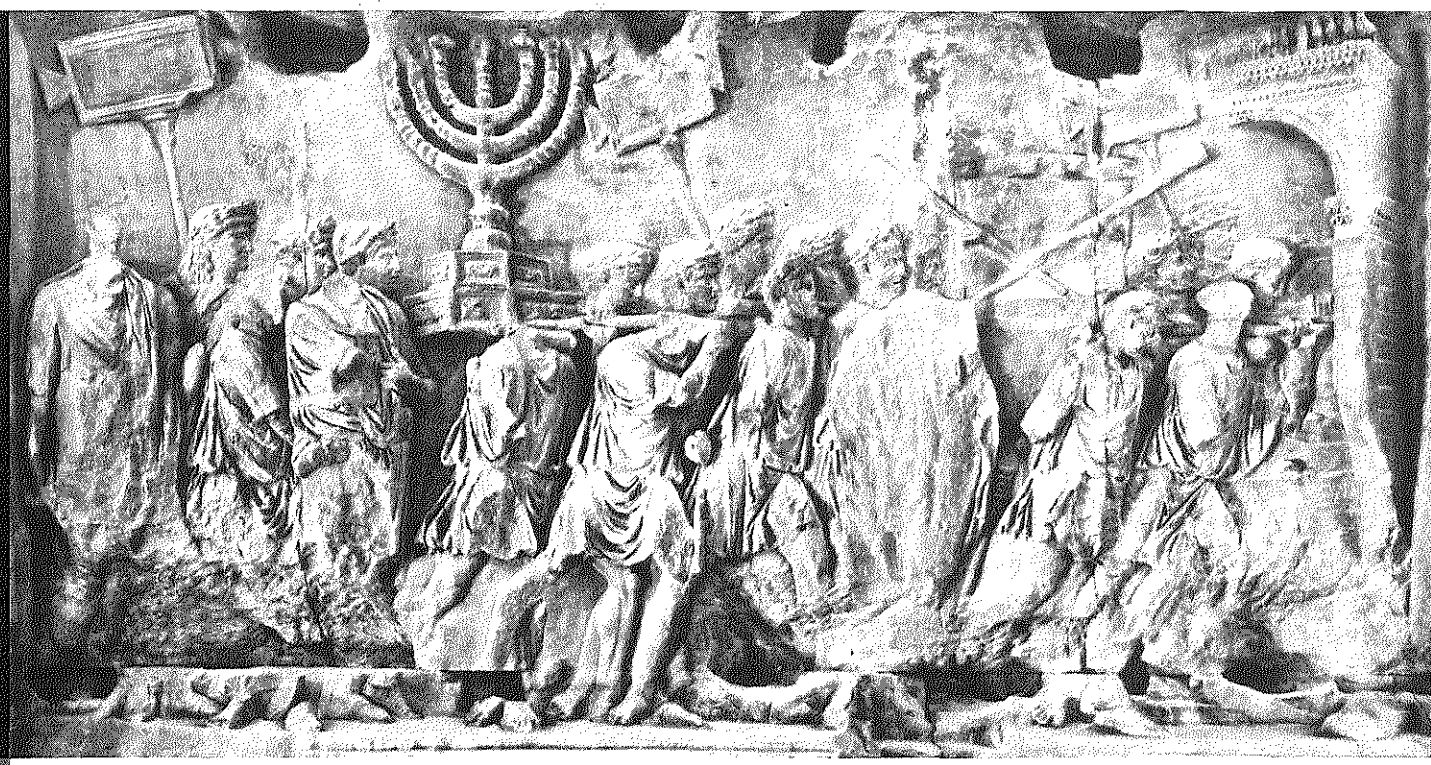

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Unsolicited articles, stories, and poems are welcome, but should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope in each instance. Reasoned comments are also welcome.

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Cover: Arch of Titus. The triumphal parade in Rome of the spoils from the Temple of Jerusalem. Built in 80–85 A.D., almost half a generation after the end of the Jewish War (70 A.D.), the Arch of Titus rises on the Via Sacra in the Roman Forum—part of the triumphal route.

William James, by Alice Boughton, 1907.

Gottfried Wilhelm Liebniz, by Andreas Seheits, 1704, Florence, Uffizi.

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FROM OUR READERS

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

To the Editor of the *St. John's Review:*

Why, I wonder, would you or your editor deliberately choose to send me an issue of your magazine calling my attention to a review (of Updike) [Lev Navrozov, "Updike and Roth: Are They Writers?", *St. John's Review*, Summer 1982] that is so gratuitously, exaggeratedly, insulting? Is this meant to be provocative behavior? Cute behavior? Am I supposed to have a passionate intellectual curiosity about what the *St. John's Review* thinks of our books?

I don't bother to reply out of anger or resentment; only to express my astonishment at what people with some pretension to professionalism think is appropriate; I won't bother opening another issue.

ROBERT GOTTLIEB

The writer is president and editor-in-chief of Alfred A. Knopf, publisher of John Updike.

Lev Navrozov replies:

I have received over 500 responses like Mr. Robert Gottlieb's letter to my reviews of "great works of literature" and of their reviews in the *New York Times* and the *New York Review of Books*. So I can establish a certain general pattern. A respondee wants to show that he despises my review so deeply that no response is appropriate except icy silence, so that his response should not really be regarded as any response at all. This approach saves the respondee from any dangerous attempt to discuss my review, to argue, or to present his view.

The respondee also says or implies that his response is provoked not by insecurity, or any other such ignoble feelings, but by the lofty emotions of a gentleman and an artist, duty bound to express his civic or artistic scorn. Whereupon a respondee lets it be known that any other response is beneath his dignity and makes what seems to him an epistolary door-banging exit.

Let me now note that a Russian emigre monthly, *Literary Courier*, has translated the review in question into the Russian and published it in the magazine's latest issue. According to its editor in his letter to me, it "has caused great interest, much praise, and this we owe to you."

So evidently the issue is not between just Mr. Gottlieb and me. The issue is rather between his milieu and mine. What Mr. Gottlieb's milieu regards as "great novels," or "outstanding poetry," my milieu does not view as literature.

I come from a family of a writer and lived since childhood in the literary milieu of the poet Pasternak and the novelist Platonov (I give these two names as known in the West). I also grew up on Western, and in particular American, literature.

Even if I had read Mr. Updike's novel at the age of 16, I (and my milieu) would have said that this is not literature.

(continued on page 2)

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I realize that to say that the naked Emperor wears no clothes may seem "gratuitously, exaggeratedly, insulting" to those tailors who spun the fictitious clothes and the courtiers who support their pretense. But what am I supposed to do? To pretend that Mr. Updike wears luxurious literary vestments?

Ironically, the parents or grandparents of many of those who belong to Mr. Gottlieb's milieu came from Russia too. Yet by the time we came they had created a self-contained cultural monopoly which keeps out all critics, whether native Americans or late-comers like myself.

Only in a culturally self-contained mutual admiration society which has insulated itself against all outside literary criticism, amateur monstrosities like *Rabbit is Rich* may be proudly published and showered with rave reviews and prizes.

Members of this monopoly can well ignore its critics who can only publish in off-monopoly periodicals which can be easily passed over in silence. Yet for all their power they cannot afford any dialogue or debate with their critics.

EDITORIAL POLICY

To the Editor of the *St. John's Review*:

Please enter my subscription to the *St. John's Review* in accordance with your policy about new subscribers. I have had occasion to see the magazine from time to time over the past two years when it was passed on to me by a friend and was first of all attracted by articles in my own field of art history and archaeology written by eminent scholars like Philipp Fehl and Homer Thompson. It was refreshing to find their ideas and opinions presented in a much broader context than is possible in the standard specialist journals. The magazine is to be praised especially for not suppressing feeling in its contributors, who are allowed to bring up issues relating to strong, basic emotions about fear and love and living and dying. Lev Navrozov is permitted to say true things he could not have said in the Soviet Union, and Michael Levin may publish his own very personal, highly debatable views on the sexes. In the case of the latter, even the outrageous title of his article, " 'Sexism' is Meaningless," (*St. John's Review* Autumn 1981) allowed for expression and reaction. The resulting section of Letters to the Editor was lively and splendid. Congratulations to the Editor, whom I respect immensely for publishing writings that help to create dialogue and bring into focus significant thought and feeling.

NANCY T. de GRUMMOND
Associate Professor
Department of Classics
Florida State University

To the Editor of the *St. John's Review*:

As an alumnus of St. John's, I think you are to be commended for printing the article " 'Sexism' is Meaningless" (*St. John's Review* Autumn 1981), especially because you must have known that to do so was to invite a great deal of criticism. But I was distressed to find that some graduates of St. John's appear to have adopted the Jesuitical doctrine that "error has no rights" and complain not merely of the opinions expressed in the article but even of your having printed it and your motives in so doing; it would appear that there is free speech only for those who hold "correct" opinions.

It is my opinion that the most recent work in anthropology and the physiology of the brain, as well the practical experience of the Army and the Marine Corps, indicate strongly that the traditional understanding of men and women as equal but complementary remains true. The obvious difficulty with this formulation has been that it has too often been used to exclude women from fields of endeavor to which they were perfectly well suited, not to mention other abuses; hence the knee-jerk reaction of the feminist to any comparison which goes beyond the "gross biological features" (to quote one of your correspondents). But the application of so gross a standard has led us to such obvious absurdities as quotas for 100lb. beat patrolmen.

It will not be easy, as it never is, to be both fair and reasonable but, if there is to be a restoration of common sense, we had better start trying. In the meantime, we needn't, and shouldn't, equate feminism with anything beyond the concerns of females; it is no more worthy as an end in itself than is machismo.

CHARLES KLUTH '52
Baltimore, MD

To the Editor of the *St. John's Review*:

An Open Letter To The Instruction Committee

I am disturbed by the statement of editorial policy you recently adopted for the *St. John's Review*...

The statement emphasizes that contributors to the *Review* should be familiar with the St. John's program (first paragraph), will probably be tutors, alumni, or visiting lecturers, and will write mainly about books and issues within the program (fourth paragraph). I presume that you find such a statement necessary because you are dissatisfied with the editorial practices the *Review* has been following for the last several issues, and I infer from the paragraphs I cited that you don't think the *Review* has been sufficiently concerned with the program. Apparently, you want to narrow drastically the range of topics the *Review* covers. That is a bad mistake.

The *Review* is the only tangible intellectual contact that many alumni and many outsiders have with the college. Consequently, I think that the *Review* should make a strong effort to appeal to them, by including articles about subjects that are of immediate interest to them. One must remember that the world of learning is wider than the St. John's program; one must also remember that most of the general public (and, after a few years away from St. John's, most alumni) have intellectual interests different from those of students and tutors at St. John's. If the *Review* wishes to address that public, it cannot stick its head in the sand and pretend it does not see that more people want to read about the informativeness of the *New York Times* versus that of *Pravda* than about spirituality in the philosophy of Plotinus, for example.

Let me relate to you my own experience with the *Review*. The articles in it that I always read first are those not explicitly connected with the program. My friends, whether alumni of St. John's or of other

(continued on page 112)

William James, Moralist

Jacques Barzun

James's long discussions in youth with Wendell Holmes and the great essay-review of Spencer's *Psychology* in 1878 were his first attempts to vindicate the character of the moral life. It had to be done because the phrase "in an age of science" was already taking on the implication that everything in human life had changed and must be reexamined before its license to exist could be renewed.

For James as a naturalist, the double question was: how to establish the reality of moral choice as part of nature; and how to show that this choice was a free individual act, not a resultant of extraneous "forces." The evidence James begins with is the root phenomenon of the reflex arc: a sensory stimulus affects the brain, and its result is some form of action. All action is reaction upon the outer world. 'The current of life which runs in at our eyes and ears is meant to run out at our hands, feet, or lips. The only use of the thoughts which it occasions while inside is to determine its direction to whichever of these shall, under the circumstances actually present, act in the way most propitious to our welfare.'

What James saw and said a hundred years ago is that reflex action is not like stepping on one end of a see-saw and getting hit in the face by the other. Between stimulus and action comes response and which response it is to be is by no means always automatic. Whatever may be the link between brain and mind, we *experience* the stimulus. Except in the simple cases of touching a hot stove or a sharp blade, response varies widely. The mind interposes at the midpoint of the arc its peculiar and complex individual characteristics.

This interlude of response may seem a slender support for the moral world, but it is the same support that holds up and indeed constitutes the whole of our conscious life, with which moral judgment and choice are intertwined. The important point is to recognize *preference* as a given element and one that is inescapably individual. It is that "taking" (or unique perception and perspective) which is central to the Jamesian conception of reality.

In one of his most charming essays, "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings," James relates a picturesque incident of his driving with a North Carolina farmer through a remote valley recently opened to cultivation. James was appalled at the devastation—beautiful trees felled, then charred stumps bearing witness to the struggle for level ground; great gashes in the greenery and patches of corn and other plantings irregularly scattered, like the pigs and chickens, among the miserable log cabins, across what must have been an enchanted vale. 'The forest had been destroyed; and what had "improved" it out of existence was hideous, a sort of ulcer without a single element of artificial grace to make up for the loss of Nature's beauty.' James put a tactful question to his driver, whose reply changed the whole scene: "Why, we ain't happy here, unless we're getting one of these coves under cultivation." 'I instantly felt,' James goes on, 'that I had been losing the whole inward significance of the situation. Because to me the clearings spoke of naught but denudation, I thought they could tell no other story. But when *they* looked on the hideous stumps, what they thought of was personal victory, of honest sweat, persistent toil, and final reward. The cabin was a warrant of safety for self and wife and babes. The clearing was a symbol redolent with moral memories of duty, struggle, and success.'

Preferences, then, the ends that we pursue, 'do not exist at all in the world of impressions we receive by way of our senses, but are set by our emotional and practical subjectivity altogether. Destroy the volitional nature, the definite subjective purposes, preferences, fondnesses for certain effects, forms, orders, and not the slightest motive would

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A leading man of letters, Jacques Barzun has recently published *Critical Questions, Selected Essays 1940–1980* (University of Chicago Press, 1982). The above essay comes from *A Stroll with William James*, a book meant to mark a life-long debt, to be published early in 1983 (Harper and Row).

Quotations from James are in single quotes.

remain for the brute order of our experience to be remodelled at all.'

It is our desires, our "fondnesses" as James calls them, that underlie the state of mind in which we say "this is good, this is bad; that is better and this worse." Or we imply these judgments by a taking or a rejecting, instinctive or deliberate. Desires are of course not limited to bodily need. Man has developed a want for the superfluous, which is infinite and includes those satisfactions termed moral satisfactions. The moral order, in other words, turns out to be the meaning attached to experience by every being who thinks while he feels.

But this conclusion is only the threshold of the higher moral questions. Thoughtful people wonder about the status of ethical ideas strictly so called, the meaning of the terms right and wrong, duty and conscience, and the standards that they comply with. In ordinary speech, "ethics" means not cheating or stealing, "morals" means sexual propriety; and the "decline of moral standards" so frequently discussed turns on how much there is of the one and how little of the other. "Wider moral issues" occupy writers and preachers and even politicians: what is a just society? Is equality of opportunity enough to ensure it? Is the criminal reared in poverty responsible for his acts? Does the right to life begin in the embryo? And in comparing groups or individuals, the question is asked, What "values" has she, he, they got? Tell us your "priorities." "Lifestyles" themselves, voguish and vaguish as the term is, embody the kind of judgment called moral, and the same estimating of worth comes into play in every realm of thought and action: art, science, philosophy, and religion are equally exposed to moral judgment; they form part of the moral life of man.

Its difficulty is that because it relies on estimates, because it arises from our different perspectives, certainty and agreement are not to be had, even with the aid of a particular religious revelation. And supposing that revelation brought about unity, the multiplicity of creeds at variance on moral questions would still leave the philosopher having to choose among revelations. He wants a prescription to fit all mankind if he can discover it. What can he turn to?

In answering the challenge, James gives in passing some credit to the Utilitarians, who ascribe good and bad to associations with pleasure and pain. Association does train us morally, but only up to a point. As James's *Psychology* makes clear, there are tendencies of the human mind that are "born in the house" and not developed by utility. 'Take the love of drunkenness; take bashfulness, the terror of high places, the susceptibility to musical sounds; take the emotion of the comical, the passion for poetry, for mathematics, or for metaphysics—no one of these things can be wholly explained by either association or utility. A vast number of our moral perceptions deal with directly felt fitnesses between things and fly in the teeth of all the prepossessions of habit and presumptions of utility. The moment you get beyond the coarser moral maxims, the Decalogues and Poor Richard's Almanacs, you fall into schemes and positions which to the eye of common sense seem fantastic and overstrained. The sense for abstract justice, which some persons have, is as eccentric a variation as is the passion for music. The feeling of the inward dignity of certain spiritual attitudes, as peace, serenity, simplicity, veracity; and of the essential vulgarity of others, as querulousness, anxiety, egoistic fussiness are quite inexplicable except by an innate preference of the moral ideal attitude.'

Since these attitudes are individual facts and unevenly distributed among mankind, it follows that 'there is no such thing possible as an ethical philosophy dogmatically made up in advance. We all help to determine the content of ethical philosophy so far as we contribute to the race's moral life. In other words, there can be no final truth in ethics any more than in physics, until the last man has had his experience and said his say.' This is what we should expect in a universe that is inherently pluralistic and unfinished.

Are there then no such things as moral principles? Is it meaningless to speak of principled action, of a man, a woman of principle? For if all these are empty words, how can moral behavior be taught and misbehavior reproved? The demand for a common standard is as strong a feeling as that of wanting justice in our special case. We ask incessantly, What is the law? the entrance requirements? the speed limit? We need yardsticks to set our minds at rest and bring others to book—the phrase is literal: the book is the record of accepted measures for ordinary thought and action. Hence the similar call for principles in the cloudier sphere of moral judgment.

But the word *principle*, with its aura of personal merit and firmness in a shaky world, is ambiguous. To the absolutist a principle is a teaching fixed for all time and good on all occasions, a dogma. One should not be afraid of the word, "dogma," for it conveys the advantage that principles have when proclaimed with authority as "indelible moral truths, not mere opinion." In that guise principle seems to possess an inherent compelling force—no need of the police behind it. At the same time, dogma has acquired its unwelcome sound because it claims universal sway, while modern liberal constitutions require the peaceful coexistence of several conflicting dogmas. So the very general demand for principles and men of principle comes down to asking that everyone have "some principle or other." And diversity is back to plague us as before.

