsule little-magazine notices; a note in its place records what that instalment held. The eight plates of the Chinese art section cannot be carried by a text edition; the magazine's own captions for them are kept, so that each is named. The poetry, fiction, essays, correspondence and reviews of the issue are given in full, in the order in which they are printed.

Where a poet uses the space of the page — indented lines, hanging steps, gaps within a line — that spacing is treated as part of the poem and kept as closely as a proportional typeface allows. Square brackets enclose conjectural readings where the scan is faded. Original spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing and verse lineation are kept.

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TOWARDS PRINT (FROM INDIVIDUAL NORM TO PRIMAL NORM)

by Yip Wai-lim

*In all patterning of Nature there are two norms:
that which is confined to itself is the individual
norm; that which extends beyond itself to become
others is the primal norm . . . so that the
individual norm and the primal norm define each
other in an infinite complexity. . . .*

— Wei Shih Shu Chi, V, III

*The ingenuity (of the T'ang Poets) lies in their
unmitigated lucidity . . . and like sound in air,
color in form, moon in water, image in mirror, an
ending statement touches upon unending
nuances.*

— Yen Yu: POETICS (Thirteenth Century)

I MODERN SOCIETY HAS BECOME increasingly dialectical: alienation of sensibility as a consequence of the aggrandisement of self-embraced worlds — each specialist believes he has lived his life to the fullest in his dialectical kingdom. Meanwhile, mass communication, under the pretext of efficiency and ubiquity, has canned language and culture for standardization.

This tragic situation is not a Babel among languages, but rather a Babel even within each given language. Poets tend to use one language; textbooks contain another; and scientists use yet something different.

The poet, ideally, should therefore give himself to the task of effecting a language readily accessible to differing sensibilities. This can be done by manipulating the language to the highest degree of communicability — that is, by the process of abstraction. By abstraction here, I mean a method

to get at a direct communion through a paradoxically-indirect representation of the verbal surface, first by elimination of all possible external divergences of the language, and then by concentrating on the thing as it is. (In philosophy, the Ch'an School of Buddhism¹ is the best form of communication by abstraction.) I think the process invaluable because every sector of meaning (sense-feeling) will be enabled to come forth directly and fully and to escape restrictions of time and place, making it possible to posit the poem as an imaginative object without resorting to regional or localized identification in culture.

1 Referring especially to the originators of Ch'an (generally romanized from the Japanese pronunciation of the word as Zen) Buddhism in China.

II

At this point, a question is apt to arise: Since a language is a meaning-object structure, how are we going to have abstraction? The conventional usage of the word 'abstraction' as a direct, irreconcilable opposite to figuration (or object) has obscured a very important level of meaning the word once carried. The process of abstraction begins with isolated individuals and groups them together by virtue of perceived resemblances to arrive at a unity in plurality.² A counterpart of the same process can be found in the Buddhist scripts in which it was explicated—that when we pass from the individual norm/s to the primal norm, letting one define the other, we get to an infinite complexity. Abstraction is not what most people conceive as nonobjective. Every stroke in a Chinese-ink abstract painting is itself a shape and has its spatial relationship with other shapes. Therefore, by abstraction, it does not mean merely metaphysical ontology, nor does it mean turning language into mathematical symbols. Language can never be absolutely abstract; and what is more, absolute abstraction will become what Confucius called 'the Great Silence.'³ Poetry, by its nature, is

voiced—not sheer silence. So abstraction in poetry will be no more than condensation of objects to their essence, liberating them from time and place.

III

Few people are inclined to postulate that classical Chinese poetry has been abstract in the sense I explained above. However, here are some examples from classical Chinese poetry:

shui liu hsin pu ching water flow heart not race yun chai
yi chü tzu cloud stay feeling all late (Tu Fu A.D. 712-770)
chueh hsia shui ching lien let down water crystal blind ling
lung wang chi u yueh

² CF, for instance, the definition in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th ed.

³ Confucius' 'state of silence' is an ideal vision of Nature highly exalted even by the Buddhists; but poetry can never be the great silence itself, nor can it be the absolute Ch'an. At best, it will bring us to the verge of these two ideal states of being.

CLEAR LIMPID WATCH AUTUMN MOON

(Li Po A.D. 701-762)

ming yueh sung chien chao
bright moon pinetree(s) among shine
ching chuan shih shang liu
clear spring stone(s) upon flow

(Wang Wei A.D. 701-761)

Even with the aid of such Buddhist terms as sound-in-air, color-in-forms, moon-in-water, image-in-mirror, Yen Yu, the great critic in the Sung Dynasty, fails to define clearly enough the merit of such lines. These lines are successful (to the Chinese readers in particular) for using on the surface seemingly casual and indirect objects to get at a straight entry into Nature. The images—objects that constitute the lines—seem unrelated on one plane; but it is not the relation of the images on the surface that we are invited to look into. It is their pointing to ‘something’ beyond, a *ching chieh*, or vision as you may inadequately call it in English: something hinted at by the images as they are or as they are growing from Nature (the never-dichotomized sphere of existence) as any plant or stone.

Most Chinese poets strive to attain to this ‘something beyond,’ this realistic abstraction where the primal norm is defined by individual norms and simultaneously individual norms are defined by the primal norm. By virtue of these interdefining relationships, individual norms gain their existences as integral, inseparable parts of Nature.

IV

While modern Chinese poets admit the value of this device by which classical Chinese poets brought objects of Nature into direct dramatic interaction among themselves and with man, they insist that Nature has been immensely modified by the variety and complexity of contemporary history. And Nature, though unchanged perhaps in its primal norm, has been enriched and complicated by the interlacing of new surges of ideas and inventions. In simpler words, Nature, once conceived as such, appears in a new norm with an incremental extension in meaning. This new dimension offers to redefine, and redefine more fully, its primal idea.

Being syntactically ambiguous and without declension, tense, number and person, and in many cases without connectives, the classical Chinese (or literary Chinese, as generally called) somehow is capable of giving the poem a richness on many levels of suggestion that a translation into English usually does not effect. Readers who are interested in how the poem works in the literary Chinese are asked to refer to THE ART OF CHINESE POETRY by James Liu (U. OF CHICAGO Press). For convenience, these lines are freely translated as: 'When the water flows the heart does not aspire to race with it, / While the clouds stay it seems that all feeling is with it.' '(I) let down the crystal blind / and look at the autumn moon in the limpid air' (cf. Ezra Pound's translation.) 'The moon shines brightly among the pine trees / and the clear spring flows upon the rocks.'

As will be true of arts in other cultures, an incrementally new norm of Nature, while becoming an inexhaustible source for vital poetry and other related arts, postures itself as an insurmountable challenge to the artist. All the poets seem to agree that we no longer can present Nature as it was; what they have to do now is to texture it as it is. The modern Chinese poets' problem is not only to find a unified form that can embody man's responses to the totality of his experiences (sense-feelings), but also to recover the original idea of Nature so that it will perhaps be possible to comprehend in poetry the presumably irreconcilable elements which have formed this humanistic-technologic monster of modern civilization. Their problem is so to revitalize the idea of Nature by going into the deep interiors of the psyche for parallel identity, that all levels of perceived realities (individual norms) will at once point to themselves as the surface manifestations of Nature and to Nature itself (primal norm), which in turn defines for us these surface manifestations. In this way, the Chinese idea of Nature, which has been so much sneered at by Western readers (due to misrepresentations in the English language) and by some casual Chinese readers (due to estrangement resulting from disruption of certain materials by intestine war), will resume

its—at least manageably—recognizable norm.

V

The impassable gap between Art and Technology becoming despairfully wide (too distinct to need demonstration in the Western world and increasingly in the East), modern Chinese poets, consciously or unconsciously, have submitted themselves to poetic extensions of such integrating power that, not only traffic between Art and Technology is possible, but in the long run one conduces the extension of the other. They seek to resurrect, through intensified abstraction in the way classical Chinese poets are capable of doing, a core-culture that bridges the surface divergencies of the two forces.

They begin, on the one hand, by probing analogically into contemporary European philosophies, mainly Husserl, Bergson, Kierkegaard, and Sartre, for selective extension of the conglomerated Ch'anist-Confucian idea of Nature (that is, the conglomerated Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism); and, on the other hand (in a sense even more significant in terms of craftsmanship in the making of poetry), by extending the direct 'grasps' of the mind-picture that characterized classical Chinese poetry. This leads to visions of grander scale by way of parallel evaluation of the surrealist and impressionistic touches; for, we do have such counterparts in classical literary tradition. The corresponding facet in surrealism which interests modern Chinese poets is the astrometeorological or atmospheric side of representation of the unnameable from the substratum.

An example from classical Chinese poetry will be useful here: How is it that an inlaid psaltery has fifty strings? Each string and peg calls up the flowery years: Chuang, in a half-waking dream, is charmed by a butterfly. The Han Emperor's soul returns in spring as a cuckoo. Moonlight shrouding the dark sea, pearls shed tears. Sun warming the

blue fields, jades engender smoke. Such emotion might come, but always falls into misted memory; And the moment it comes, one will be as lost as can be.

For many centuries, critics have been puzzled by these lines. Among numerous guesses about the meaning of the fifth and sixth, Su Tung-po's (1037-1101, a Sung Dynasty poet) suggestion is perhaps the nearest to Li's method. He said: The Chin-se was an ancient instrument made up of fifty strings. Its tone had four variations: Shih (a Taoist liberated peacefulness); Yuan (tenuous sadness in consequence of unattained love); Ching (limpidness, translucence); Ho (harmony, mildness, complaisance). And, beginning from the third line, each verse represents one variation of the tone.

While the meaning Su gives the poem is disputed, the way he parallels a group of seemingly-arbitrary images in a state of mind or feeling is very creditable. In contemporary literary terms, we would call the fifth and sixth lines surrealistic or impressionistic. I must hasten to add that I am not using the word surrealistic synonymously with the word impressionistic; but it so happens in Chinese poetry that in most cases where such touches are used, both elements seem to blend into one. More instances could be drawn from Li Po, Tu Fu, Wang Wei, and many Sung poets; however, it is not the aim of this essay to deal with them in great detail. Therefore, we return to the modern Chinese poets and see how they employ these traditional devices to express new emotions and ideas.

By using a number of surrealistic-impressionist touches, now modified and enlivened by their traditional concept of Nature and poetry, modern Chinese poets are able to liberate the imaginative self, ridden by hardened customs and weighed down by thickened repetitions of stock images and phrases.

Take, for instance, the concluding stanza of Shang Chin's
GRADIENT OF THE MILKY WAY:

Ever since the Milky Way moved its gradient To the flat,
flat corner of my forehead

CHIN-SE, THE INLAID PSALTER Y — *Li Shang-yin (A.D. 813-858)*

The entire poem appears in the center section of this TRACE.

*In the north-north-west of the empyrean
There is day and night —
Night gone never returns
Day come never goes again —
March jolts on our shoulders,
Skirts are burned by our gaze, pretty bodies
Dissolve in a lane of sunshine,
Leaving the gradient of the Milky Way
In the empty drinking-glass.*

The first noticeable difference is the new relation the poet introduces through a narrative grace in having all the words fall in their places (a merit to which the readers must refer, if ever, in the original) into a texture of images which hark back to the classical poetry world, and at the same time state definitely the contemporary situation. Nature as captured in classical Chinese poetry, with only few exceptions, is curiously static. The dramatic interaction between man and Nature is almost always suggested (or even stated) in an entirely unmotivated mode of being. Nature, under a new rhythm, is dynamic, but somehow retains a surprising equilibrium as a static sensation. The paradoxical duality (let the readers be reminded that duality does not exist in the Chinese mind, especially when we are thinking about Nature, the undichotomized sphere of existence) is justified here because of the primary idea of the interdefining character of individual images, objects, and statements. Just as the emptiness on a Chinese painting defines the spatial significance of the concrete strokes, and vice versa.

VI

This leads us to ponder more deeply on the dangers involved in the poet's craft. In extending the poetic vision of the comparatively simple society before 1912 to one that would accommodate most aspects of contemporary experience (both the social surfaces of pain and inmost agonies of spirit from the avalanche of the oppressive past), modern Chinese poets are not unaware of the dangers of getting lost in the over-arbitrary flux and juxtaposition of events. The problem is how, with their peculiar preoccupations, they can order the formless outpouring of feelings, objects, events, and statements — how they can make words into a 'circulation of stars' among which one senses a discipline without counting or measuring. The justification for such a discipline, into which all surface elements retreat and from which they emerge, is found in an age-old conception of art in China.

As I have mentioned fleetingly in preceding passages, the Chinese are predominantly concerned with the attainment of an effortless naturalness (*tzu-jan*) in art; and any detectable technique will be discredited as being unnatural. By this, they do not mean no technique, but the manipulation of images, words, and statements in such suitable sequence that one no longer is aware of discrete images, words, and statements at all. This is comparable to viewing a scene of varied mountains and cliffs where one does not notice each individual mountain or cliff, but the entire panorama as naturally formed. The poet, in dealing with the poem's substance, wants to give it coherence by making all the images and words fall suitably in place so that no trace of contrivance is present. Thus, what has been easily said, the poet must avoid saying too often; and what is supposed to be difficult to say, he must say effortlessly and concisely. As for the easy statements —where he considers them necessary in the poem—he must not let them slip by. Meanwhile, strange

objects or objects hitherto unused in poetry will be introduced in a new, yet quite familiar, relationship; and familiar objects, even stereotyped objects, may be re-used in connection with a unique situation. Such has become almost a truism; but the fact that Chinese poets, both old and new, have enforced verbal naturalness in conformity with Nature, is valid because this is the most direct and down-to-earth way of dealing with the poem as it is.

Having understood this particular concern of the Chinese poets, one will not be puzzled by their ready acceptance of statements as part of poetic expression. However, when a statement is employed only as a vehicle for a moral or philosophical message, as in introspective treatises, it definitely will be considered the weakest way of expression, if it is not entirely rejected. Chinese poets make a distinction between statement as the vehicle of prose meaning (*li-yu*), which is instructional and belongs to the philosopher's realm of thought, and narrative grace or statement said and placed with the highest degree of naturalness on the poem (*li-chü*), which is compositional and found only in the poet's intellectual order. Therefore, much of Tao Chien's (A.D. 372-427) poetry, to be exact—even the earliest pieces in the *BOOK OF ODES*—has been highly rated because this kind of compositional naturalness is there. In Tao's case, both images and statements are so gracefully incorporated into one another that only the mindscape, with its charged intensity, magnitude, and sweep, is there; and we are not made aware of any obtrusive image or statement whatever.

This, then, is the guidepost for modern Chinese poets. In this way, they are enabled to give coherence to the varied textures of states of emotion they endeavor to posture in poetic form, without losing the surface or letting the surface take over. With a concentrated abstraction, they work directly on verbal naturalness which is the breath of the poem.

VII

A final question: Is Art, then, in all respects symmetrical with Nature? The answer is negative, and must be negative; otherwise, we would not be able to posit art in Nature. Art, as an outgrowth from Nature, is integrated as part of it—but not in entirety. Art has, along with other elements which compose Nature, its own peculiar existence. The poet's vocation is to articulate Nature by becoming part of it through poetic concentration; yet, as an artist, he also has the duty to avoid repetition and overlapping. If this were not so, we would have no reason to reject mass communication as an art form (because this communicates).

A poem must express individuality, and the poet's voice must be an independent one. His craft is not to be judged on the basis of his conformity to a certain fashion or vogue, as many contemporaries tend to judge, but on the basis of peculiar gestures of words and textures the poet employs to make his substance into an artistic entity by being compositionally natural. In other words, his excellence lies in his poetry's assuming an individuated form of the greater whole: defining, on the one hand, the primal existence out of which the poem was generated as one constituent; and, on the other hand, the poem's own existence as art, having become a verbal sufficiency in itself.

POEM

potatoes dug from the earth pop up clean as if theyd been
growing in pockets of light

in a dim dancehall shoulders of girls move past your eyes
surprising you

by George Bowering

EDITORS (AND OTHERS) WRITE

A THIRD ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM OF FORM?