A further difficulty with principles is that they clash among themselves, even within the same system of morality. Albert Schweitzer, for instance, preached "Reverence for Life" and got the reputation of a saint. But what pragmatic contents does the formula cover? If it means no vivisection, more humane slaughter-houses, forbidding

blood-sports—even if it means vegetarianism, Schweitzer's injunction can at least be debated. But as a universal rule it is mere concept-worship. Schweitzer must have daily flouted his own law. If his hospital at Lambarene was even moderately aseptic, many living crawling creatures had to be denied reverence. The tape worm and tse-tse fly could bear witness to his unprincipled behavior, and he was ruthless to cancer cells, which are also a form of life. "Oh, but that's not what he meant!" What then *did* he mean? An absolute rule is literal or it is nothing. Here the nothing is a pompous echo of a general tendency already well-rooted in our mores.

Schweitzer was too intelligent a man not to see the objection and he made some verbal gestures to gloss it over: good sense should govern the application of principle. That saving clause, expressed or not, seems to go with every ideal when one begins to analyze it. It enables the absolutist to pass for a moral champion and sensible as well: proclaim the principle inviolable, denounce as unprincipled—as pragmatists—those who question the heroics of absolutes, then reserve the right to do quietly what the "unprincipled" say has to be done.*

In the last half-century the game has been played with this same "sanctity of life" to bring about the widespread abolition of capital punishment; it now goes on about legalized abortion. "The state should not commit—or abet—murder." The noble rhetoric blankets the varieties of experience and flouts the proper use of words: a judicial execution or a legal operation is not murder. And other considerations than the life of the criminal or the fetus have relevance. To name but two, the sanctity of life is hardly honored by incarceration for years in the prisons we have. Nor is it reasonable to prohibit abortion and permit all persons and powers in society, whether through high literature or low advertising, to solicit the eye and the imagination with ubiquitous incitements to sexual activity.

In a word, principles are at best short-hand summaries of what civilized life requires in general, in ordinary relations, in open-and-shut situations: do not lie, steal, or kill. But the pure imperative gives no guidance whatever in difficult cases. Universal lying would be dreadful, but you do not tell the truth to the madman armed with a knife who asks which way his intended victim went. And even routinely, you lie to spare the feelings of the hostess who apologizes for her spoiled dinner or dull company. The police shoot in hot pursuit and sometimes kill the innocent bystander, just as they would, and do, to quell a riot. The very right of self-defense works for *and against* the sanctity of life. And whether or not the unborn have a "right to life" from the moment of conception, it would be morally monstrous to force the victim of incest or rape (especially if accompanied by venereal disease) to bear her child. The child itself might come to wish it had never been born and curse the blinkered moralist.

Every human situation being a tangle of facts and meanings and possible consequences, moral judgment consists in deciding how much evil may be averted and the good sustained or extracted. Sometimes the complication is tragic, as in the case that E.M. Forster discussed at the outbreak of the Second World War: "Should I betray my country or my friend?" The dilemma may have seemed improbable at the time; it no longer looks it after the revelations of high-minded spying and treason. And the moralist is no nearer a solution than Antigone was two thousand years ago when she had to choose whether to obey the law of the gods commanding her to bury her brother or the law of the state forbidding her to do it because he was a rebel.

If these various degrees of uncertainty and horror do characterize the life of man precisely because he is a moral being, what help can thinking about it abstractly provide? James has but two generalities to offer, but they are comprehensive. The first is that 'there is but one unconditional commandment, which is that we should seek incessantly, with fear and trembling, so to act as to bring about the very largest total universe of good that we can see. Abstract rules indeed can help; but they help less in proportion as our intuitions are more piercing and our vocation the stronger for the moral life. For every dilemma is in literal strictness a unique situation; and the exact combination of ideals realized and ideals disappointed which each decision creates is always a universe without precedent and for which no adequate previous rule exists. The philosopher, then, *qua* philosopher, is no better able to determine the best universe in the concrete emergency than other men. He sees, indeed, somewhat better than most men what the question always is—not a question of this good or that good simply taken, but of the two universes with which these goods respectively belong.'

"Not this good, or that good"—it is the whole tangle that must be resolved, just as it is from the new emergencies that moral habits grow more delicate. If we no longer make fun of the insane, abuse the crippled, or beat the abc's into little children, it is because individuals with "piercing intuitions" have persuaded society that their sensibility to others' pain implied a moral duty to stop inflicting it. But short of such great reforms, what moral contribution can the morally alive person make? Start, as James always tells us to do, with the idea of a tangible result. 'If one ideal judgment be objectively better than another, that betterness must be made flesh by being lodged concretely in someone's actual perception. It cannot float in the atmosphere, for it is not a sort of meteorological phenomenon like the aurora borealis.'

The second general principle as to the question what *ought* to be done, what one's duty is in the circumstances, what the ground of our obligation is, brings us to the pos-

*The love of abstraction and hatred of usefulness go so far in certain moralists as to make them affirm that it would be better for morality if honesty were *not* the best policy. In other words, the right is what people ought to do with no reason given, except that they ought to because it is right. Imperatives satisfy, even vicariously, the imperial emotions.

sibly surprising conclusion 'that without a claim actually made by some concrete person there can be no obligation, and that there is some obligation wherever there is a claim. Our ordinary attitude of regarding ourselves as subject to an overarching system of moral relations true "in themselves" is therefore either an out-and-out superstition, or else it must be treated as a merely provisional abstraction from that real Thinker in whose actual demand obligation must be ultimately based.' James, being a naturalist, does not posit such a Thinker; he is only showing those who do that their traditional religious morality implies a claimant. It follows that in a world which acknowledges no God—or not everywhere the same one—the claim must come from the beings whose existence we do acknowledge.

James knows the strangeness of thinking that every claim imposes a duty. With our habit of always wanting a backing to reality, we look for some sign of "validity" behind the claim to turn it into an obligation, something beyond, which 'rains down upon the claim from some sublime dimension of being which the moral law inhabits. But how can such an inorganic abstract character of imperativeness, additional to the imperativeness which is the concrete claim itself, *exist*? Take any demand, however slight, which any creature, however weak, may make. Ought it not, for its own sole sake, to be satisfied? If not, prove why not. The only possible kind of proof would be the exhibition of another creature who should make a demand that ran the other way.'

So here we are, each of us, at the center of the conflicting claims that assail us. They may come from animals or infants or strangers: the range of claims we are subjected to depends on the degree of our awareness; the extent of our moral effect on the world depends on our ability to sort and fulfill them.

I confess that when I first read James on "The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life," I was struck by a sense of helplessness about carrying out his injunction. But after reflection, when I had grasped his extraordinary idea, I felt the sudden release from interminable shilly-shallying: X has asked me to do this for him. Perhaps I should. But I don't really like X, so why should I? But it's absurd to decide on mere dislike. Why not do what he asks if I can without too much trouble? Yes, but he probably won't return the favor. Surely, that's no reason for not doing it—and so on. The amount of inner wear and tear saved by the Jamesian redefinition of duty can be very great. Our modern cant phrases—to sort out one's priorities, to stick to one's values—hardly help in comparison with James's simple idea that the burden of proof in our moral relations is always on the negative: given a claim concretely presented, why should I *not* satisfy it? The search for a "why should I" is futile see-sawing or a grudging surrender to the "superstitious abstraction."

The result of honoring as many claims as possible is to raise the amount of satisfaction in the world, increase the sum of good, and thereby "moralize" the universe more than it is already. For if reducing cruelty to animals makes for a universe better than it was before, so does giving our claimants more of what they assert to be their good. Superficially, the judgment may look like the Utilitarian's "greatest good of the greatest number"; actually, it differs in having nothing to do with legislating the good of society at large or with the wishes of a majority. It is a concrete relation between persons.

That relation may even be what is meant by the utopian commandment that we should love one another. At the same time, the requirement of an existing, live claim prevents intrusive do-goodism under the cloak of love. But what if the claimants misjudge and call good what is bad—ask for drugs or the means of harming others? In such cases there is obviously a counterclaim which nullifies theirs, the claim of their kindred or of the rest of society. Besides, claims of this sort fall within the circle of mores and laws about which the moral person has long since settled his doubts. One is not bound to be perplexed and imagine a dilemma every time a choice has to be made. A great deal of the present century's feelings of guilt are the result not so much of moral conscience as of the self-conscious ego. Its feelings are not insincere, but they are more about the status of the self in its own eyes than about the object of its concern. Thus Mrs. Jellyby in Dickens, who neglected her children in her zeal for the natives of Borrioboola-Gha.

To respond to all possible claims, one must begin looking for them in one's own immediate sphere of knowledge. One must recognize the limits of one's power, but with a resolve to act. Indignation about this bad world is cheaply come by and morally worthless. As Robert Frost once recounted, he gave up reading Lincoln Steffens on the plight of cities, because as a poet he knew he could not go and help. Self-acceptance strengthens the moral judgment in an essential way, for in deciding which claims to fulfill there are times when the claims of the self must be counted. The traditional self-sacrifice of a grown child to an aged parent, for example, must be weighed against its possibly immoral results—domestic tyranny and emotional blackmail, on one side, gradually creating embittered hostility toward the whole world, on the other.

As always, it is easier to dispose of such questions from the distance of the writer's desk or the philosopher's lectern. The great merit of James's view of obligation is that its concreteness and perception of the unique warn us against the errors of casuistry. The word has acquired the sense of deviousness only because in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries the religious casuists tried to foresee and rule on all conceivable predicaments in advance, in a "case book." On paper their solutions sounded contemptible. Moral dilemmas, like experience itself, exceed all imaginings, as is shown by *our* innumerable books of casuistry —our novels. They lead us to admire or despise the same

acts, doubtless because these only look the same, or because disparate moral truths are invoked.*

Imbued with the tragic view of life, James was certain that moral action often demands the sacrifice of self; duty is hard; it entails pain and sometimes death. For evil is real and must be fought, repeatedly, endlessly, at great risk. Not only is there no guaranty that one's moral decision is right; there is not even any assurance that the fulfilled claim will not turn from a good to an evil. James's knowledge of history brought enough instances to his mind to leave no doubt.**

To speak of moral decisions implies that human beings faced with a moral choice are free to do one thing or another. This privilege is denied by thinkers who believe in determinism. They may belong to either camp of James's opponents; they may be idealists or materialists. Both accept the fact of volition: you can raise your arm if so minded or refuse to if you choose. But that choice is not really yours nor is it decided on at the moment; everything in the past has been interlinked in a chain of causes and effects, of which your present act is but the latest link to the next. We see here the block universe of the Absolute or of blind matter, either of which locks all things in a tight network for all eternity.

The battle over free will is ancient and neither side can win, because satisfactory evidence on the subject can never be found. The definition of "free" is itself a source of disagreement. Those who say that man acts for a *reason* and not from a cause are told that reasons too are foregone. The thorny notion of cause and effect divides even scientists, though most prefer determinism as more convenient to work with. This state of affairs leaves belief in free will as itself something to choose or reject. James was brought to see this option by the French philosopher Renouvier and like him he chose free will, on moral grounds. He pointed out at the same time that the determinists also choose—the opposite. Let them have their way, says James, it then follows that 'you and I have been foredoomed to the error of continuing to believe in liberty. It is fortunate for the winding up of controversy that in every discussion with determinism this *argumentum ad hominem* can be its adversary's last word.'

But this debonair taunt and argument are not enough. In "The Dilemma of Determinism" James shows what follows his choosing and what he means by its moral grounds. Take any deplorable event (his example is a brutal murder, then recent) and see the difficulties that arise if a determinist regrets its occurrence. 'Are we to say, though it *couldn't be*, yet it *would have been* a better universe with something different from this Brockton murder in it? Calling a thing bad means that the thing ought not to be, that something else ought to be in its place. Determinism [thus] virtually defines the universe as a place in which what ought to be is impossible.' And 'what about the judgments of regret themselves? If they are wrong, other judgments, of approval presumably, ought to be in their place. But as they are necessitated, nothing else *can* be in their place; and the universe is what it was before—a place where what ought to be appears impossible. We have got one foot out of the pessimistic bog, but the other sinks all the deeper. We have rescued our actions from the bonds of evil, but our judgments are now held fast. When murders and treacheries cease to be sins, regrets are theoretic absurdities and errors.'

In other words, under determinism there can be no clear and consistent meaning in the terms moral life, moral judgment, moral action.

Freedom thus regained does not mean "deuces wild"—everybody free every instant to will what he or she pleases. There *are* networks of compulsion—instinct, habit, bodily makeup—and it is as clear to indeterminists as to others that one can predict fairly well what someone else will do when one knows the doer's character and the constraints he works under. Determinists seem to fear that the cosmos will fall apart if free will is permitted to exist. 'It is as likely (according to McTaggart) that a majority of Londoners will burn themselves tomorrow as that they will partake of food; as likely that I shall be hanged for brushing my hair as for committing murder, and so forth.' Clearly, the dispute itself is very free; it suffers no constraints from common sense. But in James's universe things are not totally loose and disjointed. All kinds of unities and relations among things and among ideas coerce. The one permanent avenue of freedom, however narrow, is that 'in an activity situation, what happens is not pure repetition; novelty is perpetually entering the world.'*

One might have expected that James's large definition of duty and his solid reasoning in favor of free will would satisfy the moralist "in an age of science." But they do not, because James's maxim requires that an action for good shall be related to the entire present situation, which he says is new and cannot be judged by previous rule. But morality is the *right* and James's precept looks like the expedient, the changeful. A moralist may admit the changing character of truth, because he has accomodated himself to "progress" in science, but this concession probably

*For a vivid contrast, take our modern scorn for the medieval trial by combat or by ordeal to determine guilt. In an age of belief in a divine providence that governs every event, it was a most moral and logical procedure, and our method of trusting in the doubtful word of mortal witnesses would have seemed reckless and absurd.

**A striking one has emerged since his death: the benevolent, liberal, highly moral treaty that Great Britain made after the Boer War saddled South Africa with a regime based on the continuance of race oppression.

*The full technical argument is given in Chapter VI of *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, "The Experience of Activity;" and again at greater length in the last five chapters of *Some Problems of Philosophy*.

makes him all the more unbending about the "right." He is sure that the pragmatic imagination playing upon context and consequence can only make for uncertainty in human relations, set people adrift and helpless amid temptations, in short replace Right absolute by Relativism.

This argument is so familiar that it is often accepted by those against whom it is directed, as if they lived indeed by a lower grade of ethics but could do no better. Nor is it noticed that the attack brings together two different sets of facts. One is the diversity of existing moralities, each of them absolute to some tribe or nation; the other, the diversity of individuals within tribe or nation.

When Europe discovered the new world in early modern times it was seen that peoples lived by different rules. Montaigne pointed out that cannibals were not immoral at home though they were abominable murderers in Europe. By the next century Pascal notes that even in Europe moral truth is one thing on this side of the Pyrenees and another on the other side.

This being the state of affairs from time immemorial, it seems rather egotistical to proclaim any one set of commandments the sole morality, and somewhat fanciful to speak of "indelible moral truths implanted in the human heart." Is it moral or immoral for the Mohammedan to have four wives? Or the African chief to have forty, each worth so many head of cattle? A worldly Pope recently declared that to look with lust upon one's wife was tantamount to adultery. If this is morality for Catholic believers, is it incumbent upon their neighbors on the same street? In many parts of the world, a gift of value for doing business, giving justice, or performing a helpful official act is only courtesy; in the West it is bribery, immoral and criminal. Murder in early medieval England was paid for by a fine—that is the original meaning of the word murder; later it was paid for by one's life; now, in this country, the penalty is a life sentence, and the meaning of that is seven years in jail. (If life is sacred, by the way, the Eskimos' law is the most moral: the murderer is told to go away and join another tribe.)

Like it or not, humanity is radically diverse. It is only by successive abstractions that we come to conceive of a single "human nature." If you take away one by one heredity, education, the social forces of the time and the place, you can arrive at the essential human being, the forked radish with four limbs, needing food and shelter, and who will surely die. But having defined him—or *it*, rather—no specimen of the kind can be found; like an average prescription for eyeglasses, the definition doesn't fit anybody.

It is at this point that the second and different target of the foe of Relativism comes into view. Actual life is lived by a collection of somebodies and they are no more alike among themselves than are the groups to which they belong. Ascetics and Lotharios, extroverts and introverts, the pensive and the gregarious, the poet and the athlete, and many other varieties and subvarieties breathe and move under the same customs and costume. If the moralist perforce tolerates different national and tribal ethics, why the indignation at internal diversity?—unless it is such as to disturb the peace, which is a political, not a moral reason. In advanced civilizations the idea occurs to very moral persons that different types of character are entitled to different treatment.* Since 1914, for example, we recognize the conscientious objector. As Shaw pointed out even earlier, to do unto others as we would have them do unto us may be unjust: they are not us and their tastes may differ. It is precisely the social behaviorist's mistake to suppose that the same lure and the same whip will work on all alike. It is also the error of the speculative reformer; Utopias are invariably made for one type.

The anti-relativist of today, with his high ideal of inflexibility, needs to see that without the acceptance of different ethical norms we should never have got away from those of the cave man. The refinement of feeling and conduct that moralists pride themselves on comes from change, not fixity. The law of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth gets outgrown, but at first it necessarily appears as a violation of principle. The fear that if one rule is altered, then "anything goes" is the fallacy of all or none. "Things" could hardly "go" farther than we see them doing at present, yet our age is extremely moralistic, if not moral; it lacks "morals" in the vulgar sense but it is full of moral scruples and it labors under innumerable codes aimed at giving equal treatment and protecting the helpless. We have come so far as to cherish even "endangered species" —small, unknown, speechless claimants such as the snail darter, which now arouse widespread moral passions.** Indeed, our moralism is one cause of the perpetual anger at society: why isn't it perfect?

Since James's moral philosophy follows the pragmatic pattern of considering outcome as well as antecedents, it is clear that his relativism, far from being footloose, is held fast by as many demands and duties as the moral agent can think of. His relativism *relates*, and widely. It would be better named Relationism. In thus relating one's decision or conduct to several needs and ideals, one gives the observer as many chances to criticize, whereas the absolutist relates his act to only one thing: the fine abstraction that

*Contrary to common opinion, it is in governing and administering that rules should be rigid. If well drawn, they save time and preclude indecision. In the life of institutions good fixed rules are the prime producers of efficiency and fairness. To be sure, such grooves for sensible action must be redrawn as often as necessary. The complicated work of civilization today is chaotic because of antiquated procedures. Everybody "makes policy" and leaves action to chance or precedent. But this failure due to scarcity of administrative genius is aggravated by false notions of "flexibility," "compassion," and other forms of muddling inequity. In the struggle with the bureaucracies of business and government and education, what makes the public hate "the system" is that it is *not* a system.