Dear Editors:

From time to time you print a letter dealing with the old form-vs.-freedom argument, usually a defensive justification of the writer's use of standard forms or free verse. Everyone seems tacitly to accept the alternatives: a return to forms whose use has been pretty thoroughly explored—or rather formless meanderings in which the author hopes the content will somehow generate its own form. Why is there no exploration of a third possibility? In terms borrowed from R. Buckminster Fuller:

... development of an 'anticipatory design science' of regenerative, organic recurrence patterning to serve as a 'metrics' for a new mathemato-architectonic collection of poem-shapes / allowing the poet to predict & pre-map his movement in a poem without necessarily imposing upon the poem a matrix external to the poem's nature / allowing the poet to manifest in his true role of shape-changer.

The term 'anticipatory design science' contains the concept of formality which has made possible Fuller's shape-changing and revolutionary work in architecture, mechanics, cartography, chemistry, mathematics, and half a dozen other fields. (He was even Charles Eliot Norton Professor of poetry, 1961-62—but his contribution to poetry has not been in terms of structure.)

How do we go about developing such a science? We do not collect matrices abstracted from great poems, a practice which led to the existence of 'standard' forms. Rather, we study the sorts of events that tend to recur in poetic discourse, and study, to the extent we can, the synergetic effects (within a reader) of variously-shaped and -formed

recurrence patterning. Out of such studies we should draw an architectonic sense, resulting in the best poems having an intended and meaningful shape while we remain free of 'standard' forms and, simultaneously, free of the all too common meandering formlessness.

Gene Fowler Blue Unicorn (San Francisco) Reading Series
Moderator

Poetry Editing Supported by Analyzing Beer

Dear Editors: December (THE GOLIARDS), commemorating the end of my first year, will be a dilly. I plan to go all out.... In fact, I'm saving my overtime from the Brewery now for it. I'm hoping to set a precedent of volume and quality. I'm not hung up on 'names,' but the poems have to be good.

Isn't it great when you don't have to worry about the commercial aspect of publishing? I started out with the thought that I would print at maybe a 100% loss; and I make it a point never to expect 'reimbursement' or 'help.'

I got a good secondhand, crank-type mimeo and a fairly accurate typing machine. So I exist: work all night in the Brewery as a lab tech to make coins to run on. Get free beer at work — so my beer-allowance goes into printing.

So goes us. We are entirely a one-horse affair — my wife and I. She makes coffee and I type. The whole gizmo happens on the kitchen table and, unfortunately, the dining room table and in the living room, the bedroom — and, occasionally, the bathroom.... But we do have a good circulation. Of course, University of South Florida's selection of No. 2 for the text for the summer poetry classes helped a lot....

Well, so much for the work, world, etc.

Jerry Burns

THE CRITIC REACTS IN VERSE (SO TITLED)

Dear Editors: I was reading The Trace While lounging under
a tree When a brilliant cardinal visited me. It fluttered and
twittered and twisted its head Until its eyes were on the
pages I read. ‘Cut! Cut!’ it chirped with a critic’s stare While
it pivoted around until its target was near. Then it lifted its
tail and carefully spread Its printer’s ink on the page I read.
It raised its head proudly, as if the deed was well done And it
soared away to its home in the sun.

Dovey L. Dowdle

DISCOURSE ON & EXPANSION OF SPEEDIE METHOD

Dear Editors: ... method of copy-writing by key-value words:
Interlock with 'Pulse' Trace '63 J. Cage, , '62 Arlene Z's
'Cogito, ergo su ... 'thinking & erasure (time's arrow) all at
once... Zing, string & Byng

Byng is balance & Beattles are rush Put em tght & you
have a mush & a hush And the push-pull signal of ' Nature,
tidal, acting by progress Itus Reditus, like the sun in its
course, an image of grace' (Pascal) Grace is space Occupied.
Time narrowing . . . and . . . is really harrowing, when you
mean to convert time's arrow at its Marrow (ref. A. F.
Franklyn's Skeletons & Marrow, re John Cage's SILENCE)
inclusive of bird in space or eye on the sparrow , , , ,
Copy-writing is a complex timeoriented arrow & set of
arrows, no different in principle than the set-traces of any
re-ferent like star child table Trace, The Mag. of Living
(arrow) literature . . . Arlene's ' the word as flesh because it
is' . . . Thinking and erasure (arrowing) all at once. David
Lyle

THE TENTH MUSE OF FRIDAY

by James Ryan Morris

She lives between
the fire and the void —
to the left,
houses appear
offering themselves
to the sea
as if ice would appear
and quiet
these places
(she laughs
as a stone
developing.

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JAMES BALDWIN

IN BLACK AND WHITE

by Milton VanSickle

FOR HIS NOVEL TO BE POPULAR today — with few exceptions — an author must concern himself with Communism, sexual oddities, or race relations. If the novel also is fairly well written, it very likely will be acclaimed by critics; the author not only will make a living from his works, he will soon become famous. He may even be praised as one of the leading writers of the Free World.

James Baldwin has concerned himself with two of the three popular topics; yet, though he has published three novels and is well-known outside the U.S.A. as a leading American writer, to most Americans, he is a leading Negro writer. The reason for this is simple: ‘Americans’ are Caucasians — preferably Anglo-Saxon; although, of late, any European ancestry is acceptable. Others are somehow interlopers. We do not call them Americans; we call them Jews, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Negroes, Neisei, Cherokees, and so on.

Of the three Baldwin novels (GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN; GIOVANNI’S ROOM; ANOTHER COUNTRY), the most recent, the last named, is a confused muddle of interweaving loves and hates, without symmetry or meaning. Except for Ida (and, earlier, Cass), none of the characters is more than a type. Which is to say: they are not convincing. The author poses them in situations, and they repeat (rather than create) conversations. Even their love-making is as if posed before a camera. For, this book deals with race relations — not human relations; and the exposition is as self-conscious and painful as race relations have become in the U.S.

Rufus, whose agonizing story fills the first sixty-odd pages, seems to be wearing a sign directed only to the White

Society and screaming: 'Look what you have done!' The rest of the pages are devoted to an attempt to solve the enigma of Rufus. But Baldwin does not solve the enigma — nor does he bring us closer to the solution. The characters remain confused; and this is his confusion, not theirs. Baldwin has too much to say, and he uses characters in situations to express his bitterness — rather than letting them speak for themselves.

When there are victims — and there always are victims — most of us tend to sympathize (which is a way of expressing superiority) or to empathize (which is a way of saying: Yes, we too have been victims of something or other at one time.). And we tend to fear or hate (which is an aggressive form of fear) the victimizer. But, who or what has victimized Rufus? Neither those in the novel — Vivaldo, Cass, Ida, Erik — nor any outside the novel (including the author) seem to know. Baldwin gives us violence instead of action, love-making instead of love, and points a resentful finger at White Society rather than at society's framework — which no man or men can control, but which determines the thoughts and attitudes of all society's members. Baldwin has attempted an 'existential novel' of individuals opposed to mass men, but his characters are only stereotyped fragments of the mass.

A more successful existential endeavor is GIOVANNI'S ROOM. However, this is a glossy, shallow, and — again — a self-conscious effort to explore existence; here, through homosexuality. This novel approaches the compelling simplicity of Camus, but is more simple than compelling. As far as treatment of homosexuality goes, it is not nearly so serious as studies by André Gide, nor so penetrating as those by Jean Genêt. The virtue of the book, for Baldwin, is that it is concerned solely with Caucasians — that it undertakes to deal with humans, not races. And by reason of this, the novel holds importance for Baldwin's development both as an author and as a person.

The earliest novel, *GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN*, combines terrifying magnificence with brooding malevolence, much like the frenzied masterpieces of Dostoevsky. This, too, is about humans, not types; not about race, but about Negroes. The torment of Gabriel, the love of Florence, the sensitive confusion of John, all are portrayed with tenderness and restraint. But Baldwin no longer writes like this; and where he then spoke for humanity, he now speaks for the Negro Or, better: he then spoke for himself.

Baldwin wrote one good novel, a good play (*THE AMEN CORNER*), and a group of good essays (*NOTES OF A NATIVE SON*). Then he 'sold out.' Not to 'commercialism' or 'dilettantism,' but to a 'cause.' In this, he follows in the path of Voltaire and Zola before him. Who can censure him for the feeling of necessity within, which compelled his choice?

We still pretend that a man may choose his own life. Of course this is a pretense, and always has been. For, sometimes it seems that the only freedom left is the freedom to deprive others of their freedom. We tend to distrust those who disagree with us; certainly, we distrust those who are different. Bowing to Freedom and God, we do not believe in ourselves; and yet, we do believe we are right—and it is imperative that we be right! Therefore, we hate foreigners—those unlike ourselves (which is also to say: those who believe in a different 'right'). We wish to preserve what we have and what we are; but these are threatened by antithetical views of others, and by Time itself, always destroying the present and constructing the future. This fear is basic to segregation and apartheid.

Men who lack well developed personal identities must find identification within a group. Such people cannot accept change, and it is difficult for them to share even the world with those unlike themselves. Each is prone to accuse the other; but all are guilty. Thus, most of us back away from a coming 'world-culture.' What meaning could our small

groups or our even smaller individualities have in such a culture? Moreover, while colored nations are gaining freedom, Caucasians are losing their dominance (their burden, if you will). Many Caucasians foresightedly and resignedly have sided—at least to an extent—with the Negro, accepting what best may be termed ‘white man’s equality.’ And this is a chief target of the Black Muslims: that the white man accepts the idea of the equality of the colored man while insisting on retaining actual dominance.

In his later essays (NOBODY KNOWS MY NAME and THE FIRE NEXT TIME) Baldwin is attempting to raise a rational voice above all the guilt, the hate, the lies. As ‘inferior peoples’ in Africa and Asia are demanding human rights—no less than full equality—so, in the U.S., the colored are making demands; and the Civil Rights Movement cannot be separated from the world movement. To cite historical precedents is to cite ‘limited’ precedents: the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the revolt of the Spanish Colonies, and so on. Many Caucasians believe ‘the revolution’ is over—but it seems hardly to have begun. Just a century ago, Max Stirner pointed out that ‘the men of the future will yet fight their way to many a liberty that we do not even miss.’

While a small number of American Negroes have joined the Black Muslims, it is almost impossible to find a Negro who does not thrill to every utterance of Elijah Muhammed (and Malcolm X). Baldwin has said that the virtue of the Black Muslims is that they have frightened the white man. But this can only be a virtue if one accepts the nonsense which has been with us for so long: the nonsense of Chamberlain, Wagner, Elizabeth Foerster-Nietzsche, Hitler, Goebbels, Bilbo, Faubus, Wallace—and now, that of Elijah Muhammed and Malcolm X. The terrible lie of races! The denial of the human race!

A more important contribution of the Black Muslims may be that they have glorified dark skin and wiry hair and have urged people having these characteristics to refuse to copy those having light skin and silky hair. Actually, this is a major step and should not need underscoring. The basic idea of racial—or group—superiority is detrimental to individual development. The Black Muslims have overstated their case—which is natural, this being a reaction, not an initial action. The thesis having been presented by the segregationists, the antithesis has evolved from the Black Muslims. Can there be a synthesis? Baldwin is one of those who are seeking it.

When a Caucasian looks in a mirror, he sees himself—more or less realistically. When a Negro looks in a mirror, he tends to see a Negro. He has been conditioned to this from childhood. When a Caucasian enters a crowded restaurant, people see a man—short or tall, fat or thin, etc. When a Negro enters the same restaurant, people see a Negro. Because of this, one of the most invidious of segregationist weapons must be identified as prior education of the Negro himself. This makes the split which destroys Rufus in *ANOTHER COUNTRY* inevitable—his unquestioning acceptance of the label, battling with fierce opposition of his own individual dignity as a human being.

But this sort of split is common to all; in a larger sense, it is the conflict of individual vs. group. It is a conflict that always has been with us; and there can be no final solution. As individuals, most of us are opposed to anarchists, criminals, sexual deviates—anyone who might, in our opinion, endanger the security of society. As a group, we tend to try to force such ‘dangerous’ individuals to conform to an acceptable pattern of behavior. Meanwhile, as individuals, we find it difficult to reach common agreement on the structure of the pattern and on the degree of force needed to preserve the society. Yet, only as a group can we

impress our standards upon others. At the same time, each individual within a group has his own view of the group's aims—while other groups are almost entirely in disagreement. Some few choose an eremitical solution—though they nonetheless are products of a group and cannot wholly disengage themselves (except physically).

In earlier writings, James Baldwin emphasized the individual; but his later emphasis is on the group: Negro. Any consideration of his works then finally is determined by our approach to them—whether as individuals or as members of a group. And literature ultimately is only the concern of the individual. Thus, the extent to which Baldwin's concern with the Negro overshadows his concern with the individual, measures society's gain and literature's loss.

‘THEY HAD MANY WORDS FOR IT’

Derral Pilgrim:

LATIN WRITERS AND SPEAKERS in ancient Rome were faced with a problem. One Latin proverb expressed the problem in this way: *Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt*. ‘May those who said our good things before us perish.’

Publius Terence (185-159 B.C.) said: *Nullum est jam dictum, quod non dictum prius*. ‘Nothing can now be said which has not been said before.’

We say: ‘There’s nothing new under the sun.’ And what was an epigram for Terence becomes a platitude for us. We are accused of triteness because nothing can be said which has not been said before by the Romans—or, for that matter, by the Greeks before them, and by others, before the Greeks. Terence also noted this, and it was remarked upon in many Latin proverbs.

An epigram is defined as ‘a bright or witty thought tersely and ingeniously expressed.’ When thousands of years of written records are considered, it’s almost impossible to come up with ‘a bright or witty thought’ which wasn’t thought of by the Romans.

For proof, consider this statement of Lucius Annaeus Seneca, the statesman and philosopher who resided in Rome from about 4 B.C. to A.D. 65. He said: *Non est ad astra mollis a terris via*. ‘There is no easy way from the earth to the stars.’ Although Seneca was speaking of immortality, his words could be applied to our current program to conquer space.

Most of our homey little sayings, our platitudes, were recorded, perhaps not for the first time, in the days of the Roman Republic and early Empire. ‘As ye sow, so shall ye reap’ was voiced by Marcus Tullius Cicero, statesman,

orator, and author, as: *Ut semen tem faceris, ita et metes.* 'Big oaks from little acorns grow' has its counterpart in the Latin proverb: *Tandem fit surculus arbor*, 'a shoot at length becomes a tree.'

The list of thoughts first recorded in ancient times can be almost endless. 'Every cloud has a silver lining?' Latin proverb: *Post nubila Phoebus*. Also: *Post tenebras lux*. The former may be freely translated: 'The sun shines forth after the clouds have passed.' The latter, simply: 'After darkness comes light.'

'It takes money to make money' may be discovered in the dramatist, Titus Maccius Plautus (254? - 184 B.C.): *Necesse est facere sumptum, qui quaerit lucrum*. 'It is necessary that he who looks for gain should incur expense.' The saying: 'Don't send a boy to do a man's job?' This was a Latin proverb 2,000 years ago: *Ne puerō gladium*. 'Don't trust a boy with a sword.'

Not only in the field of the 'tersely and ingeniously expressed' thought did the Romans anticipate speakers and writers of our day. A statement of the historian, Cornelius Tacitus (A.D. 55-117) might well have been made by a modern statesman trying to justify the cost of a national defense program: 'The peace of nations is not to be preserved without arms, troops cannot be maintained without pay and their pay cannot be made good without taxes.'

The influence of Rome on modern law and the use of Latin in contemporary medical terminology and medical prescriptions are well known. Such laws as: *Nemo bis punitur pro eodem delicto*, 'No man shall be punished for the same crime twice,' have been passed down to us intact. Both law and medical students still struggle with Latin words and phrases which once echoed in the ancient marble halls.

The Romans believed in education. Cicero said: 'Cultivation is as necessary to the mind as food to the body.' The famous lyric and satirical poet, Quintus Horace (65 - 8

B.C.), thought the younger generation was going to the dogs: 'The age of our fathers, which was worse than that of our ancestors, produced us, who are about to raise children even more vicious than ourselves.'

The Romans even had words applicable to modern warfare. They would call it: *bellum interne cinum*, 'a war of mutual destruction,' or *bellum letale*, 'a deadly war.' They would describe the cold war in the words of Claudian, the poet of the late years of the decline: 'A severer war lurks under the show of peace.' The Dutch scholar, Erasmus, writing in the Sixteenth Century, went back to ancient Rome for words to describe Man's inhumanity to Man: *Homo homini lupus*, 'Man is a wolf to man.'