**UNESCO has adopted a Declaration of the Universal Rights of Animals, but it has not helped the goats of San Clemente Island, which were liquidated for endangering several species of plants and the habitats of other, less common creatures. Ah, principle! (*New York Times*, August 19, 1979).

his God or his grandfather once uttered emphatically. In other words, James insists as usual that theory be given concrete, namable contents. Those are the "objective values" that moralists preach, though what they rant about is but a formula, a form of words.*

The Jamesian obligation to connect the moral judgment not to 'this good or that good simply taken but to the universe with which they belong' also clears up the common confusion about morals in politics and foreign affairs. Lincoln's struggle with his followers' narrow absolutes may serve to illustrate. In 1863, when summoned to change leaders in troubled Missouri, he gave a reply that should be read as a textbook case in political morality: "We are in Civil War. In such cases, there is always the main question; but in this case that question is a perplexing compound—Union and Slavery. It thus becomes a question not of two sides merely, but of at least four sides even among those who are for the Union.... Thus, those who are for the Union *with*, but not *without* slavery—those for it *with* or *without*, but prefer it *with*—and those for it *with* or *without*, but prefer it *without*. Among these again, is a subdivision of those who are for *immediate*, but not *gradual* extinction of slavery." To each party, each of the six choices was the only moral goal, as Lincoln knew: "all these shades of opinion and even more" are "entertained by honest and truthful men....Yet all being for the Union, by reason of these differences each will prefer a different way of sustaining the Union. At once sincerity is questioned, and motives are assailed. Actual war coming, blood grows hot, and blood is spilled. Thought is forced from old channels into confusion. Deception breeds and thrives. Confidence dies, and universal suspicion reigns. Each man feels an impulse to kill his neighbor, lest he be first killed by him. Revenge and retaliation follow. And all this, as before said, may be among honest men only." It is as Dorothy Sayers told us: the first thing a principle does is to kill somebody.

The statesman thus appears as something greater and wiser and more tragic than the image of "the man of principle," who follows the rule by rote and lets the heavens fall. He is actually one who says: "Gentlemen, I beg you to rise above principle" and who persuades the everwarring factions of his party and his nation to give up their absolutes and be guided by his superior pragmatism. In the murderous battle of principles, he keeps in view the aim and end of moral action. The end is the test, justifying him when the story is over.

But even before, along the way, the end is the standard for judging which principle is to be followed and which must be waived. Hear Lincoln before his presidency, during the debates with Douglas: "Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any great evil, to avoid a greater one. But when I go to Union saving, I must believe, at least, that the means I employ has some adaptation to the end. To my mind Nebraska has no such adaptation."

Here with the word *means* Lincoln introduces the last component of moral conduct: besides the variety of claims and ends to be weighed and combined, there is the mode of action to be chosen. No man was more dedicated to freedom than Lincoln, but as Chief Executive he restricted freedom of speech, suspended habeas corpus, and used the army to enforce the draft against rioters—with regret, no doubt, but without compunction.

Does this not mean that the end justifies the means? Yes. Horrors! No formula arouses greater indignation in moralists; it is the mark of the Evil One; it is the reason given for regarding avowed pragmatists as suspect. Anybody who subscribes to the wicked notion in so many words has to explain himself, offer some excuse. Well, for a start, everyone without exception acts on it in ordinary life. For instance: a man takes a sharp knife and slashes a child. He is a brute, a monster. But just a minute! The man is Dr. X, about to remove the inflamed appendix. Immediately the cut in the abdomen becomes desirable, praiseworthy, highly paid. The end—and nothing else—has changed the moral standing of the violent act. The end justifies the means.

Again, we take that same child, we take all children, and, at an age when they are bundles of energy bent only on running and playing and shouting we coop them up for four hours, six hours a day, and compel them without due process of law to struggle over tasks they do not care for and see no point in. It is called Education. We piously plead: the end justifies the means. Similarly, the ends justify monogamous marriage, imprisonment by law, monastic retreat from the world, and its seeming opposite: society itself. For as Rousseau and Freud pointed out, to live in society is a harsh, unnatural discipline justifiable only by the ends of relative safety for continuous toil.

The modern state particularly is built on the ends-and-means formula so hastily condemned. From compulsory vaccination and seizing land for public use to the control of a thousand normal acts—eating and drinking, teaching and learning, traveling and importing—our laws and administrative rules interfere hourly with harmless human purposes.

We tell ourselves that the end—the common welfare—justifies. The same maxim is also blessed by one ancient church that guides the conduct of millions. It teaches, on the basis of scriptures even older than itself, that procreation in wedlock is the sole justification of sexual intercourse. The end apparently justifies the otherwise reprehensible means. On occasions less intimate and recurrent anybody would behave in the same spirit: we would not hesitate to knock down man, woman, or child to save any of them, on the instant, from being run over or burned to death by clothing on fire.

*Looking at the sum of moral ends achieved permits moralities and cultures—whatever anthropologists may say—to be adjudged better or worse.

The bugbear phrase is evidently a misnomer for something else; and cleansing it of odium is not a merely verbal matter, for its present use is to distort the actual relation of ends to means and discredit pragmatic moral judgments. What needs to be embodied in a formula is a distinct situation, that in which *the means corrupt the end*—or destroy it, as would happen, for example, if one should drug a child to stop it from crying. Weak minds are often tempted to use such means, which in effect covertly substitute one end for another; the true one is a child at peace and not crying; the false is a child merely silenced by a dose of poison.

To speak of moral intuition and believe in free will on moral grounds, as we have seen James doing, argues the valuing of belief itself as a human activity. To accept equality or any other "moral truth" for its good consequences is an act of faith and therefore a risk. But as early as the 1870s and '80s, when James was discussing these questions, faith had become a privative concept which meant: unscientific, illusory, antiquated nonsense, probably of religious origin.

Those who took this attitude generally called themselves Positivists, after the name given by Auguste Comte to his philosophy of knowledge. In effect it admitted as knowledge only what science had certified—positive(ly) knowledge. Toward everything else these minds were skeptical; toward religion specifically, or anything called spiritual, they declared themselves "agnostic"—Huxley's bad coinage for one who says: "I don't know."

The purpose embodied in this then-new word is important; it was to teach the lesson of withholding belief. The agnostic does not deny divinity like the atheist; he waits for evidence one way or the other. Such a position sounds worthy beyond cavil, but its balancing act between Yea and Nay rarely proves stable. Most positivists were assertive materialists, and James found himself obliged to meet their hidden metaphysics head on. 'Science, these positivists say, has proved that personality, so far from being an elementary force in nature, is but a passive resultant of the really elementary forces, physical, chemical, physiological, and psycho-physical, which are all impersonal and general in character. Nothing individual accomplishes anything in the universe save insofar as it obeys and exemplifies some universal law.' Thus—and this was the analogy that Taine made famous in the preface to his *History of English Literature* (1864)—"Vice and virtue are products like vitriol and sugar." James shows that the argument rests on the genetic fallacy. Treating moral facts like so many chemicals is 'as if the same breath which should succeed in explaining their origin would simultaneously explain away their significance.' And he adds that he feels 'impatience at the somewhat ridiculous swagger of the program, in view of what the authors are actually able to perform.'

Besides, this reductivism works both ways. 'If William's religious melancholy is due to bad digestion, scientific theories are organically conditioned just as much as religious emotions are.' James called such interpretation "medical materialism" and saw in it sheer intellectual arrogance. He resented the trick that transformed useful discoveries (his own included) about the dependence of mental upon bodily states into a gratuitous identification of the two. It is a permanent temptation, as the poet and scholar Joy Gresham, who became Mrs. C. S. Lewis, confessed about her youthful views: "Men," I said, "are only apes. Love, art, altruism are only sex. The universe is only matter. Matter is only energy. I forget what I said energy was only."

By the time one does get to energy, amid the elementary particles of physics, which exist for us only as traces on film and which are identical within their kinds, it is evident that something must be added to them before they can become even the ape that we say we are. Yet when one makes this simple reflection one is suspected of "smuggling in" something illicit into the universe. The word "mysticism" is murmured and one is accused of being "against Science," or just too stupid to see how, for the enlightened, science has become "a way of life."

Science can be no such thing, since it begins by excluding what it cannot measure or classify. No scientist has ever chosen a wife or bought a house by scientific methods, nor does he laugh, or applaud a musical work, on scientific grounds. Two-thirds of his life is totally remote from science. Therefore to speak of belief, free will, or faith of any kind as "smuggled in" would mean that natural science offered a complete account of experience. What it offers—too readily—is the claim to do so in the future, coupled with the command to sit and wait. Huxley, again, gave the formula: "To rest in comfortable illusion when scientific truth is conceivably within reach is to desecrate oneself and the universe."

Some writers of our time, though eager to vindicate the moral life, have accepted the premise that science legitimately occupies all the land, but hope that it might be induced to lease some untilled portion for non-scientific use. When James met the claim of total ownership he took a different and intellectually sounder line. The opportunity was given him by a statement in which the English mathematician W. K. Clifford, who was also Jame's friend and fellow psychologist, summed up the new orthodoxy: believe nothing without sufficient evidence—it is a sin: ' "Whoso would deserve well of his fellows in this matter will guard the purity of his belief with a very fanaticism of jealous care. . . . If a belief has been accepted on insufficient evidence (even though the belief be true, as Clifford on the same page explains) the pleasure is a stolen one. It is sinful because it is stolen in defiance of our duty to mankind. . . . It is wrong, always, everywhere, and for everyone to believe anything upon insufficient evidence." '

On this text James wrote a closely reasoned essay which

he called "The Will to Believe." The title has passed into common usage with (as usual) the erroneous meaning of "believe what you please." Seeing this, James regretted the phrase and thought he should have said "the right to believe." In fact, the demonstration is about the right *and* the will to believe, each restricted to precisely stated conditions.

Clifford's preachment 'with somewhat too much robustious pathos in the voice' is self-refuting on the face of it. Clifford, like everybody else, believed thousands of things on no evidence at all—for example, whatever he knew, or thought he knew about his family and friends; and he acted on faith whenever he said with no quiver of doubt: "I'll see you next Monday."

It is such facts of belief and their source in experience that James begins by examining. 'We find ourselves believing, we hardly know how or why. We all of us believe in molecules and the conservation of energy, in democracy and necessary progress, in Protestant Christianity and the duty of fighting for "the doctrine of the immortal Monroe"—all for no reasons worthy of the name. We see into these matters with no more inner clearness, and probably with much less, than any disbeliever in them might possess. His unconventionality would probably have some grounds to show for its conclusions; but for us, not insight, but the prestige of the opinions, is what makes the spark shoot from them that lights up our sleeping magazines of faith. Our faith is faith in someone else's faith, and in the greatest matters this is most the case. Our belief in truth itself is that there is a truth and that our minds and it are made for each other.'

Our thoughts are energized by feelings of all kinds, and it is the varied origins, character, and intensity of feeling that pose the problem of which ideas to trust. 'Our next duty, having recognized this mixed-up state of affairs, is to ask whether it be simply reprehensible and pathological, or whether, on the contrary, we must treat it as a normal element in making up our minds.'

To help settle the question James defines a few terms. Call *hypothesis* anything proposed to our belief and see if it seems to us *live* or *dead*. A live hypothesis is one that the individual finds believable, credible. To an atheist, the reincarnation of souls is not a live hypothesis, but "medical materialism" might be. He could in the end reject it, but it was not "unthinkable" like the other. If one thinks one might take action there is some degree of "liveness" in the hypothesis: 'there is some believing tendency wherever there is willingness to act at all.' ("Act" here would include re-arranging one's other opinions and altering one's vocabulary).

The choice between hypotheses James calls an option and he classifies options as living or dead, forced or avoidable, momentous or trivial. What he goes on to state applies only to an option that is forced, living, and momentous. It is *only* within these narrow limits and *only* when no empirical evidence is to be had, that James finds the right and the will to believe legitimate. Belief under these conditions is no frolic when teacher's back is turned; it has a reason to exist, which is: that *not* deciding is a form of decision. Thus for most people free will is a tenable idea—it is live, which makes the option living, and it is certainly not trivial; it is forced, because there is no third possibility. So in the absence of evidence one has the right to believe in free will, for not deciding would be to decide against it.

These safeguards against credulity have been so regularly overlooked in discussions of James's essay that they bear restating in his own words: *'Our passional nature not only may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds; for to say under such circumstances, "Do not decide but leave the question open," is itself a passional decision and is attended with the same risk of losing the truth.'

So much for the right to believe. The will to do so is a related subject, but its limiting conditions are different. First, willing is not mere wishing or "velleity," as it is called. "I wish I were a millionaire" and "Everybody falls in love with me" are not forms of the will to believe; they are commonplace fantasies. Not the superficial wish but the deep-seated will is a strenuous expression of the self. When Walter Scott, caught as partner in the bankruptcy of his publishing firm, decided for his honor to pay all its debts by writing novels, essays, biographies indefatigably, he noted in his journal: "I must not doubt. To doubt is to lose." That resolve was his will to believe—in his own powers, in his eventual success.

But belief is a far from simple thing. One often hears the strong beliefs of others explained away: "He thinks so because he wants to so much." But try, yourself, to believe that you are younger, or a better dancer, than you actually are; the probability is that you cannot, no matter how much you want to. Peter the apostle wanted to walk on the waters of the stormy lake; his life depended on it, but he could not will it. The test of willing, as usual, is action. Every great artist starts out unknown, uncalled for, but possessed of a belief in himself and of the will to make it true. His periods of discouragement show that it is will which is at work in periods of production.

These facts define the situation in which the will to believe is legitimate and, what is more, "creative": 'There are cases where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming. And where faith in a fact can help create the fact, that would be an insane logic which would say that faith running ahead of scientific evidence is "the lowest kind of immorality." Yet such is the logic by which our scientific absolutists pretend to regu-

*One exception must be noted: Edwin L. Clarke, in a modest textbook entitled *The Art of Straight Thinking* (New York 1929), devotes half a page to explaining that James carefully limits the domain in which belief without evidence has its rights. Professor Clarke may have been annoyed by the ubiquitous will to misunderstand on the part of other scholars.

late our lives!' James then gives a physical example to make vivid a type of predicament that one meets more often in social or emotional life: 'Suppose that you are climbing a mountain, and have worked yourself into a position from which the only escape is a terrible leap. Have faith that you can successfully make it, and your feet are nerved to its accomplishment. But mistrust yourself, and think of all the sweet things you have heard scientists say of *maybes*, and you will hesitate so long that, at last, all unstrung and trembling, and launching yourself in a moment of despair, you roll into the abyss.'

Life being full of "maybes," it forces every conscious being to act a thousand times on the strength of the will to believe. The will functions without our knowing it as such, or appreciating the philosophic and psychological reasons for its reality, as against the unlifelike view of the Cliffords and the Huxleys. But any initial doubt or faith has the interesting aspect that everyone can prove himself right: 'Refuse to believe, and you shall indeed be right, for you shall irretrievably perish. But believe, and again you shall be right, for you shall save yourself. You make one or the other of two possible universes true by your trust or mistrust—both universes having been only *maybes* in this particular, before you contributed your act.'*

One very ordinary situation in which belief contributes to making itself true is that in which trust, candor, courtesy, or love produces the same pleasant attitudes in return. And so with their opposites; the grouchy and suspicious generally find their worst expectations come true. In bodily matters, the placebo effect, long used by physicians, is of the same kind: give a sugar pill to a patient with the will to cure himself and he may do as well as the truly drugged one. This peculiarity of the body and the mind, though not uniform in its action, is so noticeable that it has inspired more than one cult of self-help: to double your energy and succeed in all things, repeat three cheerful slogans before breakfast. That is a caricature of the will to believe, but caricature implies a real original.

'Our willing nature,' as James calls it, is normally restrained; it needs favoring conditions before it can act to our benefit. The common belief of those around us is one enabling cause. A vivid imagination is another, but it must summon emotional force behind its image and keep it at the forefront of consciousness. The will to believe is the will to attend; that is why we say of genius that it is obsessed. As Hemingway puts it somewhere: "It was not just something he believed. It was his belief."

The distinction points to a generally neglected fact—the gradations of belief, the various shades of our several beliefs. Think of them in this light and the shadings appear indeed infinite. We believe the broadcast report of a catastrophe; we believe more strongly when the details are told in the next day's paper; we believe to the full when not merely a witness but a friend saw it happen.

There is even a step beyond, which is faith, or belief unconscious of itself. One senses the difference between believing *that* something exists and believing in the thing itself. People are chock-full of beliefs, but life is lived on faith—a buried assumption on which one acts; for example, that the shopkeeper will give you change for your ten-dollar bill and not say it was a five, as he could safely do if he were in *bad faith*. When any deep trust has to be put into words we discover that belief—its statement—is the interruption of faith. One used to have unthinking faith in the safety of the streets; now one at best *believes* that the stranger coming along will not assault one. Common speech records the shifting emphasis when it uses "I believe so" to mean "I am not sure."

If in order to leap the mountain chasm it was necessary to overcome "The fear that kills," it is no less important to remember the poet's next line: "And hope unwilling to be fed." For despite the derivation of the word, it is a mistake to suppose that everybody wants to believe what is agreeable.** Many prefer the worst; to them news or ideas feel true because they are gloomy. When Freud said that science was the conquest of will over the pleasure principle, he evidently felt that the truths of science robbed him of pleasure, and he rejoiced. But it is just as reasonable to say that scientific work is the expression of man's free will invading the realm of necessity, in which case science is one form of the pursuit of happiness.

These opposed views are doubtless never to be reconciled, but they illustrate a main contradiction of our century. The age cries out for all the freedoms—the free will of individual self-determination, the free choice of social and cultural pluralism, the right to free beliefs and utterance, the free access to good things that equality affords. But it also believes in the material, medical, subpsychical determinism of all acts and thoughts, and it turns its back upon risk, which is the necessary companion of free will as well as of the right and will to believe. So while half our energy goes to freeing, the other half is spent on trying to make safe, to control, to predetermine by means akin to the behaviorist's conditioning or the poll-taker's way of freezing the future. Our worship of science springs from the same passion for certainty (plus the hold it gives on other's opinions) rather than from intellectual pleasure and admiration. Similarly, because they are risky and disturbing, heroism and ambition are thought wrong and ridiculous; tests, statistics, diets, charts tell everybody "This is what you ought to be—indeed, whether you know it or not, this is what you are." And with that denial of freedom and risk, anxious guilt replaces the sense of accomplishment.

*Thanks to the currency of the phrase "self-fulfilling prophecy," the public is now familiar with the workings of the negative will: predict that your wedding will not take place and make it so by not showing up for it.

**"Belief" seems to have a two-pronged etymology: be-lief means be-glad, as in "I'd just as *lief*," *lief* being related to *love*; *belief* is also connected with *leave* in the sense of *allow*. Our belief is thus what we should be glad to think when it is allowable to do so: exactly James's position.

Treasure Hunt

Meyer Liben

It was one of those lovely New England days late in August which our great authors of the early and middle nineteenth century have described for us so easily, so extensively. When a region has achieved a given importance —political, cultural, whatsoever—the climate and terrain take on an added significance. How much more so if the beauty is there to begin with!

I am poor at natural description, I find it difficult to portray what is, whatever exists, in distinction, I mean, to what is happening (I add that as a kind of self-pleading, to hide a deficiency). I am plainly insensitive to natural beauty (a great deal is happening there) having a poor sense for color, space, and relationship.

Lake, mountain, and cloud blended. The predominant colors were green, blue, and brown, the dusty brown of road. A few clouds wandered aimlessly in a sky otherwise absolutely clear. I mention the aimlessness of the clouds because that contrasts so strongly with the decisive, the volitional nature of the event now ready to begin, I mean the Treasure Hunt in the annual *Blue and Gold* color competition in the summer camp set in a terrain which has been so closely and charmingly, so easily and extensively described by our great authors of the early and middle nineteenth century.

A word in passing about this Color War, a phenomenon requiring explanation for those unfamiliar with the customs of the summer camps of the late 1920s and the early 1930s. The competitive element was strong, mirroring that of the Great Society. There was no particular effort made to disguise or soften the competitive instincts. Everyone in camp, counsellor and camper alike—with exceptions to be mentioned—was on the Blue or the Gold team engaging in every variety of sport, in dramatics, and in any other kind of activity which lent itself to competition. Our *Blue and Gold* lasted for only five days. There were some camps at the time which were divided on the very first day, even on the bus or train carrying them all out of the city, and the struggle for points, for victory, went on all during the summer! That was obviously exaggerating, rather than mirroring, the world round about, and then there were camps coming into existence which discouraged, even forbade this type of competition, trying to create an atmosphere different from that of the society. The competition in these camps was of a low-pressure sort; in some cases the element of cooperation was definitely encouraged.

But our camp stood in the middle between those which were competition-crazy and those which were competition-shy—we had our five days of *Blue and Gold* rivalry (deeper thinkers amongst us referred to it as an attenuated hangover of the War Between the States) and we were now on our fourth day of that rivalry, with the issue in doubt, and an important 25 points to be awarded to the team (this was a Senior Division event) winning the Treasure Hunt.

There were three on a team. On the Blue team were Larry Altman, Dick Gordon, and Dave Crown. On the Gold team were Marv Woolman, Jackie Lesser, and Ben Semmel. This game—finding a written clue on the basis of a written clue, and so to the final treasure, usually a prize, in this case the 25 points—requires intelligence and speed. There is hardly a game that doesn't. Now Larry and Marv were very intelligent (both, as it happened, from Townsend Harris Hall), while Dick and Jackie were very fast, ran neck and neck in the sprints, and both murder at laying down a bunt and beating it to first. That left Dave and Ben to represent sagacity, the guiding hand, even what we in our camp called "character," a quality for which medals were awarded at the reunion held in midwinter. "Character" meant a certain stability; often times the awards were made to those who seemed most reserved and didn't particularly shine in one sport or another. The stability didn't seem to jibe altogether with the sagacity, but that was part of the confusion of this particular area of choice.

The contestants were gathered around the flagpole, situated on the parade grounds which overlooked the lake. The Grand Isle seemed very close, the brilliant clarity of that August day acting as a kind of telescope. Down at the waterfront the sophomores were starting their swimming meet, and the points to be won here, tho not crucial, were bound to be important.

Above the cries and splashes of the sophs one of the judges, head of the Senior Division, laid down the rules. A word about these judges. The Head Counsellor and the

camp Doctor were kind of ex-officio judges—they might be used if a shortage or an emergency developed. The active judges were usually counsellors chosen for their non-combative natures. They came most from the intellectuals, those (often, of course mistakenly) thought to be the least interested in victory and therefore, by a curious twist in logic, the most judicious. If a counsellor went to an Ivy League school, or planned to do medical research, he was pretty sure to be chosen for a judge. So do the men of the world underrate the fierce rivalry of mind and spirit.

"The boundaries," said the head of the Senior Division, "are the backstop of the baseball field (not into the woods), the beginning of the girls' camp (not *into* the girls' camp), the parents' Social Hall, and the lake (not into the lake). And remember, no conversation with anyone not on your team."

This last warning was given because (as this judge had heard) there had been a scandal a number of years back, years after the Black Sox scandal, in which spies were used to report the discoveries of the opposing team. These spies would follow the enemy, see where the clue was replaced, and report accordingly. That episode almost disrupted the Color War, but then it came back stronger than ever.

I'd like to sketch in a little of the background of this Head Senior Counsellor, while he is laying down the law in his rather pedantic manner, tho shot through with flashes of wit which were swiftly reabsorbed into the pedantry, only to reappear again, for he was bright and nimble, really assumed a pedantic style to cover an extreme restlessness, a power of imagination.

His name is Jules Kurtin, he has just finished his senior year (on scholarship) at Yale, and will enter Law School in the fall. He is a kind of solitary, friendly with both the egg-heads and the athletes, tho belonging to neither group, and naturally incurring the suspicion of both. Since he had no girl friend, there were rumors that he was a homosexual, but that was wrong, it was just that he had no girl friend. Rumors of sexual deviations and difficulties were not uncommon—it was an easy way of getting back at someone who seemed superior or odd. He had no camp experience before this year, and had no particular interest in going to the camp. His sister, however, had a boy and a girl of camp age, and she insisted that her brother be included in the kind of package deal which was usual then, and probably still is, in the summer camps. So, since he had nothing better to do for the summer, he found himself at camp. Then he was made head of the Senior Division because the man who had been hired for that job gave it up at the last minute for a better-paying job in the Poconos. The reluctance of the other Senior counsellors (who had been to the camp before and wished to continue for themselves the benefits of its tradition as a "Counsellor's Paradise") propelled Jules into this position, in which, after an unshaky start, he managed quite adequately. In view of his college, his temperament, and consequent reputation in the camp community, it was only natural that he should have been chosen as one of the judges. No one could imagine Jules taking sides in this war. No one thought that he would fight over a close decision at home or threaten to leave the camp unless the broad jumper on the other team was disqualified for a foot fault. It was the felt absence of this combative edge which disqualified Jules from being chosen for the *Blue and Gold.*

So Jules, in spite of his comparative unfamiliarity with the ins and outs of the camp (for many of the counsellors had been there, beginning as campers, for as long as ten years) had been given the task of working out the route and writing the clues for the Treasure Hunt. He at first approached this as a rather pedestrian task, but as he began to work on it, one night at a writing table in the parents' lodge, his interest was aroused. The game took on the profound meaning which all games, sufficiently examined, will bring to light, every game being a deposit, so to say, of man's history and forgotten behavior. Jules began to see this game as a kind of allegory of life's pursuits, of all the goods (and evils) which we are forever seeking. He saw the Treasure not only as money—he thought of the Holy Grail, the Golden Fleece, of the brawling and curiously honest madness of California in 1848.

Then he jotted down, as they came to mind, some of man's pursuits: Fame, Love, Money, Power, God, Happiness, Truth, Justice, Security, Failure, Status, Understanding the Origins of the Universe.

These were some of the pursuits from which he decided to make his choice for the game. And because he realized that so many people do not know what it is they are pursuing, indeed are seeking something to pursue, he added Ideals to his list.

And what about the randomness and mystification in life? He grinned at the thought of his favorite line from Ring Lardner. Lost, at the wheel of a car, close to home, our author asks a policeman for instructions. Advised to take the Boston Post, Ring replies: "I have already subscribed to one out-of-town paper".

So, out of the joy of play and amateur mystification, he included this last sentence as one of the clues. Does this sound as tho it would be too esoteric an allusion for the hunters? Not at all. For, as it happened, there was a counsellor from Boston, who received, every day, precisely the Boston newspaper in question, which he spread out, weather permitting, on the parade grounds, during free time, rest hour, or whatever other time he could snatch from duties not very arduous to begin with.

But now the clues are finished, and the hunt has started. Each side is given the first clue. They study it anxiously, eagerly, wanting to get the head start. It was the famous quotation from Socrates about the worthlessness of

the unexamined life.

Now in these summer camps, in these close social conglomerations, there is a high level of interpersonal knowledge, there is endless joking and jibing about oddities of behavior, an intricate and ever-changing web of friend and

enemy, there is a great deal of sadistic gossip (as well as friendly gossip, boasts of the merits and achievements of those on your side), there is a great deal of the hostile interest of the young, part of the pattern of what we today call "putting one down".

The point of these clues in the Treasure Hunt is that a given word, or phrase, will, through free-associational routes, rational analysis, or luck, yield up the material leading the hunters to a given person, or a given place. So these paragraphs, these lines, sentences, and clauses are studied with the care and intensity that the New Critics give to a line of verse.

Obviously the key word in this first clue was the word "unexamined". Now there was a youth in the camp, whose name was Jordan Kustler, who refused to be examined by the camp nurse. On the occasions when these examinations were necessary (the nurse sometimes doubling for the doctor, or assisting him in these mass prophylaphtic orgies) Jordan would disappear—into the woods surrounding the camp, down to the lake and under a war canoe, anywheres where he thought he'd be safe from the examination (mostly throat) of our attractive nurse.

This clue, therefore, was not the most difficult of clues. Larry and Marv (the smart ones, you recall) hit on the answer at about the same time, and the teams, with Dick and Jackie in the lead (the fast ones, you recall) sped towards the bunk and the bed of Jordan Kustler, twelve years old, a Junior. The two speedsters arrived in a dead heat (the distance from pole to bunk being very short) but Jackie found the slip, which was under Jordan's pillow, and, according to the rules, his team, assembled, had one minute to read and analyze the clue before handing it over to the foe, or, in the absence of the foe, to replace it *exactly* where found. To enforce these rules, the judges were spread out at the different discovery spots, moving ahead with the progress of the game. This, of course, was to prevent the discoverer of the slip from hiding it in a place absolutely unrelated to the sense of the previous clue. It is an example of the imperfectibility of man. So the Gold team examined the new clue, and then, at the word of the judge, handed it to the Blue team, and tore off in the direction of home plate.

Look homeward, angel,

Milton's line, Wolfe's title, was the second clue.

When writing down this clue, Jules was thinking of man's role in the world, that he must seek to prove himself in the great outside, and then return to the ease and safety of home (the way Shakespeare did), tho, as with Ulysses, the trials on the way home were not the least hazardous. To the Blues and the Golds the line meant only one thing: Home Plate on the baseball field. The Blues reached the plate just as the Golds were streaking off.

On the ball field, the Juniors were in the midst of a game worth 50 points, and these could prove to be important, if not absolutely crucial in the final tally.

"What's the idea?" asked the catcher on the Gold team as Dick went for the home plate. "How are you supposed to play a ball game with an army tearing around home plate?"

But he had not objected when the Gold team had looked for and found the clue buried under the plate.

"Don't hold him back," said the judge, "let him look." And then Dick triumphantly came up with the slip of paper, and discussed it with Larry and Dave, who had by now appeared on the scene.

That third clue was not an easy one, it certainly puzzled the Blues, who stood discussing and analyzing it, at the edge of the field, not far off from the Gold team, which was similarly stymied.

This clue read:

Luck is a fool's name for fate,

and it was an expression of the sort that sometimes gains currency in this kind of social organization, makes the rounds, is on everyone's tongue and then is swiftly forgotten. Both teams now tried to remember who it was that had coined the phrase, or introduced the phrase, or made the phrase popular, thereby associating himself indissolubly with that phrase. Marv Woolman was sure that the expression had originated with Boris Melkin, a somewhat bizarre Junior Counsellor (that is, a younger fellow, a J.C. not a counsellor in the Junior Division) who put on Hamletish manners, roaming the camp grounds, quoting tag-ends of verse and wisdom. "I'm pretty sure" said Marv, "that he started that saying" and off went the Gold team towards the bunk and bed of Boris Melnick. But Larry Altman had another thought, it was a kind of free-wheeling inspirational thought, one of those flashes into the outer darkness that lights up precisely the object lost or hidden. "Let's go" he said, "to the horseshoe that's hanging on the Social Hall door." So, without question—one can run as fast puzzled as clear-headed—off sped the Blues, with Dick in the lead, and reaching that spot, he sure enough found the fourth clue tied onto that horseshoe. They read it swiftly and dashed away from the Social Hall, trying, unsuccessfully, not to be seen by the Gold team. Frustrated in their search in Boris Melkin's bed and bunk (to say nothing of his trunk and personal belongings) that bunk, as it happened, being at the end of the line and so having a view of the Social Hall, the Gold team (it was actually Ben Semmel, to give credit where credit is due) noted the surreptitious departure of the Blues—they left like scouts at dusk—and began a swift examination of the Social Hall. Finally, they hit on the horseshoe, without any association coming to mind, but by that time the Blues had a lead of about five minutes, by no means commanding at this stage of the game, but fairly significant, and were far away from the Social Hall, while the Golds stood around and puzzled over the fourth clue.

That fourth clue was the line from Shelley:

Fame is love disguised,

and this one, too, proved somewhat of a puzzler for the contending teams. These clues (the analysis of whose structure is long overdue, quite perfect for a doctoral thesis straddling sociology and literature) often depend on associations of an eccentric sort or on puns of a sometimes ghastly sort. In this fourth clue, for example, both teams spent time on the word 'is', for it seemed at first glance to offer the most likely possibilities, considered that one of the counsellors was called Iz, and so both teams went into a swift breakdown of his life, loves, and habits, but couldn't somehow come up with enough to go on, enough to make them move in a given direction, so they looked further into the mystery hidden in this short line. What follows is surely too gross a generalization, but it sometimes happens when those of roughly similar backgrounds are engaged in the same problem, that they will sometimes see the answer at about the same time. This of course is running down the importance of individual difference. Nevertheless, the two sides suddenly remembered the play (written by the dramatics counsellor) in which the actor, wearing a mask of wordly power, suddenly throws off that mask, reveals a face desperately alone, and pronounces the name buried in his heart. It was a memorable moment, both teams remembered it, and the Golds rushed back into the Social Hall, followed soon after by the Blues, who had not gone too far off for their deliberations. The six of them milled around on the stage, seeking the clue which had to be there. It was there, worked into the folds of the curtain, and fell when the curtain was shaken in a moment of random despair. Dick and Ben touched the paper at the same time (so said the judges, after a disputation) and both teams looked together at the fifth clue, the one already mentioned:

I have all ready subscribed to one out of town paper,

and that turned out to be a pretty easy clue. The contenders lit out for the Bostonian's bunk, but there was no clue there, no object left untouched, no possible hiding place passed over, and then they all went, as the Irish say, after himself. He was officiating as one of the judges at the Sophomore swimming meet. In no time at all he was surrounded by the six youths, and paid them as little mind as he could, considering the circumstances, the sixth clue folded and protruding from the coin pocket of his swimming trunks. Dave Crown of the Blues spotted the piece of paper and grabbed it. That gave his team the minute's edge to analyze that clue and reflect on it.

The sixth clue was the statement from Laotse, which had impressed Jules, as an amateur cosmogonist (who is not an amateur cosmogonist?):

All of a sudden, nothing came into being.

Larry, Dick, and Dave looked incredulously at this sentence, and then incredulously at one another. So did the Gold team (at sentence and one another) when the paper came into their hands.

"This is a real lulu."

"What is *this* supposed to mean?"

"That Jules is off his rocker, bats in his belfry."

"What does nothing come *from*?"

"What does it *mean*?"

These were some of the comments made and some of the questions raised by members of both teams. They were on the shore, a little ways off from the dock, and were pretty close to one another. It looked almost as tho the difficulty of the clue had brought them together. But then they moved apart and began a closer examination of the text.

There was a freshman in the camp by the name of Lee Soden.

"SuddenLee, suddenly, Lee Soden" said Marv excitedly, and off went the Golds on a wild goose-chase. It was a genuine wrong number.

The Blues recalled that one of the counsellors, Bob Kamin, was very fond of the expression: "Nothing to it". He used it on every conceivable occasion, preferably when it sounded quite senseless. Apparently he liked the sound of it, or preferred to stop conversations. Or it might just have been a kind of habit, the way some couldn't help spitting, or winking an eye. So off dashed the Blues on as wild a goose chase as the enemy.

Both possibilities, of course, were genuine, they deserved exploration. They were only wrong, and after the teams had proved to themselves, by the most exhaustive search, that this was the case, they continued to study the sentence written by the Chinese philosopher, desperately seeking the word, the sound, that would send them off in the right direction.

After a while someone (Ben Semmel, as it happened) saw the word *being* (which should have been *existence*, but Jules remembered it as *being*) as *beeing*, and that led the Gold team to the place where the bee-hive had recently been discovered and soon destroyed—after a series of swift, high-level discussions, the final one on the spot. Here, sure enough, the Golds found the seventh clue, and so went back into their early lead. And this turned out to be a fairly substantial lead, for it was a good ten minutes before the Blues, after excluding one possibility and another, picked up the right word play.

Now it somewhat threw Jules that these sentiments, which he had chosen with a certain amount of care, with some thought, should have to be read as semantic puzzles, interpreted on the basis of these puns, these sophomoric plays on words. But that was the tradition in which the game had come to be played, and to change the tradition in the middle of the game, he thought, is a way of spoiling the game. So was the content overlooked, the allegory grounded. But the sentiments had to be read nevertheless, and the kids might feel some sense of the over-all...

Jules's thoughts were checked, as he approached the scene of the seventh clue, by the sight of Georgie Lessing,

a senior. Jules grinned at the sight of the boy sitting on the steps of his bunk. He was the only kid in the camp who had stayed out of the Blue and Gold competition. He did it as a matter of principle. "If you want me to compete," he said, "I'll go home." And that, of course, would have opened up the problem of a return on the camp fee, if indeed that fee had been paid in full, to say nothing of his two cousins in the girls' camp. All manners of pressure were brought on the boy, but he was adamant. "It's all madness," he said, "creating a phony rivalry, fighting where there are no real issues." So he sulked in his cabin, or, as now, sat on the steps of his bunk, reading "War and Peace" or one of the "Baseball Joe" series, for that was the style of his eclecticism.

"Where are they looking now?" asked Georgie. "At the bottom of the lake?"

"If you only knew," said Jules.

He hesitated and then decided it wouldn't be cricket to tell Georgie about this next clue, which was a really corny one. The thought of it always made him a bit hysterical, being so obviously ridiculous, so outlandish, so idiotic. In order to make use of this clue, he had had to get the permission of a counsellor called Wilfred Thar.

The clue, of course, was:

There's gold in them thar hills.