Those who are trying to weaken the NATO alliance well might consider what was said by Caius Sallust, the historian (86 - 34 B.C.): 'The safety of a kingdom does not depend so much upon its armies, or its treasures, as on its alliances.'

In the field of the arts, writers — and also composers — have borrowed liberally from the good utterances of the old Romans. Among the epigrams of Martial (A.D. 43 - 104) is an enigmatic statement to a forgotten man called Zabidi: 'I do not love you. I cannot assign a reason, but this I know, that I do not love you.' This inspired the well known bit of verse:

I do not love you, Dr. Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell;

But this at least I know full well, I do not love you, Dr. Fell.

A Gilbert and Sullivan song which advises a ruler to 'let the punishment fit the crime,' could have been based on Horace's: *Ne scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello*, 'Do not pursue him who deserves a slight whip with the weightier scourge.' In the First Century A.D., Petronius Arbiter said: *Mundus universus exercet histrioniam*, 'All the world practices the art of acting.' Shakespeare amended this to read: 'All the world's a stage, and all the men and women

merely players.'

The great Augustan poet, Ovid, had advice for the politicians of our day who fear the extremes of the right or the left. He said: 'You will advance most safely in the middle.'

The older Vergil spoke of gossip: 'It flourishes in its quickness of motion, and gains new strength in its progress.' And Seneca could have been speaking about sloppy homework done by modern students when he said: 'No book can be so good as to be profitable when negligently read.'

So, there's not much new under the sun, and not much we can say which hasn't been said before. It may justifiably be asserted that the Romans said some things better than we. We say: 'Don't kick a man when he's down.' The Latin proverb is: 'Even rabbits can insult a dead lion.' While we declare: 'You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear,' the Romans' expression was: 'A Mercury is not to be carved out of every wood.' We say an overwordy speaker is 'talking through his hat.' But Horace passed down to us: 'The mountain is in labour, and a ridiculous mouse is brought forth.' Plautus's 'Where there is honey, there will be bees,' seems much more expressive than our 'Where there's smoke, there's fire.'

And what modern statement compares in terseness and wit with Julius Caesar's familiar message from the Gallic war front informing those at home in Rome of a great military victory: *Veni, vidi, vici*, 'I came, I saw, I conquered?'

Accordingly—even though it's been said before—we perhaps can learn something from the thousands of years of written records. Like the ancients before us, we are faced with the problem of speaking and writing interestingly. If we fall into platitudes or use trite phrases, still another Latin-descended comment might be applied: *De lanâ caprinâ*, 'About goat's wool'—not worth consideration.

ROT

Louis Gallo

(A three-part editorial arrangement comprising a portion of Mr. Gallo's work under this title and, with his permission, parts of some of his more recent writings. See notes at close.)

AXIOMS

I. Existentialism, which is a word, has reference to a special and a specifiable — i.e. an organic (therefore, by definition, a 'real') — variety of rot, its area of attack and devastation, the brain.

II. Brain-rot affects a body's functioning totally; existentialism, the word, has reference also to this total body morbidity, this rottenness.

III. Once having struck, the disease is fixed permanently in the body, the problem as with old age — being one, then, not of cure but of accommodation.

ARGUMENT

Three nights ago — I quote Pascal: ' . . . completely at rest, without passions, without business, without diversion, without study' — I experienced an attack of the disease: not worse than others of a similar kind experienced during the past half-dozen years, no cause for special alarm, certainly I wasn't going to die from it. I had finished my dinner; the dishes had been washed, dried, and put away. The evening was there, stretched out in front of me, mine, to do with as I pleased. I had planned, earlier, to give the time to writing letters or to reading. I entered the living room (which is also my study). And just at this instant I awoke.

Awoke into that reality which no man.

In short, an attack.

Of what?

Obviously, of 'existentialism.' Of fear and trembling. Of nausea, nothingness — what all the existentialists are moaning and slobbering about. One might say it perhaps

this way: For no ascertainable reason I had suddenly awakened as if from a trance (my natural state) and there I was. Where? In a jungle? In an elevator in a large Johannesburg building? In a dark cellar bistro in Istanbul? WHAT AM I DOING HERE? This is the unvoiced shriek that signals the beginning of the attack. And, of course, one can explain, step by step, logically and reasonably, what one is doing there. (I was in my living room. This was where I lived. What was so weird about that?) But just this is what gives the nightmare its peculiarly daylight, 'existential' quality. Life itself is the nightmare. One has 'awakened' from it. And now what? Does one jump out of one's own skin, out of life? One is paralyzed. To 'come to one's senses' is to re-enter the nightmare, life. Has one an alternative? Well, clearly, yes. One can refuse to re-enter the nightmare: one can kill oneself.

I remained where I was standing, mute, motionless. If I were to panic, the consequence, I knew, would be a pain.... Whereas, if I allowed.... I would give it thought. Meanwhile, I would remain fixed to my spot until moved — but by what, of course, I had no way of knowing.

In time I returned to the kitchen. I stared a long two, three minutes at the refrigerator door. I opened the door. The attack became unendurable. (Had I known it would? — and forced it anyway?) The thought of putting something in my mouth (I had only just finished eating). The thought of mouths, millions, trillions. Fish, big ones, swallowing, through their mouths, eating, whole, alive, smaller. Snakes, swallowing, through their mouths, eating, whole, alive.... Disgusting!

And another two or three long minutes passed before I could bring myself to close the refrigerator door.

I returned — I was quite 'awake,' entirely in control of all my faculties — into my living room. I took from its place on the bookshelf above my desk Pascal's PENSEES. Pascal. That

one. Who had suffered, three hundred years ago, exquisite, excruciating pangs of just this angst which now gripped me. Pascal. No more than the sound of his name, given my extraordinary state (but was it, really, so extraordinary?), was enough now to flood my brain with a foul-smelling poison, inducing a kind of dementia of depression, a weariness and lethargy unmistakably pathological — by which I mean: clearly not attributable to fatigues brought on by the day's labors.

And I sat, then, fully thirty minutes in my comfortable reclining reading chair — my 'agony' chair, I call it — before I could bring myself to open the book.

Which I opened, then, at random.

Reading the words (page 314, thought 894: 'Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction;' p. 217, thought 647: 'Two errors: 1. To take everything literally. 2. To take everything spiritually;' p. 131, thought 414: 'Men are so necessarily mad . . .') merely to get their 'smell,' rather than to grasp (more accurately: be grasped by) their meaning.

His thoughts on weariness — and, at last, if I should feel up to it, his crowning thought, his thought 139, on diversion — were to be the finishing blow. The evening had really only begun. I would take this, I thought, slow.

I think reading — if I may interpose at this point this irrelevant relevant point — whatever its purpose, is an obscenity. Reading a newspaper, I think, is the final obscenity, a lewd, really an unspeakable, indecency. My attacks include always a lacerating sense of my own indecency (although I never read newspapers; and never, even more fanatically, news magazines): reading is the major activity of my leisure hours.

My impatience to have my thrill, indecently once having opened the book — and the image now comes to me: a man having fought down his sense of himself as made of finer

stuff; the steps climbed; the door knocked on, opened; the whore, tired-looking, standing there, puzzled; then suddenly smiling, amused, throwing open her shop for business: O, it's you! I remember you! Come in! — broke down, very soon, every semblance of good breeding. And there I was, the attack at its height, wallowing in the delirium of Pascal's voluptuous, existential (a redundancy: what is existential is by definition rotten, voluptuous) angst.

126

Description of man: dependency, desire of independence, need.

127

Condition of man: inconstancy, weariness, unrest.

130

Restlessness. — If a soldier, or labourer, complain of the hardship of his lot, set him to do nothing.

131

Weariness. — Nothing is so insufferable to man as to be completely at rest, without passions, without business, without diversion, without study. He then feels his nothingness, his forlornness, his insufficiency, his dependence, his weakness, his emptiness. There will immediately arise from the depth of his heart weariness, gloom, sadness, fretfulness, vexation, despair.

Could I go on from here, all the way to thought 139? How much more of the evening was left to kill? I had been a pig. I had gone beyond surfeit. I hated the object now which I had sought out for my pleasure. Pascal, sick, hopelessly, constantly sniveling, whining, tormented without surcease by thoughts that he would one day be dead — and what did it all come to? A mistake, when he thought of it, that he had been born at all. And an outrage, when I thought of it (and such were my thoughts at the height of the angst), that, all innocent, only just eighteen, wanting only to love life, a freshman at Columbia, famed alma mater of baseball

immortal Lou Gehrig — ‘Columbia Lou,’ they called him: they called me that! (O, agony! O wild west went!) — the world mine, ahead of me, waiting to be conquered, and this poison poured onto my brain, Greek Tragedy, St. Augustine, Pascal, insinuated insidiously by those sly, laughing, perverse professors, who, in the guise of giving me — ha! ha! — a ‘Liberal Education.’ . .

But, no! I don’t intend to portray here in militant metaphors and sickly similes the bilious greens and putrescent yellows of my state. Too many already have more than adequately detailed the delirium: my aim is not pictorial presentation, moreover, but is dialectical, homiletic, analytic, prophetic, hortatory, poetic — all of these and yet, finally, none of these (I don’t really know my aim). Let it be enough to inform my reader that the brain-rot had swept over the enviroing nerve networks and the body was consumed now entirely in the passion. Could I have averted this full fury and fervour of the attack? Did I have to pick Pascal? Idle questions. Sufficient to say that I arrived, at last — my dinner, at this juncture, swilling in my throat, my head hammering, tears coming into my eyes — to Pascal’s crowning pensée, his pensée 139. Unnecessary to add that I got through only the opening few lines, and through only snatches of these.

139

Diversions.—When I have occasionally set myself to consider the different distractions of men, the pains and perils to which they expose themselves at court or in war, whence arise so many quarrels, passions, bold and often bad ventures, etc., I have discovered that all the unhappiness of men arises. . .

At which point I had to stop — or I’d puke. Taking the book up again several minutes later:

But, on further consideration, when, after finding the
cause of all our ills. . .

Until. . . Etc.

THE PROBLEM (FROM 'THE JOURNAL'—LATER)

I awoke this morning near 5:00, screaming. Not literary, not aloud, and not really screaming, of course (what would the neighbors think!). But leave it. I awoke miserable, say. Later, near 6:00, I experienced the agony at its optimum intensity. I had no reason for going on. For getting out of bed. For living.

So at ten minutes to seven (okay), I got out of bed. And I saw it clearly: my problem is not happiness. Even less is it life. My condition through breakfast was not panic (the pursuit of happiness), it was patience. If I took it slow. Meanwhile, two aspirins. I had absolutely nowhere to go. No psychosis rigidly required my ritual acquiescence, my appealing presence. And if you tell me my problem was in unecstatic fact the unromantic necessity of keeping myself alive, the business of feeding myself (hence 'life'), I reply that this problem had been solved. Anyway, for today.

Am I losing it? Are we out of sight of our starting point? 'I got it bad' — to quote a man in love, carried away. Except that sanity — a state of no psychosis — is presently the passion (if sanity can be called a passion). I can't care. (And there you have it: I've said it.) Tell me Christians are bayoneting Buddhists in Viet Nam. I hate Christians. I should care. No. I also hate Buddhists. In a state of sanity, one says okay, moreover, to all of it. To the starving in Peru and Ecuador, the slaughter in Russia (numbering millions) of Russians by Stalin (also Rumanians), the rising (alarmingly) suicide rate in Singapore, São Paulo, and San Francisco. Everything.

And yet, at 5:00 this morning, that scream. Was I saying okay to it all in that scream?

I had it, during the tea-break a half-hour ago, bad. I turned on the radio. You see my problem: in a state of no

psychosis, by whatever means to enter a psychosis. Once inside, I'd care. Then: Shoot the bastards! It's an exhilarating sensation. Like when Jack told Nikita he was going to drop a bomb on Moscow, wow! Like you can't have your way — so you blow up the world! That's how it's done — inside your psychosis. Also inside mine. I'm often blowing up the world. But not today (today I'm sane).

So I drank my tea and laughed remembering something I'd heard last night on the radio. Governor Wallace of Alabama explaining there's no race problem in the South. It's all a conspiracy on the part of the Communists — backed (financed) by the radio and TV networks (Communist sympathizers). And so it is (they are) — if this happens to be your psychosis.

Meanwhile, here I am, it's almost noon — what about me? How do I escape my excruciating sanity — start caring? But this (exactly) is my problem: I fight caring. The instant I'm safe inside my psychosis, caring. I'm dropping bombs, blowing up the world. It's got to stop, I tell you, this hideous (murderous) caring. Starting when? Starting right now! Starting with me!

ENCOUNTER (NEXT YEAR, IN ‘THE JOURNAL’)

Enter Yalesh Emki. Like that. No warning.

‘I’m calling from the gas station up the street. I knocked at your front door and no one answered.’

‘I live on the second floor.’

He introduced the Miss as Anrocksa, his daughter. Before I could say Hi, Anrocksa, a pint bottle was resting on my kitchen table, four-fifths of its contents gone.

When the phone had rung, I’d been eating. The radio, turned on. Time: a minute or two after 6 : 00. Emki and Anrocksa stayed until a minute or two after 8 : 30.

And now I’m smiling. How do I summarize the visit in a few hundred words? Because I was proofreading this morning and tomorrow may receive a fresh batch. It’s not a question of stopping everything, here’s Yalesh Emki, O, boy, yip, bee! So I’ve got to do it today, while there’s yet time, before I dissociate and can’t care. Because he’s not the Messiah; he’s a crazy-mixed-up kid; nobility consists entirely, in his view, in the ability to laugh at one’s own idiocy; I’m a nut. That’s right. He told me so — to my face.

But first, some statistics. Emki is twenty-six; Anrocksa is four. He’s about my height, but thinner, appears smaller; my first guess was that he was about twenty-three. He features his hair; wears it in great abundance on top of his head; no beard; not a weirdo.

My overpowering first impression was of a character stepping out of an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel — even of the Undergraduate Fitzgerald himself bursting into my rooms. In particular, the verve. I couldn’t get him to sit down. The remnants of my meal lay shamefully on my kitchen table — should I finish eating or perhaps get him to sit down in the living room? And to keep Anrocksa occupied, I gave her an

apple.

But let's not go jumping to conclusions: Yalesh Emki is out of a novel by Yalesh Emki. My particular difficulty was in never having read his works; I had only the half-dozen letters to base a response on. I finished the mashed potatoes and suggested we move into the living room.

And the dialogue: I can't remember a single line of it. 'I haven't met anyone I could talk to in eight months,' I vaguely recall his saying. And he treated me to his opinions about Melville, Salinger, James Joyce, James Jones, Mozart, Suburbia, and incest. There was no way I could organize the talk — he wouldn't allow it. 'I'm a romantic,' he declaimed a half-dozen times, by way both of apology and defiance. He called himself 'one of that rock-and-roll hip crowd'—signifying he had done the beatnik bit, buddied with Los Angeles-Mexican-Americans, taken dope; although that was over and done with now.

Let me say this: The Yalesh Emki of the letters was not the Yalesh Emki who sat across from me in my living room last night. No connection. I was disappointed. I had expected someone more out of Kerouac. Yalesh has dark hair, so the Fitzgerald illusion faded; the character I was observing appeared at times to be out of Salinger. (Yalesh can't stomach Salinger.) I didn't want that. Not that I wanted the Kerouac, but the Kerouac is a more interesting alienation. And then everything went to pieces: impossible to place him in anyone's novel.

I played it as placid as I could. Several times I felt inclined to interrupt the action and say: No, you're wrong, Yalesh. Meaning: You're real; you're not the way I had you figured. But I remained silent.

Now, a word concerning myself: Yalesh cramped my style. He intended to. In a way it was the technique Cassius Clay used to unnerve Sonny Liston. 'I am king! I am the greatest!' And never still for a second. Terrific vitality.

Yalesh is not king; he's not the greatest. I mean it's too obvious. He's too real.

What game were we playing? And yet we were deadly in earnest—took ourselves very seriously. Yalesh said, reading my letters and the things I had sent him (particularly the Journal entries), he thought I was a complete nut. 'I am a nut,' I said. 'Well, so am I,' he said, not to be outdone. And I don't think we laughed. We meant it. Being a nut makes you superior. We were both feeling superior.