Thar had a mouthful of gold fillings. Between two of the teeth so filled there was a slit, formed, no doubt, by the slow drift of the lower teeth, and after a fairly lengthy discussion (Thar being a rather finicky chap) Jules convinced him that this slit formed by the drifting of the teeth would be the perfect place to hide a clue, which had to be written, of course, in very small script on a very small piece of paper.

"Now don't swallow it," Jules had said, and they both laughed, Jules giddily, Wilfred in a rather pained manner.

Well, it didn't need Intelligence, Character, or Speed to figure out where that clue was. Thar made no effort to hide—he sat on the steps of his bunk, watching the runners as they streaked by in the early stages of the game, waiting for the moment he did not exactly relish, tho having made his promise, he was determined to stay with it. Now and then he felt with his tongue to feel whether the slip of paper was in its proper place.

Well, the reader can well imagine the jollification, the addlement which then surrounded the person and place of Wilfred Thar. The Gold team, with its ten minute edge, was down at the bunk in a flash and were rather thrown by Thar's manner, which seemed a little more hostile than the occasion warranted. They even felt for a moment that they were on the wrong track. There was a confused huddle, during which the three team mates reassured one another, and then they started on the search. They did a thorough dismantling job on the bunk, on the suspect's bed, and when it became clear that there was no clue inside, they approached the counsellor. He sat in a species of horrified resignation; the fact is that he was very sanitation-minded, suffered on occasion from fears of contagious diseases, and looked forward with some apprehension at the prospect of six youths poking around in his mouth in search of a small piece of paper. In the summer his fear of contagion was related to tropical diseases, such as typhoid and yellow fever, diseases quite unknown in New England at the time. He had an opportunity, while waiting, to think of the medical backgrounds of the six boys, and was disturbed at the remembered knowledge that Dick Gordon's brother had been in a New York hospital for a reason which Wilfred had never thought to ask about. Thar was wearing a T shirt, a pair of bathing trunks, and sandals.

"Would you mind taking off your T shirt and sandals?" asked Ben Semmel.

The Golds had decided that it would be best if Ben, as a Character winner, should approach Wilfred along these lines.

Without a word, the counsellor removed his shirt and sandals. Both were carefully examined and returned.

"Do you mind," asked Ben, "if we looked in the pockets of your trunks?"

"Not at all," said Thar, "help yourself."

So they searched and again found nothing.

"This sounds stupid" said Ben. "but we'd like to take a quick look into your mouth."

Wilfred opened his mouth without much interest and smiled without much joy when Ben pulled the paper out.

The Golds quickly jotted down the eighth clue and Ben started to replace the piece of paper.

"Never mind," said Wilfred, "I'll handle that," and he carefully replaced the clue just as the Blue team hove into sight.

Now the Blues did not bother with bed and bunk. One of them had heard from a kid in Thar's bunk about the unusual amount of gold in his counsellor's mouth, and with hardly a word of apology they went straight for that area. The counsellor winced when Dick pulled out the paper.

The Blues had picked up five minutes on the Golds, with five clues to go.

The eighth clue, before being approved by the camp authorities, required a certain amount of discussion, some dispute. A quotation relating to Noah, and reinforced by mention of a youth nicknamed Arky, clearly led to the Ark in which, of course, was enclosed the Torah, used in the Social Hall on the rainy Sabbaths, for when the sky was clear, the Services were held outdoors, on the parade grounds over the lake.

In this high-level discussion about the use of the Ark, there was, at first, a general demurrer at the notion of using it in any way in this game. The word "sacrilegious" was used. But Jules explained the way in which he had planned the Treasure Hunt and his arguments, with their educational cast, softened the opposition.

"This relates to the search for God," explained Jules.

"How can we possibly exclude this search from the game? Is it less important than the search for money and power, than the search for love and justice?"

Presented this way, the argument was irresistible. But Jules's desire to put the clue inside the Ark was turned down decisively, nor would the judges accept the idea of pinning the clue on the curtain covering the Ark. They finally decided to put the clue on a bench in front of the Ark, and that was fairly easy for both sides, so the Gold team maintained its five minute lead.

In composing the ninth clue, Jules used the expression

the Pursuit of Failure.

That in fact was the clue. He had heard it used by one friend about another friend. Jules remembered the phrase tho he himself was very little preoccupied with failure, being young, healthy, ambitious, and hopeful. But he was aware of the Freudian implications of the statement. Some seek their own destruction, feel they deserve their own destruction because the early murderous impulses had never been properly abreacted (a word he sometimes thought of, but never used), because the impulses were stronger than the usual, or the provocations greater, or the character structure weaker. No doubt there are other possibilities—it is even conceivable that one has *done* something for which he feels he deserves punishment. And a kind of punishment is apparently the pursuit of failure—the fact that this behavior can be pleasurable only adds to the punishment when the pursuer comes to understand that the pleasure is a trick, a device to keep him on this pursuit of failure, for what is the point of pursuing failure if there is *nothing* in it at all?

This clue, too, was based on an outrageous pun. There was a counsellor (one of the counsellors for the freshmen, kids about six or seven years old) who, early in the summer, had fallen desperately in love with a girl counsellor called—yes, yes, this is her name, unbelievable as it sounds—Phalia. Her name was Phalia. She was most attractive, flashing eyes and all, and it was not surprising that Fred Angst (the freshman counsellor) should have fallen in love with her. She was apparently a living example of his type, and who, all things being equal, will not fall in love with a living example of his type? The fact that she did not respond in kind was part of the over-all situation in which Fred found himself. He was a serious chap who liked to win as much as the next one, and found that he was not sleeping as well as one would expect in this cold, bracing, New England night air. He was almost always up an hour or two before reveille, thinking of what he had said, or should have said, of what she had said, of what he wished she would say, thinking of how she looked, imagining moments of a deeper intimacy than they had so far enjoyed. The fact is that Phalia did not respond in kind, she being entranced in another direction. It was happening all over the place, but Fred was more insistent in his pursuit than most of the others, he did not drift easily to other faces, other bodies. His difficulties became known the way difficulties become known when people are looking to see the triumphs and difficulties of others. Furthermore, in the words of George Herbert, "Love and a cough cannot be hid." Fred's situation, known to the counsellors, became known to the campers (who is not interested in abiding, unrequited love?) and Fred Angst was known as the one who carried the brightest of all torches.

But it was a rough clue, the pun was beyond limits, and both teams puzzled over the four words, saying them over and over again, saying them backwards, forwards, and sideways, turning the phrase round and round. Really it shouldn't have been *that* hard because the New York way of pronouncing "failure" is precisely *Phalia* and finally, Larry Altman hit on the connection.

"Down to the freshman bunk" he cried, and as they ran, he quickly explained his thought. Dick Gordon sped ahead, easily outdistancing his team mates, for the frosh bunk was at the other side of the camp, and Dick had the tenth clue by the time Larry and Dave arrived. It was pasted on Fred Angst's trunk, more or less disguised as a Railway Express ticket. About five minutes later (for love and a cough cannot be hid), the Gold team arrived, and decided to check first the person of Fred. (Spur of the moment luck had taken Dick into the bunk). Fred allowed the search, tho it was disconcerting, for the freshman were involved in their own aspect of the color war—they were in the midst of a potato race, which Fred was umpiring, or overseeing, or whatever it is one does with seven year old kids involved in a game which they have just learned, involving a set of rules and swift movement. The competitive excitement of the Blue and Gold had penetrated the somewhat isolated life of these youngsters (for they were off from the main camp, going to bed earlier) and the ten points picked up by the winner of the Potato race might easily prove of crucial importance. There was indeed a case, known to the old rememberers, of a color competition decided by the five points given for greater silence at the dinner table.

Finding nothing on Fred's person, the Golds went into the bunk, and of course they found the clue, but by that time they were about ten minutes behind, and streaked off with the tenth clue in mind. That clue was probably the easiest of all the clues, being the statement from Isaiah (2.8) that

Everyone worshippeth the work of his own hands,

and that could lead only to one place, which must be the Arts & Crafts hut.

We leave our contestants for the moment to record a conversation between one of the judges, stationed near this hut (to be in front of it might be a give-away) and the

camp chef. The kitchen staff was not involved in the Blue and Gold. The waiters were not involved, but being old campers or would-be counsellors, they generally took sides, while the kitchen workers, older, and often without camp experience (coming from the city employment agencies) found it difficult to understand what was going on. They were amazed, for example, by the silence at table. The chef was baffled by the fierceness of this rivalry, did not understand that he was witnessing a pure, or abstract, struggle for victory, on the basis of an artificial division, and that the winner wins precisely nothing but the victory, and the right to assume a superior stance as against the losers.

"Why," said the judge, to the incredulous chef, "there was a case, a few years ago, not in *this* camp, where the color war started at the bus terminal, the teams traveling on separate buses—to learn songs and cheers, plan strategy, etc. Well, the bus drivers were carried away by the spirit of the event, by the excitement of the songs and cheers, and decided to make a race of reaching the camp, tho there were no points awarded (so they say, but who knows?). Well, one of the buses got into an accident, luckily no one was hurt, just a few kids shaken up, and that's how that camp season started."

"What is it again they win?" asked the chef.

"Only the satisfaction of winning," said the judge, who, with more knowledge, was less astounded than disturbed by this abstract lust for victory.

But then the conversation was interrupted by the appearance of Dick Gordon, headed for the Arts and Crafts hut, on a hint from Isaiah.

Now Jules would have the boys understand the prophet's meaning, that it was wrong to worship the work of one's hands, that this leads to idolatry, the worship of made objects, and can lead even to self-idolatry. "See this wondrous object I have made. Therefore am I superior, more noble, etc." The painter says to himself: "What a wondrous thing I have created," but such a work merely goes into the world and takes its place amongst the other created objects.

Nor is it to be implied (Jules would like the boys to think of this too) that the work of *other* hands ought to be worshipped, but only the living invisible God, who inspires creation, this foray into the thinly-domesticated mystery, this salvage out of chaos.

But mostly

the work of his own hands

and that work will be worshipped by the maker only if it is not in use. Man worships what he makes and hides, the way a miser worships gold (late at night, when there are no distractions) but once he sends that object into the world, why it is no longer his. He will not worship what is being used day by day, even being used up (for no such created object lasts forever). There is no secrecy, no idolatry or shame, it is only what man has made with his own hands (sometimes amazing, but never to be worshipped) to take its rightful place in the circulation of created things, rivalling the objects that came into the world, nor must *these* objects be worshipped, being merely signs of the inexplicable Creation, the mystery of the making of worlds.

Ideally speaking, Jules would have liked the boys to think of these matters, as they schemed for their points in the Blue and Gold. But he knew how fierce competition will sometimes destroy thought, knew the chasm that lay between victory and ideality.

"But something will rub off" he thought, as he watched the other Blues enter the Arts & Crafts hut.

In that hut were objects in various stages of completion. There were more objects of utility than objects of art, in line with the predilection of the counsellor in charge and a certain sense—mostly unconscious—of the injunction against the making of graven images. There were wooden boxes, of various shapes, meant for various uses, and in one of these boxes was the eleventh clue. That made the discovery pretty routine, for what boys, seeking a hidden slip of paper in a room full of empty boxes, would not open those boxes, first off? So the Blues found this clue, and, ten minutes later, the Golds found the clue, and off they were, on the next to the last lap.

This eleventh clue was more difficult than others:

I have always known
That at last I would
Take this road, but yesterday
I did not know that it would be today.

Narihira (translated by Kenneth Rexroth)

When the Golds found this clue, the Blues were still puzzling over it. They did not know in which direction to move, trying desperately to decipher the lines before the Golds picked up the clue, for they feared the keen mind of Marv Woolman, remembering (all of a sudden) that he had won a high school poetry prize. So the Blues studied the document, the way one studies the missing word in the crossword puzzle—time and the unconscious sometimes succeed, activated by the reason, and activating in turn that reason, and in the interplay the missing word appears, the puzzle is solved. And then the Golds were in the same boat. Both teams studied the text. What *road* was meant? What kind of *yesterday*, what kind of *today*?

And yet the answer was not so terribly difficult—one only had to hit on the fitting event, and then all fell into place.

What event was this? Now there had been a boy in Jules's bunk, a boy of twelve, called Sandy, a very engaging and ingenious child, very spirited, very poignant, a child who could easily win one's heart, the way he won Jules's heart. Towards the end of July, Jules received a rush

summons from the camp director. It was in the late afternoon, in the pleasant interlude between the end of the afternoon swim and dinner time. All moved at their ease (I say all, but there are always some so dispirited that even this pleasant interlude had no effect), discussed the high spots of the day, hungry after much activity and sure that food would be forthcoming. The head counsellor and the doctor were seated with the director, who handed Jules a telegram. This telegram announced the death of Sandy's father. Jules looked at the message blankly. The dead stranger slowly disappeared, and the problem remained of breaking the news to the child. We may worship the dead, but we must take care of the living.

"We thought," said the director, "that it would be best if you told the boy, you're pretty close to him."

Jules nodded. He thought of a book by Mrs. Ward (was that her name? what was her first name again?) in which a character is faced with the problem of breaking such news. It is a universal situation, but each event has its unique approach.

"You'll understand how to break it to him," said the director, "gradually."

"Yes," said Jules.

He was rather proud that he had been chosen for so delicate and difficult a task. Why not the director, the head counsellor, the head of the Junior Division? He wondered why the doctor was at this meeting? Why a doctor at the news of the death of a distant stranger? A kind of reversion, he thought, to the ancient medicine man, the witch doctor, the man of magic summoned at the moment of awe and loss. Then, of course, before one dies, he most generally is sick, and so the doctor is summoned when he dies.

There was so little left for any of them to say at this conference, it all seemed quite unreal, except for the reality of telling the child. If the child didn't have to be told (but those were not the instructions) why then the matter would slowly have disappeared amongst all this social happiness, the way a wisp of cloud will disappear in a joyful sky of blue. There would have been no high-level conference.

But the man was dead, and the child had to be told, he had to be sent home, to be at his dead father's side, and walking down to the camp (the meeting was in the parents' lodge) during the interlude, the free play, Jules thought of what it was he had to do.

He had to be serious with the child, until the child realized that his counsellor was serious, and then the child would begin to expect an explanation of this seriousness, for this seriousness had to be maintained beyond the usual range. That was all that had to be done—a certain seriousness had to create a certain expectancy, and that expectancy had to create a given anxiety, and then the anxiety had to be met.

So Jules was serious in the bunk, serious to *all* the kids in the bunk, but particularly to Sandy. And the child grew serious, expectant, and anxious, for this was an unexpected style of behavior on the counsellor's part. But Jules decided that he would not break the news till the next morning. Should I trouble his sleep even more? thought Jules, and he decided that the best time to break bad news is in the morning, when one is least tired, but would the anxiety interfere with the child's sleep?

That night, after dinner, the Juniors had camp fire, they sat around, sang, listened to stories, roasted marshmallows, put out the fire in the immemorial way of boys. The songs floated in the air, the stories flooded the stillness, the voids of expectancy, the fire died in the solemn hiss. Then, when the kids turned in for the night, Jules sat on Sandy's bed, spoke to him about the city, about his life at home, enquired about his mother, about his father, about his sister, and then again about his father, created an air of seriousness, of anxiety. And the child was confused, troubled, fell asleep after an active day in which he had played his part. Hadn't he doubled in the ninth, and then come home with the winning run?

The next day, after breakfast, Jules took the child for a walk, down to the lake. That was an unusual act.

"But what about inspection?" asked Sandy, for after breakfast the bunks were inspected, for poorly-made beds, spider-webs on the ceiling, dirt in the corners, and each week a banner was awarded to the cleanest bunk in the division.

"We'll be back in time" said Jules, and they walked slowly along the shore. The lake was absolutely calm, the sky clear, the visibility perfect. Jules asked about the boy's school life, about his street life, about his grandfather, about his father, about his teachers, about his friends, about his father. The child was uneasy, worried, wondered about this walk, about this conversation, began to expect what he did not want to hear, and then heard it, slowly and conclusively. The lad was silent, he threw a rock into the lake, and both watched the widening ripples. Jules put his arm around the boy's shoulder. They walked together along the lake-shore.

"Your mother wants you to go home today," said Jules.

"It didn't have to happen," asked Sandy, "did it?"

He looked up trustingly at his counsellor.

"It happened," said Jules, "that's how it is. Now you must go back, out of respect to your father, to remember him, and to help your mother."

He felt a bit foolish mouthing these platitudes, but was not sorry that he said them. What else is there to say? he thought. Is silence better?

Sandy seemed, on the surface, to be wondering more than suffering, wondering why this had happened, wondering why it happened to him. There was an indication of anger, that this had happened to him, an indication of resentment, that this had happened to *him*, and not to the others, rather than to the others. He listened to the camp cries, to the early-morning hum. Then his jaw hardened, he stoically accepted the inevitable, the mystery and the disappearance. He acted the man who silently sorrows, buries grief and suffering, and continues his day's work,

his life's work. Then the boy's lips trembled, and he burst into tears, with the awful sense of absolute loss.

So it was only a matter of time before one player or another, one team or another, would stumble on the meaning of the lines of the Japanese poet, would come to think of one who amongst all having to leave, left earlier than expected, on the road he would have had to take.

The Gold team picked up the clue first. Far from Marv Woolman, it was Jackie Lesser, the speedster, who hit on it. His nimbleness was apparently displaced upwards, and a certain sympathy, a feelingful note, triumphed over cleverness and character.

"It's Sandy," cried Jackie. "He left before the season ended, he took the road home before he was supposed to take the road home."

Marv and Ben looked at him with an amazement compounded with surprise, even anger, for how come that Jackie, picked for speed, should have come up with an answer that made immediate sense? But their feelings quickly disappeared into the competitive crucible, and the three minds worked as one in trying to figure out just where they were supposed to look. Would it be in Sandy's old bunk? But there was clearly a road involved. What road? The road home, of course. That road started at the top of the hill, it was the beginning of the country road which led to the town road, which led to the main road, which led to the railroad station. So up they sped to the beginning of that country road, where stood a great oak tree and thru the branches of that oak peeped a sheet of paper. It was the clue, tied around a twig. They read and copied the clue, looking around all the time to see whether the Blues had picked up the trail. There was no one in sight. Then one of the judges appeared from his hiding place, and tied the paper back on the same twig. Off went the Gold team, not down the path they had come up on, where they might be observed by their rivals, but singly the back way, behind the bunks, to meet near the Nature hut where they read, again, the lines of Keats which made up the final clue:

Young men and maidens at each other gazed
With hands held back, and motionless, amazed
To see the brightness in each other's eyes

As they were examining these lines, leading to a place, the Blue team was desperately reading over and over again the lines of the Japanese poet until they too, by a process of elimination and association, came to remember Sandy and his sudden departure home, and that led them to the oak tree and the final clue. That clue, those lines from Keats, were swiftly fathomed by Larry Altman, and he and his teammates rushed down to the parade grounds for this was where the boys and girls came together for the Sabbath services and on all other ceremonial occasions.

(It was quite amazing that the Gold team had so much trouble with these lines, they were so accurate a description of the meetings between brother and sister camps. The three teammates, standing in front of the Nature hut—a random meetingplace, away from the oak—were in full view of the parade grounds, but looked past those grounds in a kind of panic which sometimes occurs when the victory is in sight. How else is it possible to explain their overlooking these meetings, climax of the week, the girls dressed in their whites [to welcome the Queen of the Sabbath], the boys scrubbed and combed, in their sailor ducks and sport shirts, waiting—in the dusk—for this or that familiar face, for the figure actively sought out, or flirtatiously avoided, for the figure warm or indifferent?)

A little down the way from the flagpole, Jules waited with the other judges. He looked out at the lake, on whose quiet surface, way out in the distance, the boats of strangers were faintly seen. He felt, for a moment, a curious sense of power, as one who created movement in others, even choosing the direction in which they moved. But he did not like that feeling, and it faded. He wondered whether he had left out any important pursuits. Of course he had—there was the search for identity, later to become a rather fashionable problem, namely, Who *am* I? or Who am I *really*? But he had excluded that pursuit on purpose—he believed that one found himself (is everybody lost?) not by looking for one's self, but by struggle in the outside world, the world of struggle, the world of ideas (a kind of struggle), of love (a kind of struggle) and so on.

Then the Blues appeared at the parade grounds (with Dick Gordon, or course, in the lead) and quickly sized up the situation. There was only the flagpole, and Dave Crown was the first to look up (character pays) and there, three-quarters of the way up the pole, the tell-tale piece of paper was taped.

"There it is" shouted Dave, and then Dick—who was nimble as well as fast—started to shinny up the pole. This brought the Gold team out, wondering what connection the lines of the poet had with the flag, which was swaying in the slight breeze. Then Ben Semmel understood the sense of the lines, saw the parade grounds filled with boys and girls

. . . amazed
to see the brightness in each other's eyes,

saw the paper on the flag pole, but by that time Dick was up there, pulled off the tape, and swiftly brought to the ground the paper which read:

TREASURE HUNT WINNER!

and that was certified by the judges who appeared from their vantage point and made official the victory of the Blues.

Don Alfonso

In this harmonious villa
Where oboes serenade
And lovesick tenors croon
Of constancy among the sycamores
I think of two old men who closed their eyes
And recollected what they owed.

The one considered wise
As ice crept up his thighs
Settled a rooster on the demigod
Who cured him of becoming.

The other fellow, fat but not a fool
Also perplexed his school
With chatter of a debt to Justice Shallow—
Suddenly chilled
When to be king his Prince banished the world.

This morning in the coffee house I heard
The fresh Ferrando trill of Phoenixes.
His friend, a baritone but still a boy
Joined him in sixths to idolize
Some lily of allegiance.

I hate a warm duet.
Too arrogant for owing, I'll enjoy
A bet. Adept at recollecting, I'll
Collect, moved not by eros but
Experience. No instant chill
Nor gradual welcome gelidness
But icy from the ages, I'm compelled
By one goad only: to instruct
Exasperating innocence.

Leaving the losers to their wry quartet
I'll shape my cadence to the sages' tune,
A philanthropic glee
Contrived for three:
Midwife to wind-eggs and the source of wit
And I, who knew Giovanni.

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The Unity of Leibniz's Thought on Contingency, Possibility, and Freedom

Arthur Collins

1 The Defects of Cartesian Physics

That it fails to accommodate force is Leibniz's fundamental criticism of Descartes' physics. Descartes tried to reduce physics to geometry. A conceptual scheme restricted to geometrical concepts lacks resources adequate for the representation of physical forces. In the context that is best known and most often discussed by Leibniz, he attacks Descartes' conception of the conservation of the "quantity of motion," and he substitutes the idea of the conservation of *vis viva*, or active power, which is what we would call the conservation of energy.[1]

When we try to state the issues here in up-to-date terms, at least in the terms of modern classical physics, it can appear that Leibniz is insisting on the conservation of the product of mass and velocity-squared, while Descartes calls for the conservation of the product of mass and velocity. Since mv^2 (kinetic energy) and mv (momentum) are both conserved, some commentators say that Descartes and Leibniz are both right and that debate is out of place.[2]

This conciliation is not satisfactory. Nothing like the modern concept of mass is actually employed by Descartes. Were we to try to introduce "mass" where he speaks of "quantity of matter," we would have to make amendments in his thinking along the very lines which Leibniz requires. Mass eludes any merely geometrical description and the shortfall is only made up by appeal, in one way or another, to something like force. Furthermore, Descartes actually thinks in terms of what we might call "speed", that is, motion along any path, straight or curved, while the conservation laws only hold for rectilinear speed. This distinction becomes significant in Descartes' metaphysics when he tries to reconcile mind-body interaction with the thoroughgoing mechanical determinism that he supposes to rule the material world. Descartes' idea of conservation and his laws of impact express this determinism. The problematic mind-body interaction takes place, Descartes hopes, when purely mental influences manage to "deflect" the subtlest material particles of the animal spirits in the pineal gland. Such deflection is supposed to change the direction but not the quantity of motion of particles affected.[3] In the parlance of classical physics, this solution fails because it violates the principle of the conservation of energy. The deflection of a particle would constitute a change of velocity (though not necessarily of speed) and, therefore, a change of energy. This addition or subtraction of energy would not be charged to any account in the material world. Leibniz makes this point.[4]

These faults in Descartes' ideas are not just details on which he remains at an unsatisfactory and preliminary level, relative to later science. On the contrary, the difficulties spring from views which are among Descartes' most important and best insights. The claim, "My physics is nothing but geometry,"[5] is widely recognized as the expression of his deepest inspiration in science, but this view is also, as Leibniz thought, responsible for the most obvious defects in Descartes' physics. Why are we supposed to agree that physics is just geometry? In part, this is supposed to follow from the fact that nothing sensuous is allowed to characterize "outer," spatial, material reality by Descartes' epistemological analysis. All sensuous characteristics like color, sound, and heat, that is, all the so-called secondary qualities,[6] are not really *out there*. They exist only in the play of mental states and perceptions in our minds. Contact with outer things is causally responsible for the generation of *ideas* with sensuous features, but material things do not have such features themselves.[7] On

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reflection, it appears that nothing is left with which we can rightly describe the nonmental space-filling world except nonsensuous concepts like figure, magnitude, and motion.

When sensuous distinctions are no longer thought to distinguish different regions of space, we are reduced to a defoliated universe of moving particles having geometrical features only. To Descartes this seems a great intellectual advantage and a trustworthy sign of the correctness of his epistemology. In fact, it would be better to say that his epistemology is motivated in major part by his scientific objectives. He intends to filter away the sensuous so that a mathematically suitable subject matter will be left for scientific theory. His epistemology provides just the interpretation of reality needed by Descartes and others who were convinced that scientific understanding becomes possible only when we manage to delete the unmanageable, subjective, sensuous aspect of things and to characterize the subject matter of science exclusively in the vocabulary of abstract mathematics. In the argument of Descartes' *Meditations* and in the *Principles of Philosophy*, the proof for the existence of an external world of material things is simply a proof that the abstract mathematical and geometrical truths, which we are able to appreciate in pure thought, do have a subject matter outside of our thought which they fit and describe. This subject matter is *res extensa*, that is, space, as an existing manifold or entity.

Descartes does not confine his purification of our conception of the material world to the purge of sensuous characteristics. The prevailing scholastic-Aristotelian tradition was dominated by biological and psychological paradigms for the explanation of change. Within this tradition, as Descartes read it, the understanding of physical phenomena involved projecting into the physical realm various soul-like agencies and, in particular, the substantial forms of the scholastics. Descartes' reduction of physics to geometry means the elimination of this psychologism and teleological thinking from the scientific explanation of the motions of bodies. The material universe which survives the elimination of both the sensuous surface and the inner determinants of motion is Descartes' plenum of indefinitely subdivisible particles, all of whose motions are determined by collisions that conserve an initial sum of motion given to the system at the beginning of things by God.[8] Matter itself contains no principle of action nor disposition to move or not to move. All concepts of determinants of motions residing in material things are eliminated in Descartes' rejection of the animism of the scholastic-Aristotelian tradition.[9]

At a level near common sense we can represent the shortcomings of the Cartesian identification of space and matter and the resulting purely geometrical physics as follows. A theory in physical science has to provide concepts with the help of which we are able to see what happens as the instantiation of clear regularities. Motions observed in ordinary experience are usually too complicated for analysis, but, at least for the scientific explanation of motion, rules should be formulable that cover very simple artificial or imaginary ideal cases. Descartes himself thinks of the obligation of scientific theory in this way and he formulates seven laws of which ideal cases of impacts of particles are supposed to be the instances.[10] If such laws are satisfactory they will enable us to predict what will happen when situations fitting the conditions specified (here the specification of simple collisions) are realized. This elementary reflection is usually summed up by saying that a scientific theory generates predictions when initial conditions are satisfied. Now Leibniz's critique of Descartes' physics can be stated as the thought that no such predictive validity is accessible to a physics framed with Descartes' attentuated concepts. Using *a priori* arguments, Leibniz is able to show that the specific laws Descartes presents are incoherent and could not possibly be empirically adequate.[11] But the larger point is that no laws based on Descartes' concepts can succeed. Leibniz sees this permanent inadequacy in the fact that Descartes has no conceptual means for distinguishing between instantaneous motion and instantaneous rest.[12]

Suppose we are going to predict the future position of bodies in the solar system. In order to do this we need rules expressing the patterns of motion which they instantiate and we need initial conditions in the form of specifications of the positions, velocities, and accelerations of the various heavenly bodies at some particular time. But geometrical concepts only yield determinations of position at a particular time, that is, at an instant. Descartes' purification of the concept of matter has left him nothing with which to express the difference between a moving body and a stationary body at one moment and he has no reason for thinking that there is any *intrinsic* difference. The obstacle to predictive success within Descartes' conceptual scheme can now be put very simply. Initial conditions that characterize material things at one moment of time accessible to Cartesian physics will give the positions of particles only. But the future development of a system of bodies depends upon velocity and acceleration, and not merely on position. So the Cartesian scientist will inevitably find different developments arising out of what he sees as identical conditions. If the conditions are identical, however, the very idea of scientific regularity requires identical predictions. So predictive success cannot be forthcoming. *Ad hoc* efforts to generate predictions conformable to experience must result in laws which are arbitrary and incoherent, as Leibniz finds that the Cartesian laws of impact are in fact.

The characterizations that successfully distinguish motion and rest at an instant are just those that are accessible to the infinite mathematical methods of the calculus which Leibniz himself developed. Leibniz thinks of Descartes' "matter" as *incomplete*. It is a mistake to think that merely space-filling stuff could constitute a substance.[13] In this there is the influence of Aristotelian conceptions of matter and form which Leibniz does not repudiate. Nei-

ther matter nor form, by itself, can constitute an existing thing. But Leibniz's view is also determined by his understanding of the irreducible status of force in physics. In his thinking, momentary material existence is an abstraction from the reality of temporally extended things. Substances are not constituted of densely laminated temporal slices which are their constituent realities as the cards are the constituents of the deck. Substances, rather, correspond to functions with values extended in time. Thus, the monad contains all its temporal states as the values of a function are contained in the law *which is* the function itself. The fundamental metaphysical description of the world must be in terms of such functions. Such a description can never be reached by aggregating consecutive momentary distributions of merely space-filling stuff. In contrast, time does not enter into Descartes' characterization of *res extensa* at all.[14] So, in Cartesian physics, moving bodies have to be constructed out of momentary stationary bodies.

Descartes did attempt to present a theory of motion in his laws of impact. Furthermore, his scientific writings present an enormous number of explanations of various phenomena most of which are now merely picturesque relics. Some of his explanations are reasonable and correct. On the whole, however, it seems to me that Descartes was never entirely clear about the appropriate expectations for scientific explanation, once the field had been cleared by his elimination of both sensuous qualities and occult inner determinants of change.

No one emphasized the role of mathematics in science more than Descartes. Yet he seems to have had very little confidence in the possibility of really detailed mathematical explanations of real events, and he did not foresee anything like the kind of success mathematical physics was to attain, so soon after his lifetime, in the work of Newton. Sometimes Descartes writes as though the chief intellectual job of science is *completed* when substantial forms and teleological explanations have been dropped so that the material world can be understood to be a matter of moving and colliding particles.

The explanations that Descartes actually gives of particular phenomena are usually very much like *ad hoc* scholastic explanations in their ambitions and their explanatory horizons, however unlike scholastic explanations they are in content. Like the scholastics, Descartes offers imaginative stories that are plainly without predictive force or intent. They are broad ways of *seeing* the phenomenon in question within the framework of a geometrical particle universe.

In a remarkable passage, Descartes says that, since he came to appreciate the real character of physical reality, that is, that it is a spatial manifold of particles, and since he came to appreciate the nature of physical events, that is, that they are collisions of particles, he has found that he can solve any problem of science that is proposed or that occurs to him in a very short time.[15] This is not so much an outrageous boast as it is an illuminating indication of what Descartes expects from explanation in physics. The solutions to problems which he can produce so promptly are obviously merely broad hypotheses providing, with the help of humble empirical analogies, a way of seeing this or that event as a particular form of particle motion. So the phenomenon of planetary motion is *explained* when we see that an ocean of particles might carry suns and planets in vortices, as a whirling eddy of water carries a leaf in a closed path. Magnetic phenomena are *explained* by the imaginative hypothesis, again based on the observable world of everyday objects, that there are screw-shaped pores in bodies, which impede but do not prevent the passage of screwshaped particles, just as the threaded nut impedes but does not prevent the passage of the threaded bolt. Combustion is explained to the same limited degree as the progressive destabilization of the structure of a burning object by a storm of fast moving particles. And the refraction of light is supposed to be intelligible on the model of tennis balls deflected from their path when they encounter the light resistance of a thin veil. In sum, explanation does not go beyond the provision of a hypothesis that makes it reasonable that the phenomenon in question is observed even though the world is just a plenum of moving particles. Particular explanations rely on a rough empirical analogy to show how such particle collisions could constitute the phenomenon in question. It is only such hypotheses, dependent upon empirical analogy, that Descartes was able to think of in a short time, and that is what he means by "solving" the problems that come to his attention. Given this conception of explanation it is quite understandable that Cartesian physics should tolerate divergent developments from initial conditions that are identical when described in the terms that Cartesian science permits.

Near the end of the *Principles of Philosophy*, Descartes quite explicitly expresses his conception of the irreducibly conjectural character of theoretical explanations. He recognizes that accounts in terms of particle motions involve positing events (the particular particle motions and collisions) which are not accessible to the senses. Then, in Principle CCIV of Part IV, Descartes tells us

> That touching the things which our senses do not perceive, it is sufficient to explain what the possibilities are about the nature of their existence, though perhaps they are not what we describe them to be and this is all that Aristotle has tried to do.[16]

In the following passages, Descartes says that we would not find his individual explanations compelling if we considered them independently of one another. The real support for his system is that so many explanations are generated from so few ideas (namely, those that go into the scheme of a plenum of particles), yielding a simple coherent picture of the world.[17]

If we look at Leibniz's critique in the context of Descartes' repudiation of teleology and his reduction of nature to a wholly mechanical system of particles in motion, we

find that Leibniz urges the rehabilitation of teleology and is prepared to reinstate the Aristotelian biological paradigm for all substances complete with the *entelechies* and substantial forms that were so deliberately expunged from the physical world in Descartes' thought. This must appear to us as a considerable step backward. A number of Leibniz's prominent excesses such as his panpsychism, his denial of the reality of death, his theoretical assimilation of all causes of change to a more-or-less mental "appetition", and his ubiquitous teleology are all of them regressions in comparison with the conceptual restraint achieved by Descartes. Leibniz only manages to preserve any plausible and recognizably scientific perspective at all by segregating teleological and mechanical explanations and holding that everything that happens in the physical world can be explained mechanically, without invoking the agency of any entelechy or deploying any teleological pattern of explanation.[18] Teleological thinking is conveniently allocated to a higher metaphysical level. Teleological understanding, in the form, for example, of least action principles, guides our discovery of mechanical laws without introducing a teleological aspect into those laws themselves. Leibniz says, for example, that the thought that light always takes the shortest path operates essentially in the understanding that led to the discovery of Snell's law.[19]

I do not want to give the impression that Leibniz's defense of teleology is entirely inappropriate. Leibniz did not simply slump back into already discredited styles of thought. On the contrary, his insistence that reason-giving explanation must be reconciled with a mechanical universe and his idea that the two patterns of explanation operate at different levels embody important truths.

2 Nature Itself

Attempting to delete spurious psychologism and teleology, Descartes eliminates all activity from the material world and paves the way for an Occasionalist philosophy in which God is directly responsible for each thing that happens. The ultimate passivity of material substance is expressed in Descartes' thought that matter does not even contain any principle sufficient for its own continued existence into the next instant of time. All temporal continuity of existence depends on God's continual recreation of things.[20] How could a particle, unable to struggle though a second of continued existence without help from God, have any continued and independent effect on things other than itself? Furthermore, the Cartesian exclusion of every means for distinguishing one region of space (which is matter) from another undercuts the very idea of occurrences in the material world. At each moment, every region of space or matter exactly resembles every other region. It follows that at every moment the structure of the whole of space or matter is exactly what it is at every other moment. The universe is at every moment a plenum of indefinitely divisible particles. Then anything that happens will leave things exactly as they were: a plenum of indefinitely divisible particles.[21] If, somehow, we could attach meaning to motion in this universe, we would still be unable to make sense of Descartes' idea that God has caused an initial motion of particles and ordained the subsequent conservation of that motion. For Descartes' conceptual parsimony leaves us no way to grasp how it is that motion might continue without the continued action of God.

At first impression, we are apt to think that Descartes can reasonably propose that God has created an essentially inert, wholly passive, and motionless universe, which he then sets in motion at the beginning of time. We will have in mind analogies like the initial winding of a motionless clock which creates a motion that endures in the clock without our continual intervention. Leibniz sees that this understanding of motion in nature cannot survive close inspection, if we are thinking in terms of Descartes' physical concepts. Clocks can be wound so that they will run continuously precisely because of the nongeometrical features of bodily existence on which Leibniz insists. The compression of the mainspring of the clock represents a force, an inner determinant of future motion. This intrinsic potential cannot be represented as a particular arrangement of particles. Within Descartes' framework of ideas, the compression of the spring would bode nothing for future motion. A mere arrangement of space-filling particles will not induce any further changes. A further rearrangement will need an external cause. Ultimately, God will have to move the hands of the clock himself. This is the prospect for "the new philosophy which maintains the inertness and deadness of things."[22]

Leibniz mounts such criticisms in his 1698 essay, "On Nature Itself."[23] If we are to imagine that God has arranged things to conserve the initial motion that he has caused in matter, we must suppose that he has imparted to material a foundation for continued motion that is intrinsic to that reality.