I'm not doing it, giving a picture of the evening. In particular, of myself, my style cramped. He wouldn't give me an opening. I can't recall delivering even one sermon. I can't recall speaking a single scintillating line.

He's young. He reminds you of when you were young. That's your problem. Growing old. You sit at your desk: that's all you can think about: life is finished for you: you're growing old. That's what you mean by all that bullshit about 'annihilating actuality,' 'a desperation equally annihilating,' 'instants so sublime as to seem positively mythical.'

CONCLUDING RETROSPECT (LETTER FOR ‘THE JOURNAL’)

The perils of a life lacking in belief. The need each day to construct a cosmos the night will smash to smithereens. I once took deadly seriously problems in trigonometry. Elaborated myths to account metaphorically for slights to my physical efficiency. A sergeant whose disposition displeased me I magnified with Evil personified—my own cause was Good. (Pascal, *pensée* 894: ‘Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.’) And so backboned by belief, struck sufficient terror to keep under convenient cover all who might critically have maimed me. To this end: here I am.

And sorry the sight is.

A man in a ramble.

Though pride props where faith fails—his gait, while a sham, is not a shamble.

Pascal, pensée 910: 'Must we kill to prevent there being any wicked? This is to make both parties wicked instead of one.'

This . . . by way of introducing the ultimate in a life lacking in belief—the man who elects to be known by any other (but not his own) name. The final failure of nerve. The masks men assume—the radical alterings of their egos—the heartlessness at the center of art—the camouflage, the subterfuge, the connivance, the chicanery, the cunning, the sophistry—buttressed (all) by belief in an extraterrestrial complicity . . . the raw ruses of real-life roles. All of this I've renounced. My life lacks what it takes to take seriously what is altogether at its core lacking in life. I mean belief. I mean in myself. (Of course I take seriously those who kill cheerfully to fill their voids, in the name of their vacuity, from 'religious conviction'—Pope Paul, Barry Goldwater, the governor of Alabama, George Wallace, men of 'faith' I take very seriously.) I mean that nothing I say on Tuesday has meaning for me the morning after—after the cosmos I constructed has been through its nighttime careening, smashed (in sleep), the chaos complete at the instant of awaking.

(Editor: In ROT, Louis Gallo has used the statements of certain contemporary critics, to elucidate his ideas about the problems of the serious writer at this time. The first Journal excerpt is from a longer passage concerned with the same basic psychological question here revealed as central to his own personal problem. The concluding 'letter' section seems to admit 'involvement'; that the veiled admission is speculative, even couched in repudiatory terms, does not nullify the impression of a 'conclusion'—whether or not Gallo himself would concede that he has arrived at one.)

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YA HSIEN

LO-YANG . 1942 . IN TIME OF WAR

After springtime
Incendiary bombs held up the main street like a fan.
On the burnt chair
Of red sandalwood
My mother's hard smile rose to become a souvenir.
Thin-legged bees made their hives in the Seven-Mile
Shrine.
My mother was half-drowned in the many
Dove-gray deaths last year,
And when the world did and re-did the same thing,
Her shoulder was made of stone.
That night between remorse and drowsing
A donkey brayed and brayed and a regiment of soldiers
Went down before the light-poles beneath the windows
To spread out their papers.
The leaves of the Stone-Wood were so thick:
It was said nobody took any sleep.
Yet from beginning to end
What they wanted was but to force you to choose a
river;
To make you find a denouement,
Or write a long letter to your slim mistress in a
neighboring village,
Or startled by a field of buckwheat.
But all these were done.
The people were too tired to wait and expect and after
all you had
to participate
In the making of grass amid the buzzing of death;
And even —
Angels were no longer necessary.

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YA HSIEN

ON THE STREETS OF CHINA

Ya Hsien

The blotting paper of dreams and moons.
Poets put on suits of corduroy.
The public telephones cannot be connected to the
celestial Nu Wo.¹
Thoughts walk on roads like scripts on oracle bones.
To feast on cooked wheat in the immense cauldron with
the Muse.
Sandwiches and beef steaks are thus left unattended.
Poets put on suits of corduroy.
In the dust, Huangti,² our first Emperor, shouts.
The trolley buses have left our Queen's phaeton rusted.
Since they have gas-lights and neon lights.
We will not lend them our old old sun.
Recall, the greatest battle with Tzu-yu,³ Huangti's
enemy.
Recall, the Song of Reeling Silk sung by Lui-chu,
Huangti's queen.
Recall that poets did not put on suits of corduroy.
No congress meetings and nothing had ever really
happened.
Confucius had never imposed royalties on books by
Laotze.
Airplanes roar and pass by a row of smoke-shrouded
willows.
The tides of students' strikes dash on the eroded palace
walls.
Without coffee or ever initiating a revolution, Li Po wrote
his poetry,
Not to mention his not having to put on suits of
corduroy.

Unexpectedly Whitman's collection did not come from
Tun Huang.

Oceanliners say: Beyond the four seas there are another
four seas.

A beggar in the subway stretches out his black bowl.

Sailors flirt with girls scantily dressed.

And toward the left: red lights, and toward the right: red
lights.

And poets put on suits of corduroy.

YA HSIEN

The advertisement of quinine is pasted on the face of our
Husbandry Master.

When spring comes, everyone is busy talking about
interplanetary trips.

Steam-whistles strangle the workmen. Pamphlets on
democracy.

Bus-stops. Lawyers and electric chairs.

On the gates of the city you will see no more heads
hanging

as deterrents.

Fu Hsi's Eight Diagrams cannot catch up with the Nobel
prizes.

The cypress in Confucius' home town is made into railway
ties.

If you want to put on anything, put on suits of corduroy.

The blotting paper of dreams and moons.

Poets put on suits of corduroy.

People say there has never been such a creature as the
dragon.

So feast on cooked wheat in the immense cauldron with
the Muse.

So thoughts walk on roads like scripts on oracle bones.

And wait for the people coming out at the end of all sexy
movies.

And put on suits of corduroy.

¹ Nu Wo, the legendary imperial lady (2738? B.C.) who attempted to repair the cracks of the firmament with pieces of rocks. ² Huangti, the first Emperor of China (2698 B.C.). ³ The battle between Huangti and Tzu-yu was said to be the greatest ancient battle, during which Huangti invented the first compass. Lui-chu, Huangti's queen, who first discovered the use of silk. Tun Huang, a district in northwest Kansu province, noted for its priceless mural paintings done in the T'ang Dynasty; and thus, the symbol of great culture. Husbandry Master or Shen Nung, a legendary emperor (2838 B.C.), who first discovered the use of herbs for medicine. Fu Hsi, brother of Nu Wo, a legendary emperor (2852-2738 B.C.), famous for his invention of the Eight Diagrams, the first mystic form of prophetic expression which later developed into writing. He was also the first who taught the people to have their food cooked.

SHANG CHIN

GRADIENT OF THE MILKY WAY

In the north-north-west of the empyrean
 The sheep-flock are muteness, in file —
 One fashion of longing
 In another fashion.
 The pasture lies in the east of the Milky Way while
 The pond in the deep of the heart,
 The heart at the corpulent loins of the guitar.
 But in one night the Milky Way
 With its gradient
 Seems to have twisted silence
 And lowered its elemental leaf
 To the water
 To receive those stars.
 The Milky Way lowers itself to the water.
 Stars cry out silently.
 Many simple limbs and forms
 Are moved by their own shadows.
 The guitar sails on the sound-wave and
 the meadow
 Drifts under the cordage;

Sheds tears
and becomes the sister of the pond.

SHANG CHIN

**BETWEEN THE HIGH-TENSION WIRE AND THE
GRAPE TRELLIS THE MILKY WAY STOOPS TOWARD
ITSELF, THAT IS, STRAIGHT TOWARD MY
SOUTH-EAST. THE DEAD SOUND OF THE MOTOR IS
BOUND BY TWO LINES OF EUCALYPTUS. THE
MILDEWED SIGHING BECOMES A SOUND-BLAST AT
MIDNIGHT. MY FRIEND ASKS THE WAY WITH A
SUGAR CUBE AND GETS LOST IN THE JUNGLE
UNDER THE EAVES. NO ONE KNOWS HOW AT SEA
YOU WERE, SEEING HER WASH HER HAIR,
MEANWHILE THE MILKY WAY IS BENEATH THE
PASTURE; NO ONE KNOWS HOW AT SEA I WAS,
SEEING YOU DRY YOUR HAIR IN THE SUN. GOD
OF THE EARTH, HOW BORING IT IS TO DIE!
TIME LEAKS AWAY IN THE MARKET-BASKET TO
BECOME BEE-HIVES TO MAKE HONEY THAT
TASTES SWEET ONLY TO THE BLIND.**

Ever since the Milky Way moved its gradient To the flat,
flat corner of my forehead In the north-north-west of the
empyrean There is day and night — Night gone never returns
Day come never goes again — March jolts on our shoulders,
Skirts are burned by our gaze, pretty bodies Dissolve in a
lane of sunshine, Leaving the gradient of the Milky Way In
the empty drinking-glass.

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SHANG CHIN

TAIPEI, 1960

I Beside the exhausted day and feeling like charcoal I anticipate her breathing her last, using rose crepe paper to kindle the clouds, allowing a half-closed window a fine decoration. Beyond the tile-kiln in the distant suburb, a solitary expression of the eyes seems to have burned and scorched the invisible other side of the mountain.

II On the main street the day flings its heart out of its bosom and hangs down slowly along the frigid buildings and pacifies us who are looking into the daylight, taking down our sunglasses. The blood in the endocardium is obscurely dark and genial and its amplitude makes him become once again a mole: We are charcoal, not prepared in the tilery, but come to what we are by burning ourselves. If someone walks toward the west, it is only because the wind from the movie screen is also cold and because of this, one's desire increases to smoke and drink.

III Fountainless city, O pitiful sunset, let me praise you by a shower. For a long time I have not spit on others with tears. As to the four obstinate iron beasts, the saliva from their mouths describes for us a hand that can never be retrieved.

IV In the New Park just above the turnstile, a naughty boy, as if to hurry the ants on their way, directs night to come in from this side; meanwhile day goes out from the other.

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SHANG CHIN

EMOTION ABOVE SEA LEVEL

After the rainy season has begun, the vultures stop their happy but fear-inspiring whistle in the vacant valley.

How come that you remember a retired ship? Sea oysters made a relief of the anchor, the hilarious shoals unscrupulously returning home empty-handed. A negligent mouse woke up from its two years' sleep and started to weep on the deck. In truth, you were but a dog in service. A rainy day might not be a day for a holy feast. The goodhearted Prince of India would not give you one of his Hong Kong feet. The wind-hunter came back with nothing but a red bell-shaped nose....

Wait until nightfall when I shall run away for a hundred and eighty minutes, going along the firewood-pickers' path up to the summit where the night, selfish, grudging me even a piece of watermelon, uses my held-back tears to smash into pieces the stars of champagne.

FROM DEATH IN THE STONE-CELL

1.

Only casually lifting up my head toward a neighbor's
lane, I am stupified
In a morning rainbow, walking with a serpent's gait.
The dark hair does not tangle in the blood,
As one, with his incompleteness, his long sullenness,
Holding a black tributary.
My face spreads like clouds, and thus, the bitter pear
tree.
The two pupils move behind the eyes,
Moving toward directions people dare not talk about :
I am a sawed-off bitter pear tree
On whose annual rings you can still hear clearly winds
and cicadas.

2.

To all knocking at the door the door-rings answer with
ebullience
of the past,
As all my brothers will come and drink my foreheadful
of anxiety:
Your thirst is like a white flower in my room;
I have to open my eyes only slightly and there will be
sound
Tinkling from the walls down on the plates served to
guests.
And afterwards, an afternoon of bitter arguing and all
kinds of unclean
revelations —
Your language is a heap of unwashed clothes,
Being hurt always like people without a constant home.
When the tree's profile is split by the light of a stone
crevice,

Its height gives me the stature of a building's firmness.

Mo Lo-fu

18.

Don't spit in my face, brothers, for having completed a
building.

You will wake up from winter like pajamas of spring
And will be like fallen teeth and woods stripped of their
skeletons,

So weak, so much like the grass roots crawling on the
ground —

The blood-lost rock will be flagellated for stealing the
sun.

Always teased, I am a citadel, a pit on the parapets.

Romanticism paints my soul on a red-hot gun-case.

Today's voice will be congealed into tomorrow's
countenance.

If on the veranda only an incomplete head is hanging,
All of you will hurrah just because the guillotine is too
crude.

19.

And so you divide the feast of your own body in the
dugouts,
Like doctors who write their theses with plasma
exchanging reputations
for eyeballs,
When guests leave the session one by one,
There will be no more discussion why the sun doesn't
come out from
the gun barrel
So as to let war write biographies for generals.
Finding complaisance in a lizard's eyesight and
obstinacy in its
skin complexion,
At noon, I thought you could be the same sort of
animal,
And thought of war — war is a black skirt that forever
defies folding.
When death kicks in two the rainbow above my roof,
I suddenly remember you had a pair of eyes once eaten
by the cuttlefish.

MO LO-FU

35.

Sound and countenance coming toward me from the
front, I look up
With the absorption of one taking a shower, receiving
its regard
With my parched lips.
In order to tell where to put this ladder
I jump up a second time to glance at the sun rise the
sun set.
How sour! this color, always tempting us to grope in a
certain direction
And following its turns, to pursue it along the veins of a
leaf.
If all flowers were faithful to Spring but disgrace
themselves to Autumn,
We would wait ruefully in order to hear the one real cry
From the fruit shell when it cracks.

41.

And morning is a beetle that walks on its back,
Chewing as it goes on. I am the leftover night,
Barely hearing stars crying among the joints of teeth.
I write my dying commands on the wind and on the sun
about to rise,
And only by sneezing can I remember what eats me is
myself.
On the forehead is propped up a black tent, like a tear
lodging on the
cheek.
I walk into the sun and come out of the sunflower,
Not knowing whether wearing green clothes would look
like clouds,
Which being single, grow lean from sickness in a valley.
After I finish carving death on the tombstone, I break
the knife in two.

Mo Lo-fu

42.

Sisters can fumble out some love even from
palm-reading.
The red-faced god, who supports the ground-structures
with soft
cheekbones,
Sends out diverse fun through the tip of the tongue.
And you are crinkled
flowers
Thrown away by those gone and taken up again by
those coming —
You are sounds of shoes that die on the streets and
wake on the streets.
Like a great serpent sloughing off its skin
The city of Spring scatters bloodstained scales.
You come around to see, then complain: that the
street's surface is not
bright enough,
Tempting me to scoop out one of my eyes to supplement
it.
O God! What I can offer before your feet is but this
much anger.

CHANG MO

EDGE OF PURPLE

A shadow undulates among the hundred flowers
Harkening to the reviving reading and singing that fall
On clean tips of branches along the brimming fragrance
of
The water of spring
The water of spring
Bushes of dark hair, fleecy tufts of early grass
A mirror-lake, an orchid sombre —
Purple-lovers, they say, are blessed

Purple-lovers, mutated they say,
To gird up a dress at the waist with unseizable colors
And heart — how deep is the half we caress and caress!
Didn't we once enter the low-breathing
Dream-sea? Didn't we meet when you
Lightly shook your wave-hurrying flower-umbrella
As if turning yourself over again and again
Breaking into sounds . . . ?
What is the rhythm that runs against you?
No reason to climb upward,
no reason to drink up the all-wet interior
Like the fog's sound and light
glueing up the white edges of our lips
And with silence smash our flesh?
The sun reflects, the sun releases, the sun reveals
The plough and the diversified timbre
Sow seeds on her purple
Plaited curls. Oh — How could one say that this is a lie?
If it is not the rainbow erected by nature toward the
evening
If you would not mind our overly-heavy steps
Why don't you lift your skirt just slightly
To throw out a handful of stars and jump upon them

PAI CHIU

AUTUMN

On the face, identical every year, as if
We have lived thousands of years of love, autumn
Remains the way autumn has been. Those
Bean-sprout faces chased after by the wheel of war
We are like fresh fish starting to rot
Rotting rotting rotting rotting rotting
In the world's pool, the low-clouded sky from afar
Is like the loaded belly of a short-breathed pregnant
woman
Every year the identical face. Many thousand years we
lived.
Ai! those iron-shoes take turns to ravish our wife of
hope!
We are a deserted roadside house looking
Emptily at the road in front of the door
disappearing into the distance

CHENG CHOU-YU

THE PROPHET OF NAKEDNESS

To be naked together with a mail boat in the tropical
bay
The good-looking muscle of this steel animal
Was striped with some green tattoo
I remember I did not put on anything
(Not even a stripe of tattoo)
If not for the shadow of some Chinese red trees
I would be death-stunned by the long-feathered sea
birds
I was then a sailor thrown here and there
Because I had snipped off the shadows of all travelers to
brew wine
I disdain those sojourners pretending to cover their
lower limbs
To leave behind too many children
O when spring comes, this naked body of mine,
drinking wine,
will be
beautiful like a red coral

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CHENG CHOU-YU

THE MOUNT OF MIGHT : IMPRESSIONS

Unable to go farther east, fearing our toes might kick into the
soft belly of the early sun We walk into a line of fish under
the corridor of the sky, Unable to go farther west, west being
the ridgepole of happiness.