> For since this command [calling for conservation of motion after the initial motion was imparted]...no longer exists at present, it can accomplish nothing unless it has left some subsistent effect behind which has lasted and operated until now, and whoever thinks otherwise renounces any distinct explanation of things, if I am any judge, for if that which is remote in time and space can operate here and now without any intermediary, anything can be said to follow from anything else with equal right.[24]

and

> ...if things have been so formed by the command that they are made capable of fulfilling the will of him who commanded them, then it must be granted that there is certain efficacy residing in things, a form or force such as we usually designate by the name of nature, from which the series of phenomena follows according to the prescription of the first command.[25]

In other words, no matter what role we assign to God, we must impute active powers to nature if we are to formulate intelligible explanations.

"On Nature Itself" is Leibniz's contribution to a German debate occasioned by Robert Boyle's contention that appeals to "Nature" should be deleted from science.[26] For Boyle, the repudiation of Nature meant the rejection of scholasticism and scholastic forms. In this, Boyle is following Descartes. For the specious concept "Nature", Boyle wants to substitute "mechanism" as the foundation of all explanations in the material world. The German Cartesian point of view supported Boyle's claim and reasserted the essential passivity of material substance.[27]

Leibniz does not argue against Boyle's mechanism, nor does he claim *here* that mechanical explanations ought to be supplemented by teleological explanations, though this is certainly his view. In this context, it is the Cartesian concept of mechanical explanation that Leibniz finds defective as a consequence of the limitations of Descartes' concept of material substance.[28] Descartes tries to exclude *ad hoc* psychologism and teleology.[29] But the resulting conceptual platform is so feeble that no explanations at all can be mounted on it. Then God's *ad hoc* intervention is required at every point. If that is so, then it turns out that the only explanatory pattern that finds any application in Descartes' material world will be the teleological pattern of intended purposeful behavior. God causes each and every thing that happens for his good reasons. Then all explanations are psychologistic, the very thing Descartes sought to eliminate completely. Although Leibniz is rightly known as the defender of teleology, his insistence here that activity be ascribed to *nature itself* is founded on the claim that, failing an active nature, each and every mechanical event in the universe would have to be understood as an intended action on the part of God.

Perhaps the most interesting idea of "On Nature Itself" is Leibniz's thought that we should bring under a single philosophical perspective both the mechanical events studied and explained by physicists and the free actions of men. Leibniz sees that the independence of the human will and the independence of mechanical forces from God's actions are parallel requirements if we are to understand human responsibility and the motions of bodies respectively. The passivity of created substance finds expression in the Cartesian doctrine "that things do not act but that God acts in the presence of things and according to the fitness of things." Natural application of this to the mental realm of thinking and willing would mean reassignment of the cause of the sequence of our thoughts and desires and resolutions from us to God. The Occasionalists such as Malebranche who seem to espouse such a view have not really established it and do not appreciate its destructive implications. We must believe in our own spontaneity.

> To doubt this would be to deny human freedom and to thrust the cause of evil back into God, but also to contradict the testimony of our internal experience and consciousness by which we feel that what these opponents have transferred to God without even the appearance of reason belongs to ourselves.[30]

Furthermore, the very idea of an *independent substance* is wrapped up with action so that, were actions all assigned to God,

> God would be the nature and substance of all things—a doctrine of most evil repute, which a writer who was subtle indeed but irreligious, in recent years imposed upon the world, or at least revived.[31]

Equally appropriate to mechanical causality and free action, these ideas show us what is best in Leibniz's thought about teleology without the encumbering metaphysics and theology with which his insights are ordinarily accompanied.

What is at stake in the dispute over active powers as far as mechanical explanation is concerned? Consider a simple example. The wind blows dead leaves from the branches of trees in the autumn. Leibniz's intuition is that our science must offer a mechanical understanding that really succeeds in attributing the detachment of the leaves to the force of the wind. Of course, Leibniz thinks that God has arranged the laws of nature and that these laws are as contingent as the particular events that obey them.[32] But to say that is not to say that God really removes each leaf, that God twirls it in the air for a while, and that God then deposits it on the ground. On the contrary, things are so ordered that the wind removes the leaves and no action of God's is present or required. To assume that God knows just how each leaf will move is to assert the infinity of his understanding but not the ubiquity of his will. To think otherwise is to destroy the idea of "laws of nature" and to replace them with mere generalizations the truth of which is only a consequence of the consistency of God's actions. Therefore, our mechanical conceptions must be rich enough to capture causal action in relationships that obtain between natural events. Descartes has produced a physics that is too weak for this job.

Turning to voluntary human behavior, Leibniz finds the same pattern in a setting of very different philosophical issues. When we raise the question which preoccupied Leibniz throughout his career, that is, the question of God's responsibility for the failings and evils of human conduct, we are asking whether or not human beings are truly active in the world. Of course, Leibniz thinks that men are created by God and that, in his creation, God fully appreciates the powers, limitations, and liabilities of his creatures. Moreover, being omniscient, he knows exactly what circumstances they will face and how they will act. This much is parallel to the fact that God makes the things of the material world and the laws of nature and he knows in advance just what will happen. But to say that men have any powers at all implies that, when those powers are exercised, it is men who act and not God. When I vote it is

not God who casts a ballot, any more than it is God that tears the leaf from the wind-whipped branch. No doubt we would not hold a man responsible for his actions if he were a mechanism like a clock or if his "acts" were caused by the wind. So there is more to responsibility and free agency than independence of God. In "On Nature Itself", however, Leibniz sees the common ground of mechanism and volition. In understanding we have to make fundamental explanatory appeal to the human agent. In understanding mechanical events we must make fundamental appeal to physical determinants of change. The creativity of God no more constrains physical forces than it does human actions.

This line of thought also clarifies Leibniz's often-expressed view that there is a mechanical explanation for everything that happens in the world while, at the same time, teleological explanations have their own validity within the same world of events.[33] The physical world is not a continuous sequence of miracles, as it would be if active powers were excluded from nature. The physical world is ordered by the intentions and creativity of God. But to say that is to say that he has created a mechanically functioning system wherein what happens is explained by physical causes for motions and not by the will of God.

The wisdom of this conception is partially concealed from us by the theological trappings of Leibniz's customary discussions. It becomes correspondingly clearer when we translate the conceptual relationships envisioned by Leibniz back to the level of human purposeful action in a mechical world. What is required for the simplest self-consciously purposive action by a human agent? Suppose, for example, a man drives a nail into a wall in order to hang a picture. The format that Leibniz proposes urges us not to confuse the aptness of the teleological explanation, "He put the nail into the wall in order to hang the picture," with a mechanical explanation of the motion of the nail: "The force imparted by collisions with the hammerhead caused the relatively rigid nail to penetrate the relatively fixed wall." We should not think that the mechanical explanation competes with or rules out accounts that cite purposes and reasons. Thus, Leibniz says that there is a mechanical explanation for all motions. The mechanical explanation is not merely *compatible* with a reason-giving explanation. Leibniz is asserting that a mechanical explanation is *required* if the reason-giving explanation is to be intelligible. We could not act as we do, when we want pictures hung, were it not for the fact that nails are *mechanically caused* to move by collisions with hammerheads. Leibniz appeals to a notion of levels of explanation saying that there are mechanical explanations for everything which are not teleological, and that there are also teleological explanations applicable to the same reality which are correct explanations.

Leibniz thus stands against all reductive programs that would try to convert teleological explanations into mechanical explanations. Such a reduction is the common aspiration of Hobbes's conception of the material embodiment of deliberation and will, of Descartes' theory of deflections of particles in the pineal gland, and of contemporary mind-brain materialism applied to action and motivation.[34] In Leibniz's view mechanical causes are organized as they are as a consequence of God's intentions. But it is physical forces that explain what happens mechanically, and God's intentions are not physical forces. The same pattern of relationships holds for human purpose-fulfilling actions. Human intentions have a secure explanatory role. But this never removes the need for a mechanical explanation for the motions of things. Human intentions are not mechanical causes any more than divine intentions are mechanical causes.

In his theological presentations we can all understand with Leibniz, although perhaps few of us will agree with him, the thought that the laws of nature are instituted by God in the course of bringing into existence the kind of world he wants. But in understanding just this much, Leibniz shows that we must be envisioning two kinds of explanation which are correlative and not in conflict with one another. We are supposing that God sets up the world and its laws with a purpose and to fulfill his plans and intentions. This is a reason-giving explanation belonging to the general teleological pattern. But this idea would not be intelligible at all, and explanations would collapse into the assertion of sequences of miracles, if we did not *also* suppose that the arrangements God makes give scope to another very different kind of explanation, namely, the mechanical explanations of the motions of things that appeal to physical powers and forces in nature rather than God. In the absence of an explanatory role for natural forces, appeals to God's ordinances reduce to the Occasionalist's attribution of each and every event to the direct intervention of God's will. Following the same pattern, while deleting the theological context, we can understand a purpose-oriented explanation of human behavior, but we would not be able to understand it, for it would mean nothing if it were supposed to rule out or to compete with mechanical explanation of what happens. If it were supposed to rule out a mechanical account, a reason-giving explanation would have to assert that the will moves objects directly. But we neither understand nor have any use for this efficacy of the will. We do understand that someone has arranged matters to realize his objective just insofar as we also understand that there are mechanical causal relations which he has foreseen and wittingly exploited in his action. If we thought that teleology eliminates mechanism, we would convert every purposeful act into a man-made miracle.

The idea of purposive action in a mechanical world has seemed to many philosophers to require a gap in the mechanical order of things through which the will can find expression in what happens. Leibniz's insight here shows us that the envisioned gap could serve no useful purpose. A motion that is not mechanically explicable would not be

graspable as a purposeful act but, instead, this uncaused motion would belong to the realm of the miraculous, as though our every action involved a kind of levitation.

We tend to credit the question, "How can my reasons have anything to do with what happens if there are mechanical causes for all motions?" This natural-sounding complaint implies that my reasons could be relevant if only some events were not determined by any mechanical cause. Then those things at least might be determined by "my reasons." But this line of thought is hopeless. If my reasons could produce some motion in things, this will be either an unintelligible miracle and, thus, no explanation, or, "my reasons" will just be an expression for some further mechanical cause, as both seventeenth century and twentieth century reductions will have it. But if appeal to reasons is actually only appeal to mechanical causes, then purposes, objectives, that is, true reasons, drop out altogether and explanation operates merely by appeal to sufficient prior determinants of motion.

Without the cloud of dust that philosophical reflection about causality and freedom inevitably raises, I do not think we would find an apparent inconsistency or any other problem in the fact that the force of hammer blows moves a nail, and that I, at the same time, claim to have a reason for its being in the wall. Only a philosopher would ever think that the correctness of the reason-giving account implies that I must have moved something "with my will" so that either my will is also a physical cause, or the mind can mysteriously intervene in the physical order and violate conservation laws in the process. In Leibniz's thinking the choice between these unpromising options is not forced upon us. Teleology is not mechanism and it does not presuppose a gap in the mechanical order. Quite the reverse is the case. Leibniz shows that if the relevant motions are not explicable mechanically, the teleological explanations will not get any explaining done. This is the most profound message of the understanding of activity and explanation presented in "On Nature Itself."

Our thinking about action is often beset by another speculative temptation. We are willing to allow that the mechanical force of hammer blows surely accounts for the motion of the nail head. But then we simply want to look further back in the physical and physiological chain of events for the point at which appeal to reasons and purposes finds its real footing. Of course, I did not simply will the hammer to move any more than I simply willed the nail into the wall. I picked up the hammer and that means, *inter alia*, that forces applied to the hammer by my hand explain its motion. Could it be that the will only produces its own nonmechanical effects when applied to parts of my own body? This would enable me to orchestrate the mechanical relationships of things in the world beyond my body so as to achieve desired objectives. This attractive thought comes to a dead end with the appreciation that the motions of bodily parts are not in any relevant way different from the motions of external objects. Conservation laws alone mean that there must be mechanical explanations for motions of protoplasm as well as for motions of rocks. There are known physiological-mechanical (speaking loosely) explanations for the motions of my hand, of my muscles, and, no doubt, there are as yet undiscovered explanations for all the subtle electro-chemical goings-on within the muscles, the nerves, and the brain. Should we not suppose that my control of my body, to the extent that I have such control, presupposes and exploits just these mechanical relationships? To think otherwise will be merely to project the miracle of *willed motions* into some physiological recess where our scientific understanding is presently incomplete and does not as yet, therefore, make such willing as unintelligible as the idea of willing a hammer to move. Willing things to change and move is really a concept with no more application within the body than without. And voluntarily moving things that we can move does not imply that no mechanical account of their motion is correct.[35] Leibniz's view that purpose explanations do not replace or conflict with mechanical explanations appears to be the only defensible understanding.

This conclusion does not mean that Leibniz provides any philosophical analysis that removes the feeling of incompatibility that surrounds the issue of freedom and causality. The understanding of teleological explanation and its relation to efficient causality or mechanism remains to be achieved.[36] Leibniz's view of the distinctness and the interdependence of these explanatory patterns is both subtler and more promising than many approaches that are still defended. This Leibnizean view, as I have tried to show, is independent of theological commitments and of Leibniz's too-bold opinion that there is a teleological explanation for everything that happens.

3 Analyticity

All the events and actions that are explained either mechanically or teleologically are contingent according to Leibniz. True propositions asserting such occurrences are contingent truths. By a contingent truth Leibniz means a truth of which the denial expresses something *possible* and is not inconceivable or contradictory. I want to emphasize Leibniz's assertion of the contingency of all of these subject matters because there is an interpretation of his thought, and it is the dominant interpretation now, according to which he does not really think that any of these matters are contingent. On this, the dominant understanding of Leibniz, he takes all truths to be *analytic* truths, and, as everyone agrees, no analytic truth can be contingent. It is an obvious and essential feature of analytic truths that their denials are contradictory. So in saying that Leibniz thinks that all truths are analytic, supporters of this interpretation assert that he cannot really distinguish between the class of truths whose denials are contradictions and any other class of truths whatsoever. So

his real opinion is supposed to be that there are no contingent truths at all and that everything true is necessarily true.

In considering this contention we have, first, to note that *there is a sense* in which all these contingent truths are also necessary. They are "hypothetically necessary" in Leibniz's customary terminology.[37] By this he means that there is a coercive reason why this event or action occurs rather than some alternative to it. Thus, given the laws of nature and the relevant circumstances preceding a mechanically caused event, that event must follow. This is entailed by the presumed universality of natural laws. Leibniz recognizes that the conditional statement that expresses hypothetical necessity is itself logically necessary or, as he expresses it, *metaphysically* necessary and *absolutely* necessary. It is a feature of any absolutely or logically necessary truth that its denial is a contradictory statement. Therefore, in saying that an event is hypothetically necessary, Leibniz is associating that event with a conditional statement that is absolutely necessary.

This is not an extreme view of Leibniz's, nor one that we should think of as expressing a characteristically rationalist perspective. An ideally simple schema can bring out the points in a way that makes them noncontroversial, or nearly so. Suppose that the only law relevant to the occurrence of the event E is the simply conditional: "If circumstance C obtains then event E follows." E is shown to be hypothetically necessary by adverting to this law together with the fact that the circumstance C did obtain in the actual context of the occurrence of E. This can be summed up in the logically necessary conditional:

> If it is the case that the law: if circumstance C then event E, holds; and if circumstance C does obtain, then event E follows.

All those philosophers of science who envision a deductive relationship between scientific laws, initial conditions and statements asserting the occurrence of explained events are committed to this Leibnizean viewpoint. Most empiricists adopt this view. That the relationship of the *explanans* to the *explanandum* is deductive is just another way of saying that propositions with the above form, and those with much more complicated laws and instantiating conditions, are logically true. Leibniz once asserted, "As for eternal truths, we must observe that at bottom they are all conditional, and say, in fact, such a thing posited, such another thing is."[38]

The necessity of conditional statements connecting laws and conditions with explained events is all that Leibniz means by "hypothetical necessity" in the sphere of mechanical explanation. Such hypothetical necessity leaves open the possibility that some other event might have occurred, rather than the actual event, had the laws and initial conditions been different. For factual circumstances, and the laws of nature, are themselves contingent according to Leibniz.[39] Thus, the denial of the occurrence of a hypothetically necessary event is not contradictory.

Parallel points are to be made in understanding Leibniz's conception of the contingency of free actions. Leibniz consistently rejects what he calls "the freedom of indifference." By this he means to exclude choices which are entirely arbitrary and motivated by nothing but the disposition to choose. Freedom, for Leibniz, never eliminates the need for a reason for what is done which distinguishes it in some intelligible way from all alternative actions and makes clear why it was chosen over alternatives. To suppose that a man could actually make a random or arbitrary choice between alternatives would be to allow an element of unintelligibility into our idea of reality. A single inexplicable node in the causal network of things would infect the whole scheme of an explicable world.

The vulnerability of this conception is revealed in exchanges with Samuel Clarke, who points out, among other things, that Leibniz must rule against the very possibility that God, or a man, could ever be faced with equally desirable means to some desired end.[40] In the manner of the problem of Buridan's ass, the value-equivalence of the means would prevent selecting either of them, on Leibniz's principles, no matter how urgently desired the end.

In spite of such penetrating criticisms, we should bear in mind that the idea that everything that happens is explicable is not merely a rationalist dogma. It seems to be a presumption of all investigations of things and one that is extremely difficult to set aside.

For better or worse, Leibniz's view is that an agent must always have a definite reason for choosing the action he does perform from the alternative courses available to him. The reason is coercive in the sense that, once an agent determines what course he prefers, which Leibniz expresses as "what course appears best to him," he will inevitably adopt that course. He likes to compare deliberation with weighing things in a balance. The very idea that a man could act in the absence of a determining reason is, for Leibniz, like the idea that a balance might incline to one side although there is no greater weight in that side than in the other.[41]

The principle: men always choose the course that appears best to them, is the analog of a scientific law, and the particular assessment preceding an action will be the analog of prior circumstances. Again, conditionals of the following type can be formed:

> If a man is choosing for the best, and if A appears better than any other option that he recognizes, then he will do A.