Meteorites strike on our shoulders of coarse linen.

Water gurgles from the native town of stars.

And mountains, budlike, lock the flowers

Under our bare feet,

Unable to go farther ahead, ahead being sky's end.

Great pines larkspurred Are pooled by white clouds.
Although we can live forever by casting the fishing-line, We
cannot forget the tattered road we came by.

Void and void and void We do not hope to turn our heads
And once we ferry ourselves over there We'll be where we
turn our heads

ISSUE P. 252 · SCAN P. 54

YUAN TEH-HSING

FROM THE WAY OF THE BIRD

VI O night! If clamor is not purely hunger, can it be otherwise? The sunshine stored by the hay is eaten up by the soil; and language, if refrigerated, is threatened to become a rainbow. The breath of the meadow is gathered at the pores of the skin. The footfalls in the distant veins. And as to the rose, it is an unlikely thought that people will speak against the red. O Night! If clamor is not purely hunger, can it be otherwise? I would very much like to slice the silence and give it to you. Then you are in a fashion of hanging yourself alone between two blank skies.

CHI HUNG

FERRY

We walk past the flower-forum
Girls
Walk past the chrysanthemum and marigold garden.
In a season like this
The chrysanthemum sticks out its body and there
The marigold leans.
We walk past the rosebushes
Girls
Facing the morning sun while the red roses are
 blooming
Attractively like you.
The white rose's buds in
The sobriety of dawning
Are cleaner and beautiful. Girls,
They can fill the flower baskets of your breasts.
And we walk past.
We have to go to the lattices that have a shivering
 sound
And to grey guns and to the
Cold, cold steel cables.
We will see again (not knowing where)
Girls.

YU KUANG-CHUNG

TURFAN

At last the irresistible fatigue comes to attack
The all-black cat of nonbeing squatting on our face
Let the red mercury ebb in the haemal system
To experience the dead silence after the inundation
Thus stranded on this plane of death
We die for love and line abreast our corpses
Night is cubic — although time, like a rat, is gnawing
Stars on sentry above the roof pass commands
While we make moistness under it
And make all that swell swell
As the warm Simmons bed is turfanning us
With a restless hand-gesture
We throw away the art of Lui Chu,² and put on savagery
The primitive epidemic forest bewilders us
As we exchange warmth and rub flintstones
Attempting to uproot all life
Attempting to poison the counter-mate, then poison
ourselves

¹

²

YU KUANG-CHUNG

Blood, the liquid given to boiling most easily
Is already kindled in each other's alcohol lamp
And we fan the roar of the Red Sea
Even if you closed your Venetian blinds I could still
 smell
The scorching of desire, white smoke leaking out
From all wide pores of the sweat glands
At least we can forget the moisture on the ground
And with your own moistness prove yourself a female
 animal
At least we can forget the slicing of limbs by maggots
And with incandescent heat brand the marks of
 occupation
Forget the stiff cold and the black eyesight of an empty
 socket
Living — in an absolutely dependable now
Forget one body within another
When vertebrates use the sun on the planet's other side
Or the man-made moonlight inside a building
When they push the grindstone on the watch-face
And take narcotics on different wheels
Looking out from different zippers
To ride on picnicking clouds with eyes

1 The Turfan were one of many ancient Chinese tribes known for their savagery.

2 See note No. 4 under Ya Hsien's ON THE STREETS OF CHINA.

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Hsiu Tao

THE WHITE SPURT

At the east end of the bathroom is hanging a pier-glass, four feet by one and one-half feet. Every day I meet myself there and afterwards there will be no secret between us. Neither of us cries. I go back; he returns to his place.

I ought not stare at myself many times in one day. Don't blame me. Just look at him standing there at a loss, bearing at his hips a huge belly, bought back from the market burdened by years, and on top of him a disheveled thing like a deserted old novel from one of the attic corners, his two eyes cherishing reluctant desires. I start by whispering to him, asking what is it that he wants; and then I have to shout to him — so loud that my voice goes beyond its compass. But he has such a whimpering look! Ah! What an indifferent look of a man to be pitied! This compels me to step back some distance, assume a running posture, stretch my arms and spurt at him.

And the walls are so white, explosively white like me.

ISSUE P. 257 · SCAN P. 59

KUAN KUAN

THE MAN WHO RUBBED HIS FACE WITH FIREFLIES

A pack of bitches were biting the sea and the evening.

Eight o'clock sharp. The man who had just taken over the sentry saw with his own eyes the evening's red embroidered shoes being stolen and the sea's skirt torn to pieces by bitches. — O what a strange man! — he did not even fire his rifle at them or report this to the lieutenant, but became absorbed in the beauty of a wild chrysanthemum he planted in his barrel and insisted that it was a woman; and then, he hummed a happy tune: Little mother, I am brave and brassy.

'Signal fires continue for three long months; A letter from home is worth a thousand pieces of gold.'

But he did not know that without shoes, evening could not return home, that the sea lay on the beach among torn pieces of skirt, weeping. A bitch was mouthing a flare bomb she believed to be a fallen sun; he ought to have believed it, too. But this man, ugh! I simply cannot bear the sight of him.

A shot from the gun gave the night eyes to see. Meanwhile the night was herding a gang of mice and the moon was herding a school of flying fish. This man grasped a handful of fireflies and rubbed his face with them, saying that his face was hung with stars. He held up his rifle and desperately shot at the stars. Because the mice had eaten away the stock of his rifle? Or maybe because the Hunter had come down to steal his rabbit and had eaten it up and had drunk his kao-liang? But the lieutenant said these were no reasons. It was simply that the lieutenant disliked the sight of him. The next day he would go to buy a ticket and drink wine.

**Kao-liang is a famous strong spirit made from sorghum.*

HUANG YUNG

THE FEEL OF MELANCHOLY

Unable to distinguish all these:
Laid on the jointed iron-sheets are
A heap of nails
And some toothed junks.
I think I am arranging for a massacre —
Just like having all the snakes in one den.
But these are solid and all of a piece,
Piling themselves up, piling;
And afloat.... But
They are no vessels
Nor is there any sound.

HUANG YUNG

STANDING STILL IN A CASUAL MOMENT

Were it in Venice
I would be able to find a reason
 for several fishing lines flowing out from your
 window.
But so distant! O Mediterranean Sea.
 O Jerusalem.
And I am a pilgrim fish.
Far off I see you
Smile
Like a monastery in a remote land
Where, when the wind comes, one sees the bells swing
The jingling is unheard
 Once so familiar
 So familiar I now often tremble
Who says this:
That doesn't mean anything?
No, that doesn't mean anything either if —
If you part the morning rain
And find me, hooded in a blue raincoat,
And like the people waiting for the bus by the roadside
Standing still in your absorbed gaze.

SHUM QUANAN

THE CONFINEMENT

In a huge room the air of flies fluttering
Youyou babelike looking up the cross window
Between clouds many records and many gods
Youyou spitting a bitter old folk song
Youyou knew well muscles of the stone
Upon which wounded equations and portraits
And signs of astronomy — the moon dripping in
Youyou vented the love-juice at the dry bread
On Sunday, a body of snakesmell rattling in
Youyou feigned — the saliva as nightmare bees
Who unlocked youyour days in the chest

When youyou lost in the totem of the three-lives
Rockets, computers and all isms, indifferent
Springsummerautumnwinter, same, eyes opened
Stars like ores, ores ballpointing at youyour forehead
Were thrown out with a harvest-gathering heart
Life
Eld
Disease
Death
Youyou and us and them and mankind
Away from the universe
Upon walking
A tortoise
And a snail
The carapace within

SHUM QUANAN

AUGURING AND SPIRALING

Auguring and spiraling
Spiraling and auguring
The carapace within
And a snail
A tortoise
Upon walking
Away from the universe
Mankind and them and us and youyou
Death
Disease
Eld
Life
By the fishbone platter with rats youyou worked
And recalled the matter of hopes and of colony
Of lips and of typewriter and of the key to joy
But not foreigners, nations, cartoons and not etceteras
A good citizen of the safe island, identified youyou
The foolish drama of time and space —

A delivered corpse on the bed lopped at last
 And carted to the gloves of a bad surgeon
 The old wish, a secret since youyou're guilty found
 Since the wheel less than the machine
 Out of the mass-gate into the idea-jail
 Youyou wanted no canting priest or painted catacomb
 Let fate lock youyour door; on fire youyour voice
 With a wax feeling youyou kissed the photo of
 wife-and-son
 After a moment youyour head dwindled on the ground
 A blood sun rising from the horizon of that cold wall

(N.B.: Not translated by Editor Yip; an English version by this poet, Hong Kong.)

HSIUNG HUNG

I AM ALREADY GOING TOWARD YOU

You stand beneath the neon lights on the opposite
 bank.
 All chords are muted. I want to wade across this
 circular pond,
 Wade across this blue glass inscribed with water-lilies
 I am the only soprano.
 The only. I am a carving hand
 carving sempiternal sadness
 Which lives in a smile, sempiternal sadness.
 All chords are muted. The globe turns only eastward.
 I beg, on this smooth paper-leaf of permanence,
 Beg for the convergence of today and tomorrow.
 But the lamp-mist does not move. I go toward you.
 I am already going toward you.
 All chords are muted.
 I am the only soprano.

CHOU MENG-TIEH

JUNE

Reclining on what is not mine, I hear myself
What is obscurely beyond myself
And yet obviously inside myself
The gradual voice of June.
Cold from where has never been cold,
The millennial riverbed shivers
Issuing from an over-stout yawning,
Scattering a bitter smile like a snow-tear
On a black and thin rose-thorn.
The first night when frost fell, the grapes and the vine
Mumbled their dreams beneath the stars —
They met always like strangers,
Dreaming the plum blooming over the fields,
The dead trees singing-dancing round a fire;
Dreaming the Heavenly Kingdom in the shape of a little
 hempen bag
And Jesus not the last willing cobbler.

LO YING

THE SEASON OF APPLES

Under the cotyledons of the sunshine outside the door
The apple stretches its damask and ductile fragrance
And dangerously holds a dumbfounded cloud,
(God cries inside your eyes.)
Morning is a series of smoke.
People play around a centre,
Which is thriving, insipid and sad,
And plant love into the fan-shaped tombstone;
And time, like the spider, crawls across the sky.
(You can never roll up the shadow of the tree.)
Let the sun wash his ice-cold solitude;
The crows will come in flights,
Bringing an immense black sea,
The drifting naked autumn.
What treasures sleep like the snowflakes —
The red apple.

YIP WAI-LIM

FROM FUGUE

I
North wind can I bear this one more year?
Streets shivering along the walls
Romances in cold sorrows from the frontiers
Remind me of these:
Patience of mountains Erratic breath of outlands
Chronic neighing of Tartar horses
Bonfires in war and farming in spring
Plants that transcend all knowing
Immaculate snowfalls Grand cathedrals and palaces
All plunge into the scandals of gods
That follow our youthful days
The song goes:
The moon will rise
The sun will sink
Please be quick And do not get lost in the sun
Have you forgotten the oracle of the dragon?

YIP WAI-LIM

IT MAY SLIP AGAIN FROM THE JADE BALCONY
INTO THIS ONLY ASPEN AMONG COMPACTED
HOUSES YESTERDAY OR TODAY? (I AM NOT YET
SURE) BESIDE THE RIVER OR THE DEEP-FLOWING
WATER OR THE DARK-SHIMMERING RUSHES I SEE
A CLOUD OF CROWS GATHER AROUND A DRIFTING
OF LIVES BUT WHERE TO? THE WINTRY WINDS
BRING THE BARKING OF DOGS INTO WINDING
BACK ALLEYS THE POETS ARE DEAD THE VIXEN
COMES IN SILK IS THE ONE-EYED SEER STILL
LIVING? THE WINTRY WINDS ROAR IN THE COLD
STREETS IN THE FLYING DUST I CAN STILL
RECOGNIZE THIS IS THE BUS TO MY NATIVE
LAND TABLES MATS AND WINES PROUDLY INVITE
ME TO SEE THE STARS — FUGITIVE IDEAS ON
FLOWERS AND INTENTIONS IN MYTHS WE GO
SIGHT-SEEING

YIP WAI-LIM

AFTER THIS, OF COURSE, THE PARTRIDGES CRY

Darkened
A child-town by hair-webbed twigs
We break in between sky and earth
(What is night — location and movement?)
To welcome into our arms the wide rains
On a high turret
A lute from the sourceless stream
Of winds and moons
Charges the chrysanthemum
With surges roaring
Caught in last winter's ice
Last winter in the empyrean
Of sickness
Rocks fed by the soil of our desire
Jut into our eyes' greenscape

YIP WAI-LIM

A solid wave
Pressing against the bursting breasts
Sister of the river
What wishes do you make for us
Before these empty windows
Of the uninterred
Toys unowned by our hands?
What mountains are you driving
When our bare call
Splits into a jargon
In your echoing darkness
When in the sun of sickness we see
Clouds part themselves into
A trailing of wild geese?
Voices gush out like tender faces
From a fountainhead of light
We seek a color to flesh us

So that in our conversation we will know
 The biting shame, the brimming white leaves
 Growing from our arms hanging
 In the deafening surges like
 An unpronounced letter
 That an ended war bears
 After this, of course, the partridges cry

Below: Lui Shau-kwan, Nature (ink), courtesy of Modern Literature and Art Ass'n, Hong Kong.

2nd page: Che Chuang, West of the Wood (oil).

3rd page: Liu Kuo-sung, All of End (ink).

4th page: Yang Ying-feng, Waltz of Flowers (print).

5th page: Wucius Wong, Mountain and Water, I and II (ink).

6th page: Cheung Yee, wood carvings, courtesy of Modern Literature and Art Ass'n, Hong Kong.

7th page: Chen Ting-shih, The Empty, The Abstruse, The Visionary, The Act of Rising, Liberators, The Pure Region (prints).

8th page: Fong chung-ray (two paintings).

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The eight pages of Chinese art the captions above describe cannot be carried by a text edition and are absent here. The captions are the magazine's own and are given in full, so that every plate is at least named: work by LUI SHAU-KWAN, CHE CHUANG, LIU KUO-SUNG, YANG YING-FENG, WUCIUS WONG, CHEUNG YEE, CHEN TING-SHIH and FONG CHUNG-RAY, several courtesy of the Modern Literature and Art Association of Hong Kong. The section was guest-edited, and its poetry translated, by YIP WAI-LIM; his commentary on these artists closes the issue. — ED.

DEATH CAME AND WHISPERED IN MY EAR :

Dave Margoshes

LIVE

(One of a cycle of stories concerning the death of Conrad Cross)

The sky fell on chicken little's head. It was an acorn. She was knocked silly. She thought it was the sky. But it was only an acorn. The sky is falling, chicken little said. She ran. The sky is falling, she told them. They ran. The sky is falling, they said. It was only an acorn but they didn't know. They thought it was the sky. They ran. They went to the king. The sky is falling, chicken little said. Yes, they said, the sky is falling. It was only an acorn. Nonsense, the king said. Chicken little hit him on the head with the acorn. The sky fell on the king's head. It was only an acorn. The king was knocked silly. He thought it was the sky. But it was only an acorn. The sky is falling, the king said. He ran. Chicken little ran. They ran. It was now official. The sky was falling. They ran. It was only an acorn, but they ran. Therefore, the sky was falling.

Connie fell. He awoke, although it took him years to realize that he had fallen. He fell for years. It took years before he could feel himself land and hear the dull thump of his body hitting the floor. He awoke. The heat all around him was terrific. He wiped his forehead and looked up. The sky was falling. He ran. He couldn't get up. He lifted his hand and groped in the darkness, trying to feel where he was. He couldn't lift his hand. He couldn't feel. He opened his fallen eyes to see where in the darkness he was. He couldn't open his eyes. He couldn't see. On the little table beside his bed

was a small folding traveling-clock. He could hear its tremendous ticking. But he could not hear.

At home it was just past four o'clock. Lois stood in the sickly yellow electric light in the kitchen listening to the coffee bubble and watching the nightness that still hung about the window. Charles came in from the kitchen larder, where she'd sent him for a sack of sugar, scratching his head. Lois didn't stir. She could smell the coffee getting strong but she didn't stir. She heard the bubbling and Charles' soft clumsy tread but she didn't stir. She thought too that she could hear something else. What was it? A cry?

'Good mornin, Miz Cross,' Charles said and pulled a chair out from behind the table and sat down. He seemed to shout. The chairlegs scraped across the wooden floor like a tank's rumbling. And he heaved his body

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down like a hippo. Damn him. 'Hush, Charlie,' Lois said. 'Hush, I'm listening. Don't you hear somethin strange.'

'I don't hear nothin but the coffee boilin over,' Charles said.

'Hush. It's like somethin cryin. It's like a baby cryin for its mother.'

'It's wind maybe, moren likely, hittin the loose shutters on the porch. I shouldn't worry about it if I was you, Miz Cross. They ain't likely to be any babies around here cryin for their mothers or anythin.' Charles guffawed. 'Maybe it's that calf too. Wantin some tit.'

'Hush, Charles.' She looked down at the stove. The coffee was boiling over. She got all excited then, turning off the heat fast and grabbing up a potholder and grabbing the coffeepot up and holding it over the sink until the spilling was through and then wiping up and taking out the cups and all. She didn't stop bustling until the coffee was poured and Charles had all the milk and sugar he needed and had stopped his noisy stirring and had begun his noisy sipping. Then she took her own cup and stood by the kitchen door and peered out into that darkness. She heard some of the dogs barking out behind the barn. She heard Charles smacking his lips around the plastic cup, behind her. She could hear John stirring restlessly in his sleep in the bedroom off the livingroom. She could hear the wind hitting the loose shutters on the porch, and yet she strained her ears listening for something else. What was it?

'Guess I'll get started layin down feed,' Charles said, and scraped his feet against the floor as if he were about to push his chair back and rise. He stirred his empty cup with a

tinkling spoon. Damn him, damn him, damn him.

'Hush, Charlie. Don't go just yet. Hush.' Lois looked thoughtfully through the glass of the door. She could see the night sky just beginning to crack. Perhaps it was a splinter of the sky that she saw then. Perhaps it was a splinter of her eye. She thought she saw a shooting star. She thought then too that she heard a child crying for its mother. 'I just saw a shooting star, Charles,' she said. She turned around to look at him because she was suddenly afraid of the sky. Charles said nothing, made not one sound. He had lowered his head.

Connie opened his eyes and stared at the ceiling. There was a small light glowing in the trailer, just the 10-watt socket bulb that he required in order to sleep, and it cast a sickly pallor over the walls and caused twisting ghosts to float and dart amidst the shadows. The ceiling was lowering. It was sliding slowly down the walls toward him. Slowly it moved, but with a tremendous force. In his fright he rose from the bed

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too quickly and fell. It seemed to him that he soared through the air for years before he touched the floor, and when he did he landed with a horrible clatter which shook the bones of his ears. The ceiling followed him downward and his panic quickened. He lurched forward in an attempt to escape, but he must have hurt himself when he fell because he found that he couldn't move at all. What rotten luck to have hurt himself now. If only it would pass by morning so that he wouldn't be too stiff to ride. He needed the extra money that he made by riding as an exerciser in the mornings. And God, what if he should still be too stiff by afternoon. It was bad enough that he had missed Monday and Tuesday, although he couldn't have helped missing Tuesday of course. There hadn't been anything to miss really except just the morning exercising if there had been any and the little money he might have made then if there had been any to be made. But he just had to ride today. Aside from everything else there were commitments. If only it would be better by then. What rotten luck. And worse luck still if the ceiling didn't stop sinking down upon him. He would be crushed. Connie started. He realized in a fresh burst of tightened panic that in a moment or two he would be dead.

Crit stood in the doorway of the lounge watching the black and white images flicker across the small screen of the t.v. set in the middle of the room. He smoked as he watched, his eyes slipping away from the screen from time to time and going from face to face, scrutinizing the dozen or so students who were still hanging on, drawing deeply with each puff and exhaling slowly through both nostrils. Occasionally he would raise one finger and place it firmly against his nose, causing all the smoke to pour out of the opposite nostril. He glanced at his nose cross-eyed and thought of himself as a dragon. He was vaguely bored, just enough to be aware of it but not nearly enough to make him do anything about it.

He would have liked to have been able to go to bed, but Irene had written that she would call him as soon as Kennedy had won (she was that sure), not for any reason but just to hear him and talk to him, and Mr. Nixon had not officially conceded the election yet. There was no clock in the Union lounge and Crit had left his watch in his room, but it seemed to him it had been two a.m. when he'd left the coffee shop about an hour before. He crushed the butt of his cigarette on the floor, glancing around to see if anyone was watching him, then lit another. The lounge was nearly deserted and the few remaining students had their eyes glued to the screen. Crit examined their partially-hidden faces and

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was aware that he was observing history. The flickering image of Mr. Nixon was on the screen, smiling.

Far ahead of him Connie saw a light. It hovered before him, then dashed over his head and went out. He watched it. He was lying down. He got up. There was the light. He touched it with his fingers. The bulb grew dark, covered with blood as it was. He couldn't see it any more. Afraid of the dark, he cried out. He heard himself scream, but he couldn't hear. He saw himself dying, but he couldn't see. The light, which was in his eye, was blinding him. He shut his eyes, the better to see with.

The guitars went hum. The harmonica went hum. It was blackman blues. I went out in Virginia honey where the green grass grows. I went out in Virginia honey where the green grass grows, I tried to tell myself that I didn't want you no more. My baby told me honey stop doing me wrong, my baby told me honey stop doin me wrong, well I'm tellin you baby cause I'm tired of livin alone. The guitar hummed. The harmonica cried just like a little baby. Well I get out there and I know I'm doin you wrong, well I get out there and I know I'm doin you wrong, and she could never make out that

one last line. They had puzzled over it many times. Connie had thought that the last line had ended with the words ‘one man standing alone,’ but she hadn’t even been sure of that and they couldn’t figure out the first few words anyway, so it didn’t make any sense. But it was their favorite song. They played it all that summer in the jukeboxes, and in the fall when it wasn’t popular and they couldn’t find it in any of the boxes around any more he had bought her the record. She would never grow tired of it, if only for that reason. She couldn’t make out the last spinning line of the blackman’s molasses-thick voice. The guitars went hum. The harmonica cried just like a child calling for its mama.

Joy-anne was asleep. The record was wearing itself out on the portable that always forgot to turn itself off. She had fallen asleep listening to it, crying. She missed him, wept for him, and the song which was their song, because he had come out to Virginia honey just to find her but he would never tell himself that he didn’t want her any more, soothed her. The volume was set very low, and in the room next to Joy-anne’s her brother slept unheeding, and across the hall Joy-anne’s mother and father slept without hearing, and with her head no more than a foot away from the speaker Joy-anne herself slept, but not soundly. In the ocean of her bed she was drowning. A long time since, she had fallen out of her boat

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and her face was wet with the bitter salt spray. It was the Bay she supposed, she knew. They had finally gone, just as he had promised, on a beautiful crisp November day, the last such day before the real face of winter would show up around every corner they would turn. The water was cold, just the way she really liked it, although he never believed that she really could like it like that, but it wasn't that which she minded so much. It seemed as if she had suddenly forgotten how to swim. And she was lost too. She was crying and frozen with fright.

Across the Bay he came swimming toward her. He had come back in time and she was so glad. He would save her. His tight corded arms stabbed through the waves and hurled him forward faster and faster. She could smile. He was coming. He was almost there. He was nearly by her side when a huge wave caught him like a sudden jumping fist and pulled him down. He was sinking down. And Joy-anne too was below, but she was in a cave choking on air and safe and sound and warm and dry. And she could smile. He was coming. He was almost there. He was nearly by her side although she could see that he could never ever really be there. She was in the cave and he was in the water. He was sinking toward her and past her and on and on, going farther and farther away, floating deathlike on a shadow of his wave, down and down and down.

Connie lifted himself reeling in the darkness. His lungs were filled with blood. He could hear the tiny red waves lapping gently against his throat. His nostrils were filled with sweetness from it, his mouth was filled with it, his tongue was drenched. He had fallen from the horse backwards to avoid being spun into the post and he had landed on the small of his back. He had rested there for a moment, arms spread-eagled behind him, his head slightly raised, the cords in the back of his neck straining, catching his breath and

cursing his luck and that bastard. Of all the rotten luck to be in a spill now. Little good it would do him knowing that it hadn't been his fault if he was hurt. Little good it would do him if that hogging bastard was suspended for two weeks if he couldn't ride for a while. Wouldn't it be just his luck if he were so sprained that the bastard would be back in the silks before he would. That was the kind of luck he was beginning to expect. But it was his own fault, he supposed, he was just bringing it down on himself. Who had told him to go home for two days anyway and not to be around for the pickings and wind up sitting on a cheap plater like that one anyway that didn't even have enough guts or sense either to pull out of a hole like that one they had been boxed into by that bastard hogging jock with

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just a little bit of burst. Shit. And then he reprimanded himself for cussing, knowing that he wouldn't help his luck any that way either, and then suddenly remembered the whole pack behind him, the entire field except for his horse the two others that had boxed him in, and he knew that he had been sitting there for almost three, maybe even four seconds, and looked up just to catch a hoof in his face and another in his chest which exploded that wave of sweetness all over him, coursing through every vein. He lifted himself for a moment, but his eyes were blinded with the sweetness and his silks were drenched with it. He fell to his knees and rested. He would rest there just for a moment or two and then he would get up and stagger through the rail before the last of the field caught him. He would just rest for a moment or two in the sweet sticky dust and the darkness and then, he promised himself, he would get up.

Every fifteen minutes they drank another round to the best man. 'Let the best man win,' Ralph said. 'To Mr. Kennedy,' Tallow answered. 'To Mr. Nixon,' the bartender winked back at them. Ralph would say nothing, hardly caring but supposing that Tallow was right, hoping that if he was, that Kennedy would win, but hoping even more so that it actually would be the best man who won, whoever he might be. He drank his beer. 'But does the best man ever win?' he asked Tallow when the bartender was down at the other end of the bar. 'Never,' his friend told him emphatically, with somewhat of a self-satisfied air. 'But . . . ' Ralph began to say. 'But there are limits to every rule.' They drank their beer. Ralph was satisfied with this explanation. They drank to it. Soon they ordered another round. When

they left, at one o'clock, after having toasted the unidentified best man for over three hours, they purchased four quart bottles and took them with them. They crossed the river and went back to the dorm and sat in Tallow's room consuming beer and listening to the election returns on the radio until the results were definite, then Ralph dragged himself across the hall to his room. Tallow, leaning in his doorway, called after him: 'Except for this one time, never. Never. Never.'

Connie's hand groped for the bedclothes and caught mutely at a crease in the sheet. He pulled himself forward but his hand slipped easily without a grip in the fingers and he could see through closed eyes the reins falling away from him, could feel the mouth of the horse suddenly free and wild. He started to crawl in the darkness toward the door that

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stood like a ghost in the pale flickering 10-watt glow. He could feel the hooves tearing at his lungs and his throat was filled with the sweetness of the gas. He was sweating in the heat of the room and the sweat was boiling on his skin. There was a silent hiss, but all he could hear was the thunderous ticking of the fold-up clock which would never ever ring on time. The door was so close, but he was so tired. So very tired. He would rest for just a moment and then he would get up and go to the door. He would open it and feel the swift November air all about him. He would breathe quick sharp breaths and dispel the sweetness. In just a moment. It would be so easy. He would breathe. It would be easy. Then he would get up and wash his face and run a little and work those morning horses. Then he'd eat, just a little despite his appetite. He'd race in the afternoon and win them all. He'd keep that up all fall and make a lot of money so he could afford to marry Joy-anne. He'd sleep with Joy-anne and wake and wash his face and run and ride and eat a little and ride all afternoon. And then eat and love Joy-anne and sleep. It would be easy. He would live and love and work and marry Joy-anne some day and have kids and grow old and be happy and some day he would die, quietly he hoped, in his sleep. It was so easy. He would live and one day his life would be ended. It was so easy. In a moment then, he decided, he would get up.

At home, Lois saw a shooting star and Charles lowered his head. Joy-anne swam through the brisk Bay with her eyes streaked with tears. John stirred uneasily in his sleep, reached out, touched nothing. Lois was in the kitchen. Yes? Yes? Yes?

It was almost morning. It was almost Wednesday. Mr. Kennedy is president this morning. A phone is ringing in the hall and Crit knows who it is so he leaps from his bed where he had been lying waiting and hurries to answer it before

anyone else wakes up. It's Irene calling to say that there is a new president, and that she loves him. Crit says that he knows, he knows, he knows and yes I do too, I do too. Ralph knows it too and he is drunk and sleeping, a smile on his face. There was a shooting star. I saw it. I know. I know you saw it, Miz Cross, maybe I saw it too. I know. I saw it. Hush, she said. I saw it. Yes. I know it too. I know. I do too. I do too.

It would be so easy. It would be. He dreamt of it, he wept at how easy it would be. He was glad it would be so easy. He had never known before, or even dreamt, that it would be so easy to die.

A MOVEABLE FEAST

Eric Cashen

'I really don't want to read this book,' I said. 'I mean, I was there, I was at the Ritz, even though Georges doesn't remember me.' 'Go on, read it,' she said. 'It will take you out of yourself, out of Teaneck, New Jersey.' 'Oh, I don't know,' I said. 'There're a couple of chapters on Scott Fitzgerald, and hell, I can call up memories of him just by driving up to Princeton. As if he were the only guy who knew Christian Gauss . . .' 'I thought this book was by Ernest Hemingway,' she said. 'It is,' I said. 'It's his memoirs of Paris in the Twenties. Of course, some of us were working in the Twenties. Some of us stayed home, and put America first, and tried to get on tenure, and wrote in our spare time. But then, we can't all be glamorous, rushing off to battle at the first . . .' '4-F,' she said. 'All right,' I said. 'So what? And does this make me any the less of a writer? Why, I'd like you to know . . .' 'I suppose Sherwood Anderson's in it,' she said. 'I don't know,' I said. 'I don't keep the records for Cook's Tours, or American Express, or whatever it is.' (As if all good writers went to Paris. I know one very good writer who never went near Paris . . .) 'Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, Ford Maddox, James Joyce . . .' 'Edsel Ford was there too, I suppose,' I said. 'Hell, everybody and his Brother was in Paris in the Twenties. I suppose it was good for the liver, or something. Except me and you. We were here in . . .' 'Speak for yourself,' she said. 'What do you mean?' 'We got married in 1921,' she said. 'How do you know what I was doing in 1920?' 'Well, I assume you . . .' 'Assume nothing, Tatie,' she said. 'Despite the three children, and the mortgage, and your lousy job, and the grandchildren, and the fact that you aren't going to get anything at retirement, in 1920, you just don't know

where I was.' 'Well,' I said, 'I will get Social Security, and for the last few years we have been covered by TIAA, and if the growth-plan works . . .' 'You just don't know,' she said. 'Georges remembers.' 'Georges who?' 'You know,' she said. 'You were just telling me. In Paris. At the Ritz bar.'

FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER: PARAGON OR PARANOID?

by Donna Arnold

I FELT THE GREATEST ARDOR FOR *virtue rise within
me, and abhorrence for vice.*¹ . . . *I admired virtue
and good feelings and loved gentle manners and
amiable qualities.*²

Are these the sentiments of a deacon or a demon? More saintly than sanguinary, they were spoken by that epitome of monsterhood, Frankenstein!

Actually, Victor Frankenstein was the creator of the famous misunderstood monster, distorted by Hollywood horror films, whom we visualize as demented, diabolical, and dreadful; but he was, in fact, as tenderhearted and scrupulous a monster as ever lived in fiction . . . if not in celluloid. Except for his gross ugliness, the monster's gentle nature befitted the company of the most fastidious gentility. Indeed, his only craving was for kind love and fellowship.

Imperfectly formed by Medical Student Frankenstein, a principal character in Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's famous novel, the loathsome monster repelled everybody. 'His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuries only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same color as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shrivelled complexion, and straight black lips.'³

Even Victor reeled with revulsion at his handiwork. Upon 'awakening' to life, the creature, grinning grotesquely, imploringly extended a disfigured claw to his maker; but Victor, plagued with a weak stomach, bolted from the

laboratory, deaf to his creature's pathetic plea for love and acceptance.

Victor's rejection of him initiated a pattern of social ostracism which cursed the creature all two years of his fictional life. At his approach, women fainted, children shrieked, and brave men banished him from their villages with stones and rocks and that day's missile equivalents of water hoses and cattle prodders.

The monster deduced he was no Rock Hudson. On glimpsing his reflection in a forest pool, he was 'filled with the bitterest sensations of despondence and mortification.' Despite man's barbarity to him, and his self-loathing, the brute refused to despair. Hopeful that communication might open human hearts and escalate his status, he learned to speak and understand language. Also mindful of the equalizing effect of education, he taught himself to read. He admired the lofty ideals of *PARADISE LOST* and chose as heroes the peaceful lawgivers, Solon and Lycurgus, in Plutarch's *LIVES*. In short, this monster sought to improve his image. While living in a rat-infested woodshed adjacent to a peasant's cottage, he spied on the kindly inhabitants through a chink in the wall. From these simple folk, he learned charity and goodwill— which he then practiced in the secrecy of night by gathering firewood, chopping kindling, shoveling snow, and completing sundry chores for them . . . and to their wonder! Frankenstein's monster dreamed that one day he would present himself to his beloved 'family,' and 'by my gentle demeanor and conciliating words I should first win their favor and afterwards their love.' Clearly, the monster's social theories were progressive for his day. Instead of acceptance, he met violent rejection. The terrified peasants drove him away; then, in fear, abandoned their cottage and moved out of the block. Wandering around the countryside, the monster avoided human contact. However, he chanced upon a young girl who, playfully running from

her swain, accidentally fell into a treacherous river. At great personal risk, the monster rescued the unconscious maiden. While he was resuscitating her, the sweetheart appeared, drew a gun, and shot him. Such was his reward! The stab of injustice cut deeper than the bullet. Even the first murder (there were three), he committed in extenuating circumstances. Resigned now to social isolation, the creature reasoned that with just one companion he might find a measure of contentment. A child, untutored in hate and conformity whom he could educate to fellowship could be such a companion. The monster came upon a boy playing in the forest. As he neared, the child screamed. Frantically trying to silence and reassure the boy, he strangled him. Was this cold-blooded murder? Or an impulsive act of passion, committed under duress of mental anguish, and defensible in modern jurisprudence as temporary insanity?

¹ Page 133 of *Halcyon* edition (see note at close of article).

² Page 124, *do*.

³ Page 51, *do*.

Page 116, *do*.

Page 117, *do*.

The monster begged Victor to manufacture a mate for him, deformed and ugly, with whom he might quit society and live harmlessly in the wilds of South America. The scientist's refusal unleashed the smoldering resentments that launched the monster on a road of revenge against his inventor. Yet, when Victor died, the creature wept beside the bed, castigating himself with remorse and self-reproach. 'My heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy and when wrenched by misery to vice and hatred, it did not endure the violence of the change without torture... I cannot believe that I am he whose thoughts were once filled with sublime and transcendent visions of the beauty and the majesty of goodness,' he bewailed.

The ‘majesty and goodness’ crowned the monster’s final sacrifice, enacted on a desolate Arctic icecap. There he consumed to ashes his miserable body, that no one could learn from his carcass Frankenstein’s formula for monster-manufacturing.

All in all. Frankenstein’s maligned monster proved a decent sort as monsters go . . . and he goes on . . . and on . . . on the late, late show!

Page 235, do.

Page 237, do.

(Author’s note: Page references to FRANKENSTEIN [Or, *The Modern Prometheus*] — first published in 1818 — are to the Illustrated Library edition by Halcyon House, Garden City, New York.)

AUGUSTINE IN THE SHOWER ROOM AT THE GOLF CLUB

by Duane Locke

.he savored every syllable
as he devoutly described
the stealing of
the midget’s peaR
.the unloved and unwanted
pear rotted
near a sand traP
.juicy and sweet were
the jolly back-patting words
of the sweaty, pear-shaped
vice presidents
calling him a clever thief

OYSTER PIRATES . . .

James Hiner:

I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THE realization of all our political dreams will mean the end of Art, as some writers have claimed; but I'm certain it will mean the end of book jackets. In fact, educational marketing several graduate schools this side of Utopia will have prohibited the growth of persons with a sufficiently interesting and varied history to be worth describing on future book jackets. It's not just that I loathe the modern pursuit of education: I also happen to love book jackets.

I have, for example, a jacket before me. It says that the author was 'newspaper boy at ten; cannery worker at fourteen; oyster pirate at sixteen; sailor at seventeen; tramp, gold prospector, and "work beast," all before he was twenty. Reporter, sociologist, world traveler, Socialist, lecturer, scientific farmer, the most popular writer of his generation — these pursuits filled his later years.'

Quite aside from the fact that no one nowadays would think of being a 'Socialist' or 'oyster pirate,' can you imagine where our society is going to discover its future writers — men with such thick dossiers of experience — when it is presently busily engaged in trying to send every child through college and every other child through six years of postgraduate study?

On the other hand, if you're not concerned with novelists, you might still wonder where the future society is going to discover any characters worth knowing, where public opinion dictates that the only thing worth knowing is not people but what comes out of a textbook. Can you imagine how many high-school counselors and graduate sociologists would swarm protectively, like honeybees around their

queen, over any boy of fourteen or thereabouts who expressed a preference for 'cannery work' rather than school? The thought staggers one's metaphors!

We've got to revise our basic assumptions: get rid of the notion of federal aid to education and demand, instead, federal aid to people who want to do what they want.

Paul Goodman, writing recently in a popular monthly magazine, suggests that we might 'do something at the high-school level like the GI Bill. Give the kid the money, and let him do anything he wants.' Mr. Goodman, also, is suspicious of the present public taste for learning. 'This twelve and sixteen years of school,' he writes, 'is a fantastic notion. Sitting in a chair and taking assignments. What a crazy way to live.' We're creating a monstrous product, a world of things known as 'trainees.' They've already had sixteen years of schooling, and now they're ready to go out in the world as 'trainees.' That seems like a promise from industry that work will be made as nearly like schooling as possible. And it begins to sound like we've got the buggy not just before the horse but on top of him. It's a free-will problem in new costume. It's no longer a question whether we have it, but whether anyone will let us use it, supposing we do. A lot of people seem disturbed to see sixth graders going to formal dances; but no one (except Goodman and me) is upset to see seventh graders planning for college with all the single-mindedness of a man trying to corner a bull market. I say the day is coming when we're going to have to subsidize children not to go to school, so that in future years there will be someone left to dig the ditches, check the tires, steal the oysters, write novels, and grow up into people-people.

A View, Not a REview . . .

it is walking it is talking it is keeping to yourself keeping open talking kindly walking hard, stance, shape of your mind, to to walk out bear your life and bear a way. No lesson

but the making but a doing what you'd have way of coming
way of walking in your talk, done, down in your way, not say
do it but to do it get it done. what is what is portioned is
what's offered then as ground, what's made from there a gift
from you and me, walking, shape of your mind, shape of
walking shape of talking shape of keeping to yourself,
keeping open talking kindly walking hard. stance, shape of
your mind. to walk out bear your life and bear a way.

Ronald Caplan

* . . . of AN ESSAY ON NEW AMERICAN FICTION, by Fielding
Dawson (INTERIM Books — 50c).

REDUCTIVE POETRY SUMMARY, CONTINUED

SUPERIORITY OF JOHN WILLIAM Corrington's over most poetry of his generation is measurable by what he does with the word, the integral imaged metaphor impregnated by idea: ' . . . where deep worms patrol new catacombs / groping potential bone . . . ' (THE ANATOMY OF LOVE — \$3 — ROMAN Books). Even narrative and descriptive passages affect by more than beat and sound, conjuring thought along with sights, actions, noises, smells. His 'fault'—if it is one, in this type of poetry—is mixed extension from his frequent refusal to both about closed unity.

Though older and long well published, Jean Garrigue rarely reaches so high (COUNTRY WITHOUT MAPS — \$3.95 — MACMILLAN). Hers are mainly poetical formulations, not poems in the exalted sense. 'And earnest hillsides sporting with their bulbs / Convince me, with the moon, the new time buds:' beautiful—and craftsmanly—expositions of themes, seldom with words themselves the constituent images. The charm of her smooth flow wears fainter with re-readings; superbly skilled, she does not transcend reflective invention. Disciplined forms are handled unobtrusively enough, and essential polarities are present; but the lines do not live in the language itself.

Even such comparatively light (perhaps trivial, some) pieces as those of young Marguerite Harris (A RECONCILING OF RIVERS — \$1 — EL CORNO EMPLUMADO) 'make it' with words. While Miss Garrigue employs verbs appreciably, Miss Harris renders them more active. She brings living motion into adjectives and other parts of speech, including nouns: 'the rose, a catered grotesque, / comes with the power of hooves:.' If she lacks Garrigue's melodics (partly because she prefers the short line) or the versatile range of Corrington,

her abbreviated poems are comparable to similar bits of the latter, and her clipped phrases carry double the impacts of the former's long constructions.

Will Inman (108 VERGES UNTO NOW — \$2 — CARLETON Press) adroitly does, in utterly-different pithy style, much the same kind of thing as Garrigue. That is, he functions through undeniable talented craft, but with compression. Where he does break away, one gets a feeling he's just been sparked by a predecessor. An example is No. 13, which may have been fused by Dylan Thomas: 'I hang upon the moon where those antlers / would not root athwart the wing / I charge thru spasms sheets of blood / of sea and surf gone dust gone dust / gone gnarled and knotted shanks of stems. . . .'

Again turning to a younger poet—albeit of large reputation—Denise Levettov (O TASTE AND SEE — \$3 & \$1.50 — NEW DIRECTIONS), we find — though superficially — generative words, as in Corrington. Yet, since little in this book arrives at ISness, to dominate the senses and convey without question of intent or idea-transmission, for the very reason that the poetry is the word, one asks: What is she saying? — Why did she set this down? — and, yes — Well, then what? Pondering Levettov's final 'placement,' it may be significant that when her 'saying' does register, it bears a dubious negative cast which goes behind the poem toward the maker's personality. Specifically, there's no avoidance of sexuality; yet beauty in this aspect invariably is called in doubt, directly or by inference. In HYPOCRITE WOMEN, the voltage of internal opposition is almost zero when she fails to 'charge' any positive controversion to allegations of 'ugliness' in female sex-organs — an outright example of this rather strange manifestation.

Only twenty-four years old, and first published, Clarence Maloney (DIMENSIONS OF MORNING SKY — \$1 — ATLANTIS Editions) has more than passion of youth and sensitivity. He

seems grounded in traditions while exhibiting precocious development of a personal idiom through which he polarizes real statements. Echoes are minimal; his best pieces are lucid — not brain-tiring in their complexities, despite abundant contrasting allusions. It's difficult to choose amongst the many passages demonstrating this: 'Crickets, / like souls of the dead, / excrete waves on the landscape's geometry.' Again: 'The hills jut up, mocking folds in the earth, / shocking as a grandmother's breasts.'

Jack Micheline has presented an anthology of six other poets, already sold out in its first limited pressrun (SIX AMERICAN POETS — \$2 — HARVARD Book Co.). Though selected for their positive stances contra 'totalitarian and profit-motivated systems,' and for individualistic refusals to concur in poetically 'popular' attitudes of futility, there are greater variations in their treatments of similar thematic materials than commonly found in 'open' anthologies where it's hard to distinguish who authored what. And they are less than blindly optimistic about the human race (white or colored) and less undisciplinedly hortatory than their Editor's words presage. They are: John Richardson, Roberts Blossom, B. A. Uronovitz, Stephen Tropp, Neil Chassman, and Murray Brown.

With Daniel Moore, whose own graphic art here stems from William Blake, we are confronted with a substantial body of absorbing modern poetry which is all the same in a kind of grand discursive style reminiscent of some of John Dryden . . . on through Edward Young, William Somerville . . . Alfred Tennyson, Matthew Arnold . . . and some of W. B. Yeats (DAWN VISIONS — \$2 — CITY LIGHTS Books). At any rate, 'visions' these are, well and soundingly detailed through multiple devices and really without what often can specifically be tabbed as hackneyed; yet, still, with over-all tones and manners unmistakably resembling such precursors.

An altogether different word-magic is employed by Felix Pollak (*THE CASTLE AND THE FLAW* — \$1 — ELIZABETH Press) who moulds ironic humor into verse, while drawing upon history, myth, and past literatures. The term here is precision, and the manner is characterized by aptness of phrases, with acute attention to sound in relation to meaning. The results are uniquely-personal and provocative constructions: 'All things are candles, even stones — although / we burn too hot to fathom their cool rays.' Pollak's lines are cool, but not unfathomable; and one sees him definitely as he is: a warm-hearted cynic.

In describing anything of James Schevill's (*THE STALINGRAD ELEGIES* — \$2.75 & \$1.65 — ALAN SWALLOW), this Editor must repeat what he has said many times: here is one of our few mature poets with distinctive flavor, invariably to be identified by a virtually-inimitable personal style. Even in such a collection as this (Leonard Breger's drawings heavily underline a social-historical theme), where little truly-denominative poetry appears in almost-expedient narrations of debacle and horror, the basic style remains the book's fascination. Occasionally a patch of lines recalls Schevill's poetry of the past: 'For days we rode without speaking / Through the snow, shooting, burning. / Our flamethrower licking with its tongue / in its desire / To separate the skeletons of peace from / their flesh of fire.'

Another older, but far less known poet, G. W. Sherman, seems neither to have produced much nor to have expended much effort to gain print; yet he offers a high percentage of top-level work derived from equally-horrifying reflections upon war (*THE CHEMISTS* — \$2.15 — COBRA Press). A likely reason for his greater success, in this particular area, lies in his leaving historical elements more submerged or in the background, and in his concentration upon close, personal emotional reactions — sometimes, upon extremely minute experiences as a chemist-technician in a wartime steel plant.

'These particles of steel are reliquaries. / Their magic was amoral, animating us / before the Embargo. In retrospection now, / they show a sharper edge, incriminating us.'

It's almost as if his special sort of pristine honesty both with ideas and with language limits Gael Turnbull when he comes forth in poetry (*A VERY PARTICULAR HILL* — 5/- — *WILD HAWTHORNE* Press). If not the ideas, then certainly the language seems literally bone-pared of vitality, as though he had determined to prevent words from being poems. His prose has touched greatness elsewhere; and a sample from this small booklet shows how the prose lives as the poetry does not. Of *A Hill*: 'The damp, dripping through the bracken, oozing slick upon clay and flint, settling in drops on the backs of sheep between the twisted filaments of wool?' So we see that Turnbull can do as he admirably observed in an article (*SUM* No. 3): '... language is ... for, in fact, creating experience ... itself has a life, and shapes and initiates ...' Even his physician's notes about patients 'create experience' out of words, while his poetry remains static.

Robert Lewis Weeks

**TO THE MAKER OF GLOBES — \$1.50 — SOUTH
& WEST)**

conveys his own genuineness as the man behind the poetry; and each poem is convincing, of itself, the words transmitting experience, mood, and thought. Forms and manners differ to an unusual degree amongst the poems; and yet, each is well formed, and the voice is identifiable. There are no indications of strain, either for messages or effects; images are specific and immediate, apparently effortless in their contributions toward a unique, romantic, personal tone. 'The past stands silent in dirty dishpans, / cold star-grit under feet, shut away / to be beaten out of rugs; / the past is on the furniture shrouded / for summer (until someone pulls the sheets away / just echo, now dust shivering in shafts of sun).'

And last in this alphabetical coverage, Howard A. Wiley (NIGHT THOUGHTS OF AN AGING ORPHAN — \$3 — PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARY) is appropriately published under such an imprint. The interest here is not for the poetry, as such, but for the lively, perceptive thoughts and the excellent writing, largely bound by form/s which in less practiced hands could have been deadening. Wiley's rich understanding of language, the arts, history, and much else — utilized by a far-from-stagnant mind (in truth, one from which unhackneyed metaphors spring with what often seems spontaneous profusion) — lift even rhymed and measured pieces considerably above levels reached by others constrained to work within such frames. Some are what is commonly misnomered 'free verse;' but the effects are those of line-broken verse or poetic prose, and the resulting forms are not convincingly integral: 'piercingly blazoned bronze bedays / this copper desert: / shrill chirls / searing lightstreaks, / smell of wet wood / waxwings brightly /

hands of liquid / in goldness dripping / air an aviary / of
amber whiteness...' This reviewer wishes he could see the
original notes, and regrets that Wiley could not have found
his own forms for often otherwise-individual musings and
inspirations.

J.B.M.

MAGIC-LANTERN MOMENTS TOWARD MEANING

SIMON PERCHIK LOOKS AS MUCH like a poet as he does a bomber pilot or a lawyer. I met him, this last summer, and was rather sure he drove a truck. There is much behind his constant grin. He flew a bomber in War II, is a practicing lawyer, and a skillful poet. Over the top of his personal good-guy facade there peeps a sensitive and basically Positive eye.

He doesn't fritter words away. In these forty-three brief sketches (*I COUNTED ONLY APRIL* — \$1.—THE ELIZABETH Press), he seems to be fitting together relevant parts of an infinite instant. Quoting parts of a poem, or even the whole thing, cannot give one the flavor of the book. It is a complete and incomplete work — each poem is different, and part of. I wouldn't want to say whether these are tiny windows or pieces of a large, shattered, oblique mirror. Whichever—or indeed, if neither—they are worth reading.

What Perchik has to say is said totally by inference—a poetic style I personally don't like—but he brings it off; and at least for the durations of individual poems, one believes that there very well may be Meaning in a Moment. It is difficult to argue with a Haiku (none of these are; most of them feel like), where the author is always looking in another direction. This poet overcomes the Sly Knowing look that a Mystic poet often wears with his exciting imagery laid upon the Ordinary.

He has avoided expanding upon his war experiences—a noble gesture—yet has left me wondering as to the effect these all had on him. The hints he makes are insufficient.

This is a very personal book: snaps of a child in a barber's chair; a ball game; a gull. His reactions are instantaneous and always his. Beyond that, the book is also a catalogue of

some most-inner things which one cannot touch without reading the poems themselves. If this is a mirror, shattered or oblique, this may be where his strength lies.

There is a distance, too—though such a reaction on my part may stem from the very brevity of the poems—a place where the reader is not allowed. Pieces of a man, perhaps, but only such pieces as he wishes us to see.

The tide of books from small presses is, thank God, unending; and only rarely have I come across one I've wanted to talk about. Perchik's first collection is one.

I hope he can get the rest of the Universe together by the time he packs away his Underwood. In the meantime, his Stereopticons pro-

CARL LARSEN

'ACCURATE' AND INSALUBRIOUS

THE IDEA OF APPLYING game theory to social behavior is not a new one. Roger Callois did it long ago in his *MAN, PLAY AND GAMES*. Oddly enough—or, perhaps, not so oddly—his name is seldom, if ever, mentioned in bibliographies. Also, the Messrs. von Neumann and O. Morgenstern used game theory as a way of predicting results in human behavior, maximizing and minimizing gains according to manoeuvres made (such as those involved in war and economics), and positing a bipolar payoff: somebody wins—somebody loses; the good guys against the bad guys; the home team against the visiting foreigners. The possibilities are calculated according to definite rules; and the mathematics works out rather neatly, at least so long as the schizophrenic win/lose, good/bad procedure is followed. The theory, in fact, works out so nicely that the Rand Corporation is doing quite a bit with the idea; possibly Washington's military brass also has fingers in this fun-and-games pie.

Others, less mathematically oriented, take up the theory of games and use it as a yardstick innocent of marks to

‘measure’ social behavior such as interpersonal relationships. Notches are cut in the stick at the whim of the social scientist involved, and these are given cute labels—thence to be described in poorly-written mss. and published in that biggest vanity racket in the world, the one identified with the university publish-or-perish gambit.

The categories into which social behavior are squeezed (the individual is seldom included—only his so-called ‘role’ being considered) might be compared with the packing of a suitcase. When the packer is all through, he has to sit down hard on the suitcase to get it closed; all around the edges, defiantly dangle oddments such as half of a red-and-black striped tie, a white brassiere (size 42), a corner of a pair of orange shorts, a green sock with a hole in the toe. The statistician is only too familiar with this type of statistical squeeze.

Dr. Eric Berne, psychotherapist and Chairman of the San Francisco Social Psychiatry Seminars, states that mathematical gaming is rational, but that social ‘game behavior’ is irrational (*GAMES PEOPLE PLAY*—\$5—GROVE Press). It seems ironic that war, politics, and economics—which so often terminate in monopoly or bombs—are termed rational. It’s almost like saying that abstract ‘behavior’ of abstract institutions is honest and reasonable, while the ways in which real people act are somehow not kosher — maybe dishonest. Actually, it would be possible to analyze international political behavior in terms of Berne’s notions and language: Krushchev and Teller; Our Bomb Can Kill More People than Your Bomb. Or one might compare a match between Russian and American diplomats with one between two small boys: I Can Piss Farther than You Can; Mine is Bigger than Yours.

Mr. Berne pigeonholes people in such categories as: Schlemiel, Peasant, Stupid, Frigid Woman, Jerk, Sulk, Show-Off, Toady, and Cling. The games they play are: Kick

Me; See What You Made Me Do; NGYSOB (Now I've Got You, You Son of a Bitch); etc. The game ploy is applied to 'delinquency, Irishmen (I drink because I'm Irish'), gamblers, criminals, children, mental patients, homosexuals, alcoholics, therapists, businessmen, real estate brokers, auto drivers, etc., with bizarre results. Actually, Dr. Berne seems to be churned up in his semantics; for, the behavior which he describes may more accurately be classed as contests rather than as games.

Some games are good games. One of these is a man and a woman telling each other how wonderful each is, like verbal tennis — which Dr. Berne calls You're Wonderful, Mr. Murgatroyd. A man exhibits his virtuoso abilities as a flatterer, and a woman strokes him in return. If she doesn't send the ball back, she's stupid; if she won't play, she's sulky and stupid, both.*

It may not be irrelevant to remark that Dr. Berne seems greatly impressed with the labored humor of Stephen Potter's various vapid and disorganized books on gamesmanship. The Berne preference in wit in a game of Greenhouse is: 'I see National Parapraxis Week is here again.' Related to this may be the statement that Clown is not a game, 'but a pastime which reinforces the position "I am cute and harmless."' When patients play this game, Dr. Berne thinks they're being autonomous (cute? — harmless?).

The author drops a few words about autonomy and remarks that babies are not born in sin; but most of the book manages to bepiss people with stinky labels. Human emotions and sickness are serious matters. One hopes that not too many therapists are gamemasters who spend their 50-minute hours fishing for compliments — that they like people, sick or well. The characterization of such deep human feelings as sorrow, anger, sweetness, revenge, affection, love as frivolous moves in frivolous games is perhaps just another marker on the road toward automating

people for manipulation as animate objects by psychologists, teachers, friends, social scientists, politicians, and advertisers. Here, behavior glibly seems to be wrapped in neat parcels for handy labels: Negro, Jew, Politician, Beatnik, Woman, Englishman, Chinese, etc. As any good novelist knows, humanity is complex, infinitely variable; and lopping off small bits for analysis reveals little. Dr. Berne himself seems dimly aware of this, for he bitterly complains about a game in which the separate petals removed from a flower can't be considered perceptive analysis. A grain of sand does not tell us what Waikiki Beach look like; a molecule in a piece of wood doesn't tell us whether it's a log that was washed up on Pebble Beach or part of the framework of a victorian house on Dolores Street, San Francisco; one hair from an unknown animal doesn't reveal whether it's from a Doberman, a beagle, an opossum, or a skunk — or from a toy made with 'real hair.'

** Reminds me of the ingenious instrument mentioned by Herb Caen in his San Francisco Chronicle column. This gadget is placed near the ear of an individual, who listens entranced as it plays: 'You're wonderful, you're wonderful . . .'*

Probably Dr. Berne is sincerely interested in the welfare of his patients and in people generally, but he does seem overwhelmed by a tendency to regard people as empty masks, like the old Greek persona. This whole book possibly reveals more of the analyst than of the analysand.

Therapists cannot afford to be picayune thinkers; and if one is going to analyze social behavior according to the games people play, maybe it might be more rational to use real games, not shadow sports and nursery pastimes — and real people, not mechanical dolls to be deftly wound up, ticketed and filed.

Despite the clowning, the cuteness, the pat answers, Berne's barbs with Bushman poison daubed thereon have a certain accuracy. For, who has not said, at one time or

another, when surveying the wreckage of something that did not turn out as planned: 'But I was only trying to help you!' And who has not said, on cornering a person who had gone too far: 'Now I've got you, you son of a bitch!' But these are not games. They are perfectly normal human behavior. To classify them as parlor games with payoffs seems unsavory — a flitting, butterfly type of superficial logic.

It would be marvelous if psychologists and social scientists were more interested in looking at people as human beings instead of as IBM cards, parts of mathematical formulae, labels, gamesters, and role-players. The questions ultimately must be asked concerning psychological tests and books such as *GAMES PEOPLE PLAY*: What is their purpose? — What is their aim? — Who is using whom? Dr. Berne winds up his treatise with the gay remark that readers are free to carp, but not to gleeck or fleer. This reviewer is no piker, and feels free to carp, gleeck, fleer, grue, and bleen. S. E. Moray

Concerning our Chinese contributors (excepting pseudonyms, surnames precede personal names in the Chinese style):

Chang Mo, 32, public information officer in the Chinese Marine Corps, founded *EPOCH Poetry Quarterly*, of which he is executive editor.... Employed by the Chinese Customs, Cheng Chou-yu, of the same age, has won recognition for a seemingly effortless and fresh narrative flow.... On the other hand, the reputation of Chi Hung, 37, has risen from his succinct precision and 'indirection for immediacy.'... Chou Meng-tieh, 44, may be found in a Taipei roadside booth selling secondhand books, cogitating his meditative creations with his back to the moving crowds.... Only 24, Huang Yung is also an economist, a table-tennis champion, and a student of biochemistry at Iowa State U. (Ames). ... As are most women, the two represented here, Lo Ying and Hsiung Hung, are basically lyricists; the former ascends to childhood's

dream imagery, the latter imparts religious intensity to love poems. Both are in their early 20's.... Hsiu Tao, 35, works for an airline. His poems always start from a deep sense of human tragedy, and he is noted for the inspired manner and movement of his statements.... Kuan Kuan, an army officer, also in his 30's, likes to mix racy army slang with neuroticism and nostalgia.... A Chinese navy-lieutenant, Mo Lo-fu, 36, has admiration and disparagement from fellow poets for his galactic presentations of lust, love, darkening war, and death in starkest aspects.... Topographical values mark poems of Pa Chiu, 28 — booklover, but school-hater, and now a furniture designer.... Army Sergeant Shang Chin, 34, gives peripheral vision through unique counterpoint rhythm, extending classical Chinese metaphor so that the neglected past becomes instructively motivated toward the modern world.... A fighter for poetic modernity, founder of the Modern Literature and Art Association of Hong Kong, Shum Quanan, 32, also works in English. In 1963, he was feature editor of the Anglo-Chinese Daily, and now has charge of the translations department of a promotional research project in Hong Kong.... Born in the same year, Ya Hsien is a Chinese navy-lieutenant who will be remembered for his consecration to the preservation of the 'Image of the Great Chinese;' he dramatically persists while perhaps dissolving Chinese social manners in the midst of current turmoil.... Yip Wai-lim, 27, has edited several magazines in Taipei, and in Hong Kong, Modern Editions — has been published widely both in English and Chinese. Presently, he is compiling and translating for a modern Chinese anthology, parts of which compose this Trace, while working toward his doctorate at Princeton U.... Also a painter, Yuan Teh-hsing, 32, is self-delineated as 'a Buddhist believer who is drunk most of the time;' and he uses language with a combination of such fervor and such surface-abstinence that it is difficult to distinguish his roles as Buddhist, soldier, and poet....

Probably the first in Taiwan to attempt employment of wit in poetry, Yu Kwang-chung, also in his 30's, adds satirical coloring to lyricism, singling out certain forgotten concepts.

With a cosmic sadness akin to that of the Zen painter, Liang Kai (Sung Dynasty), the oils of Che Chuang, a native of Peking who later graduated from Taiwan Normal University, have immediacy and sweep usually obtainable only in Chinese ink. Winner of the gold medal in the 2nd International Salon in Hong Kong, his art has been exhibited in Paris, France and São Paulo, Brazil, as well as in the Far East. . . . Chen Ting-shih, a deaf-mute who also has shown internationally, is an arduous worker with a quiet, meditative, and poetic intensity. . . . Cheung Yee, another Taiwan Normal graduate, shows the influence of the stone engravings and ancient Chinese bronzes of the Han Dynasty—working chiefly in these media, but also in wood, with highly-stylized abstraction or semi-abstraction. He has participated in exhibits in Saigon and Hong Kong. . . . Now in the Chinese Marine Corps, Fong Chung-ray won the silver medal at the 1st International Salon in Hong Kong and exhibited in Taipei and São Paulo. He has said: 'The demand of the artist is simply the clearest possible revelation of the self.' . . . Liu Kuo-sung, founder of the Fifth Moon Painting Club (Taipei), lectures on architecture at Chung Yuan College and has participated in numerous exhibitions in several countries. His paintings offer splendid examples of the plastic organization of concreteness and emptiness, wherein these terms automatically disappear in the viewer's mind, since the distinction is not in the paintings. . . . See Trace No. 53 for details concerning Lui Shau-kwan. . . . Wucius Wong, who also produced poetry in the past, having tried his hand at nearly every type of Western technique, is insistent upon exclusive use of Chinese techniques, at this time. His many exhibits have included several in the U.S.A., winning praise of leading critics. . . . Yang Ying-feng, native

of Ilan, studied art and sculpture in Peking and Japan as well as in Taiwan, where he is in the Ministry of Education, a member of the Art Committee. Also on the faculty of National Art College, he serves on many exhibition juries besides exhibiting his own work internationally.

Continued from page 218

(A) WAKE Newsletter, 129 Gordon Ave., Hamilton, Newcastle, N.S.W., Austral. (Title ref. to Finnigan's Wake keys it. Unseen.) X; ? ; 6.3/- ; '62 ; *.

(The) WATTLE GROVE Press, 69 George Town Rd., Newnham, Tasmania, Austral. (FOUR STORIES FROM BYZANTIUM, Howard Mitcham — \$6.60 — author-illustr. Also: BABYLON, Montes de Oca; STELLA MATUTINA, Albin Eiger; NARCISSUS AND ECHO, Rolf Hennequel. Re 3 unpriced, suggest them worthy of query.)

PERSONAL POETRY, c/o D. J. Ross, WBUX, P.O. Box 371, Doylestown, Pa. (Anyone, anywhere, asked published or unpubl. work for air: 'no payment, but exposure.' Max. 20-30 l. Ackn., but no returns. Says 'emotional impact,' decisive.)

WILD DOG, Box 11094, Salt Lake City, Utah. (Eds. Drew Wagon, Gino Clays, with Ed Dorn contrib., wish letters, poetry, art — 'anything that's good.') X ; P ; D ; 10.40c ; '63 ; *.

WINDFALL PRESS, 1814-E Norwood St., Chicago, Ill. — 60626. (New: LEAPING OUT UNFOOLED, Charles B. Tinkham and WALDEN INVASED, William Tillson — \$2.75 ea. — poetry.)