This pattern fits the actions of God as well as of finite agents with the difference that God's infinite power enforces his choice and to God's infinite wisdom what appears best is best.[42] In both the divine and the human case, the absolute necessity of conditional statements of this form never means that other actions could not possibly have been performed. On the contrary, it is an ineliminable part of the idea of action that all of the alternative actions

could be performed by the agent. This is the minimum meaning of calling them alternative courses of action. The question of choice only arises on the irreducible assumption that an agent could do more than one thing. Only then does the question of preference, the best, the apparent best, and assessment become relevant. Therefore, actions themselves, although hypothetically necessary, are never absolutely necessary. Other preferences and principles of action might have issued in other actions. The denial that a particular action was done is never a contradiction.

The contingency of mechanically explicable motions and the contingency of motivated actions is essential to Leibniz's thinking about these matters. If it were absolutely impossible for a particular motion not to occur, if its nonoccurrence were inconceivable and contradictory, and the assertion of its occurrence, thus, metaphysically necessary, then talk about mechanical causes would be as inappropriate in physics as it is in geometry. If a man's behavior were absolutely necessary, the desirability of an action would be as irrelevant as the desirability of a theorem in pure mathematics. Then, as Leibniz says, it would be as easy to be a prophet as to be a geometer.[43] Like geometrical proofs, scientific explanations and explanations of actions can be expressed in deductive arguments. The crucial difference is that the premises of mathematical deductions are themselves necessary truths while the premises from which actions and events can be deduced are contingent.

Apart from God, the existence of all material things and all human agents is contingent. Thus all statements that describe finite existences and say what happens to them and what they do are contingent truths, if they are true statements.[44] Plainly all statements about mechanically caused events involving bodies and all statements about the free actions of human agents will fall into the class of contingent statements.

The popular idea that Leibniz makes all truths analytic[45] is certainly wrong. It flies in the face of his frequent and careful statements on these issues. It makes nonsense of his most important views and of his philosophy as a whole. It imputes logical inconsistencies to a great logician that are so obvious that no beginning student could miss them. There is just no question of testing this proposed understanding of Leibniz against his writings in order to see whether it may be an adequate or an unavoidable expression of his real opinion. The only interesting question is how it can have happened that this reading has managed to gain, not merely currency, but ascendancy in the views of so many who study Leibniz's philosophy.

First, we need a rough review of the concept of analytic truth that is used in this bad interpretation of Leibniz. The roughness of our treatment here intentionally avoids twentieth century controversies over analyticity[46] and avoids all of the niceties concerning logical form that would require attention in a scrupulous discussion of analyticity *per se*. In particular, we shall largely ignore the fact that all propositions are not of subject-predicate form, as Leibniz himself largely ignores it. None of these matters have any relevance to the claim that Leibniz thought that truths are all of them analytic. An exposition of analyticity that fits in with Leibniz's expressed views about truth and that makes sense in the context of examples of truths like Leibniz's examples will suffice for our purposes.

Propositions are *analytic* whose truth depends upon and only upon the meaning of the terms they contain. Generally the meanings of terms are complex. In order to make meanings fully explicit reformulation of sentences is generally required. Such reformulations substitute something like definitions for terms that have complex meanings. In the case of analytic propositions, this *analysis via* articulation of meanings ultimately makes the truth evident, displaying it, for example, as resting on an identity the denial of which would be patently contradictory.

In an illustration that has become standard in modern discussions, the articulated meaning or definition: "things that are both men and unmarried" replaces the complex term "bachelors" in analyzing the proposition,

(1) All bachelors are unmarried,

yielding,

(2) All things that are both men and unmarried are unmarried,

which rests on the identity,

(3) What is unmarried is unmarried,

in the sense that to say that (2) is false is to assert that something is both unmarried and not unmarried, which denies (3) and is, therefore, contradictory.[47]

Leibniz never uses the word "analytic" in this sense. As everyone knows, the word "analytic" was first given the sense just sketched by Kant. At the same time, Leibniz certainly does say that there are truths which reduce to or rest on identities. He also often points out that this foundation of such truths is not always evident and that it requires analysis of the terms of a proposition to display the underlying identity.[48] Perhaps his thinking in such passages is so close to our concept of analyticity that we can properly say that he is talking about the analyticity of propositions in our sense, although he does not use the word as we do. But just this much, far from showing that Leibniz takes *all* truths to be analytic, seems to establish the opposite. For Leibniz always very clearly distinguishes between truths that rely on the law of contradiction from *other* truths which need a further foundation and whose denials are possible and not at all contradictory. The consistency of Leibniz's distinction on this point is one of the reasons for which it is odd that many readers are satisfied to say that he makes all truths analytic.[49] The following is a particularly clear statement of Leibniz's. It is one of a number of statements with similar force:

> Omnes Existentiae excepta solius Dei Existentia sunt contingentes. Causa autem cur res aliqua contingens [prae alia] existat, non petitur ex [sola] eius definitione.... Cum enim infinita sint possibilia, quae tamen non existunt, ideo cur haec potius quam illa existant, ratio peti debet non ex definitione alioqui non existere implicaret contradictionem, et alia non essent possibilia....
>
> All existences excepting only the existence of God are contingent. The reason why something contingent exists [rather than another thing] is not to be sought in its definition [alone].... Since there are infinite possibilities which, nonetheless, do not exist, the reason why this rather than that does exist ought not to be sought from definitions, otherwise not existing would imply a contradiction, and other things would not be possible....[50]

It is worth noting that, in Kant's initiating discussions and in all philosophical usage since Kant, "analytic" is essentially a contrastive concept and the point of calling a proposition analytic is not fully intelligible without the correlative concept of "synthetic" propositions. Neither Kant nor any post-Kantian philosopher who uses the concepts, analytic and synthetic, has said that all truths are analytic. The contrast is always the basis for a dichotomous classification of truths. There are philosophical controversies concerning the viability of the analytic-synthetic distinction altogether, though philosophers do, for the most part, accept the distinction.[51] There are none who accept the distinction and then find that all true propositions fall into just one of the two available classes.

It is this extravagant opinion, that no philosopher would dream of holding himself, that is so commonly assigned to Leibniz. This reading of Leibniz requires, then, that we retrospectively apply to his thought an essentially contrastive concept that was introduced long after his death by Kant and, at the same time, it requires us to suppose that Leibniz uses this contrastive concept noncontrastively and that he puts all truths on one side, though no other philosopher would do that. Once this interpretation is introduced, it turns out to be incompatible with almost everything that Leibniz said. This circumstance, instead of leading to the prompt rejection of the interpretation, or even to suspicions about it, has spawned various ingenious efforts to deal with the Leibniz's inconsistencies, namely those that the interpretation itself creates. The most outrageous plan for resolving these created difficulties is surely Russell's. Russell supposes that though Leibniz *says* that there are contingent truths he does not *believe* that there are any, since Leibniz really thinks that all truths are analytic and therefore, necessary. Russell finds that Leibniz was a fellow of poor character, lacking "moral elevation"[52] so he basely concealed his true views after discovering that they did not please Antoine Arnauld in 1686.[53] If Russell were right, we should have to think that Leibniz went on, after 1686, to write huge books and endless letters and articles, and thousands of fragments that no one saw but himself, in all of which he insincerely asserted that there are contingent truths only because he thought that this opinion would more appealing to his royal patrons and religious authorities than his real belief that everything is necessary.

Other critics have not followed Russell in these accusations, but neither have they rejected the idea that, for Leibniz, all truths are analytic. Why not? One obvious reason hinges on the word "contains." Leibniz states in many places that if any proposition is true then the predicate is *contained* in the subject of that proposition, or the subject *contains* the predicate. Furthermore, it is quite possible that Kant had in mind just this Leibnizean use of "contains" when he introduced the distinction between analytic and synthetic truths by saying that the predicate is contained in the subject of analytic truths, while it is not contained in the subject of synthetic truths which add something, as Kant puts it, that is not already thought in the subject concept. So we have two suggestive facts: First, Leibniz said that in all truths the predicate is contained in the subject, and, second, Kant said that, if the predicate is contained in the subject, you have an analytic truth. Combining these we can get: Leibniz finds that all truths are analytic.

But this requires the additional premise that Leibniz and Kant mean the same thing when they speak of the predicate being contained in the subject of a proposition. How can that possibly be when Leibniz makes it clear, again and again, that his "containment of the predicate in the subject" is compatible with the contingent status of a proposition? In the essay "On Necessary and Contingent Truths," Leibniz says

> Verum est affirmatum, cuius praedicatum inest subjecto, itaque in omni Propositione vera affirmativa, necessaria vel contingente, universali vel singulari, notio praedicati *aliquo modo continetur* in notione subjecti;....
>
> Assertions are true of which the predicate is in the subject, so that in all true affirmative propositions, whether necessary or contingent, universal or singular, the notion of the predicate is *contained in some way* in the notion of the subject;....[54]

Again, this citation is selected from a number of discussions which have the same force. I have added the emphasis, "*aliquo modo continetur*," that is, "contained in some way." What are the different ways in which the predicate might be contained? Leibniz clearly envisions two possibilities. In the case of necessary truths, containment of the predicate in the subject is a matter of meaning, that is, containment is shown "ex definitione" of "per analysin terminorum." Only in these cases is the reason for the containment a "necessitating reason."[55] In the case of contingent propositions Leibniz says that there is no necessitating reason but only an "inclining reason" for the presence of the predicate in the notion of the subject.[56] Again, Leibniz distinguishes between predicates that are part of the essence of the subject and predicates that

are in the subject but not part of the essence of the subject. Only propositions that ascribe essential predicates are necessary.

It seems to me beyond dispute that, were Leibniz informed of Kant's conception of analytic and synthetic propositions, he would not say that he finds all truths analytic. His stated distinctions prepare for a much more plausible response. Analytic truths are those for which there is a necessitating reason for the inclusion of the predicate in the subject. These are propositions true by definition. They ascribe essential predicates. The denials of these are contradictory. There are other propositions which are synthetic. They are contingent propositions where the reason for the subject's containment of the predicate is not a necessitating reason. They are not shown true by appeal to the meanings of terms. They do not involve essential predicates of their subjects. And their denials are not contradictory.

That Kant's analytic statements are all necessary is a logical point at the most elementary level. Leibniz, who was, after all, a great logician, could not fail to notice that where the subject contains the predicate in Kant's sense, a proposition will be necessary and its denial a contradiction. But in all the passages wherein he asserts *his* containment thesis, Leibniz also asserts that there are contingent as well as necessary propositions, and these differ "toto genere."[57] In one passage Leibniz actually seems to anticipate and reject the idea that his conception of contingent truths might, somehow, make them necessary along with ordinary necessities:

> Si omnes propositiones etiam contingentes resolvuntur in propositiones identicas, an non omnes necessariae sunt? Respondeo, non sane.
>
> If all propositions, even contingencies, are to be resolved into identical propositions, can we not conclude that they are all necessary? I answer, Not soundly.

Leibniz then explains that propositions of fact are all about existing things. What exists, a consequence of God's creation, is always an alternative to other possible existences. So there is a reason for what exists, but that something exists is not necessary. And he concludes:

> . . . dicendumque est in contingentibus non quidem demonstrari praedicatum ex notione subjecti; sed tantum eius rationem reddi, quae non necessitet sed inclinet.
>
> It must be said that in contingencies the predicate is by no means to be demonstrated from the notion of the subject; but rather a reason for it is given which does not necessitate but inclines.[58]

Furthermore, in many presentations of the containment thesis about all truths it is plain that Leibniz does not think he is asserting something controversial or even original in the least way. He intends this claim, rather, as an expression of a conception of truth shared by most philosophers.[59] He thinks it is Aristotle's conception of truth, as well as that of all the leading scholastics he can think of. But Leibniz does not propose that Aristotle and most scholastics held that all truths are necessary and that they can all be established from the analysis of meanings. Leibniz would recognize that as an extreme and unfamiliar view, while his containment thesis is presumably familiar and innocuous. In one passage, Leibniz says, "[In a true proposition, the predicate is contained in the subject] or I do not know what truth is."[60] This is just hyperbolic rhetoric for expressing the noncontroversial status of the containment thesis as Leibniz understands it.

It is not hard to state just what the containment thesis does mean as Leibniz intends it. It asserts only what might be expressed as follows: If 'S is P' is true, then, of course, P must actually qualify the subject S. That is, P must be a feature of that subject, for that is just what the sentence states. In other words, a list of all of the features of the subject S would *contain* the predicate P, for if P were not on that list, it could hardly be true to say 'S is P.'

Leibniz's thinking is also influenced by a conception which is now known as the "timelessness of truth." If an individual has some feature at some time, then the statement, 'S is P' which expresses that fact, is timelessly true. The statement does not become true when the individual comes to have the feature. This is not a mysterious doctrine if we think of the temporal qualification as tacitly included in the predicate. Then we get propositions such as "Reagan is elected in 1980" which is always true, and not just in 1980. But consider "Reagan is re-elected in 1984." If this is true, it is now and at all times true, although we do not now know that it is true. If it is true, then Leibniz will say that Reagan (now and always) has the feature of being elected in 1984 although we are not smart enough to know that in advance. Further, reelection in '84, like election in '80, is not an essential feature of Reagan, if it is a feature. That means that, if he is going to be reelected, that is not a necessary truth, though it is, now, a truth. Understood in this way, the containment thesis is as uncontroversial as Leibniz expects it to be. The containment thesis actually provides no support whatever for the idea that Leibniz takes all truths to be analytic truths.

In addition to his views about containment of predicates in subjects, there are four Leibnizean doctrines that seem to press readers to the interpretation we are considering. These are (1) that for every truth an *a priori* proof is available in principle; (2) That God is able, because his mental powers are infinite, to reduce contingent propositions to identities and thus appreciate their truth, while, for mentally weaker men, *a posteriori* experience is the only source of knowledge of contingencies; (3) There is a complete concept for every individual so that one who knows the concept would know everything that was, is, or will be true of that individual; and (4) An individual is a *species infima*, that is, a minimal species.

(1) In many passages and in various contexts Leibniz

says that there is an *a priori* proof for all true propositions, although we are often unable to produce that *a priori* proof. Now, most philosophers of the twentieth century think that the feasibility of *a priori* proof is equivalent to, or is certainly a reliable mark of, necessary status. To prove some proposition *a priori* means, for us, to prove it without any appeal to the facts of the world, which are only discoverable *a posteriori*, or by experience. Again, we are now inclined to think that if a proof does not need any appeal to the facts it must rely wholly on analysis of concepts and meanings. That means, for us, that a proposition provable *a priori* will be an analytic truth and, therefore, necessary.

In considering Leibniz's ideas, however, this line of thought must be wholly set aside. It is simply an error to project into Leibniz's thought any restriction of *a priori* status to propositions that are necessary or defensible by appeal to meanings alone. God's policy of action: selection of the best, and man's policy: selection of the apparent best, are premises that Leibniz plainly admits in *a priori* proofs, but he regards these as contingent premises and their contingency will be inherited by whatever is proved with their help. In fact, the contingency of all created existence alone guarantees the contingency of all matters of fact even though a sufficient intelligence would be able to predict them, using God's selection of the best as a premise. Leibniz says,

> Principium primum circa existentia est propositio haec: Deus vult eligere perfectissimum. Haec propositio demonstrari non potest; est omnium propositionum facti prima, seu origo omnis existentiae contingentiae.
>
> The first principle concerning existence is this proposition: God wants to choose the best. This proposition cannot be demonstrated; it is first of all propositions of fact, or the source of all contingent existence.[61]

The confinement of *a priori* to analytic truth is plainly wrong even for thinking about Kant, as his fundamental concept, synthetic *a priori* truth, testifies.

(2) Obviously we do not and cannot produce any of the *a priori* proofs for contingent facts that Leibniz says are possibile in principle. The reason he gives for our failure is that the world is infinitely complicated and each thing in it is related to everything else. An *a priori* proof of anything will have, as a consequence, to be an *a priori* proof of everything. It will have to take an infinity of factors into consideration. Our minds are clearly not up to such proofs. But an infinite mind, the mind of God, and only such a mind, could actually frame and grasp such proofs. This strand of speculation occurs frequently in Leibniz's writings and it has contributed to the idea that Leibniz thinks that all truths are analytic although we finite minds cannot appreciate the analyticity of what we discover through experience. Therefore we call these "contingent truths". Only God can understand these truths *as* analytic truths, but such they surely are.[62]

Leibniz frequently alludes to infinite analysis in mathematics. He likes to say that he appreciated the true character of contingencies when he placed them in the context of infinite mathematical analysis. Infinite analysis is the "radix contingentiae": the root of contingency. Again, he says that it takes a little flair for mathematics to grasp the nature of contingent truths which are only resolvable, in some sense, at infinity, as curves meet their asymptotes at infinity, and an infinite-sided polygon becomes a circle. Contingent truths are often said to be like incommensurable ratios whose exact value is the sum of an infinite series of factors. And Leibniz actually seems insecure in this analogy because we finite minds are capable of summing such infinite series.[63]

Many of those who say that Leibniz makes all truth analytic are most encouraged by this appeal to infinite analysis. My guess is that such readers think that Leibniz means that we treat propositions as contingent because we cannot understand their necessity. These readers rightly note something that Leibniz surely does mean, namely, that what is only *a posteriori* to a finite mind may be *a priori* to an infinite one. They go on to the plausible but faulty extension: What is contingent to a finite mind may be necessary to an infinite one, and what is synthetic for us may be analytic for God. These extensions would only be legitimate if we could say that the infinite understanding that God is capable of is an understanding of meanings and definitions. Why should we think that? Of course, Leibniz does mean that an infinite analysis would be required to find all the predicates contained in a given substance-subject. But we have seen that the reasons for containment do not all give rise to necessary truths or analytic propositions. There is nothing in the idea of an infinity of predicates that tends to make them all essential predicates.

Leibniz sometimes says explicitly that infinite analysis of which only God is capable is needed to reduce contingent truths to identities. Can't we say that all identities are necessary? Identities come into the picture only *via* the notion of containment. If P is contained in S then the identity underlying 'S is P' is expressible as 'S (which has P in it) is P', the identical part of which is 'What is P is P.' Let us agree that this is a necessary truth if anything is. What follows? If P is a contingent feature of S, then the identity is also statable as 'What is contingently P is contingently P.' But to point out that this identity, like all identities, is necessary does not in any way undercut the contingency of 'S is P'.

At times, Leibniz did worry lest his view that all truths rest on identities make them all necessary. In a passage already quoted he asks, "If true propositions all reduce to identities are they not all necessary?" He then tries to dispel the appearance of necessity in a manner much like that I have just proposed. To say that there is an underlying identity only means that the predicate is contained in the subject. But the truth in question is necessary only if the containment is essential "ex notione subjecti" and not

if there is a merely inclining reason for the containment, a reason "quae non necessitet."[64] The same understandable worry sometimes leads Leibniz to deny that contingent propositions really reduce to identities at all:

> ...ita in contingentibus datur connexio [relatioque] terminorum sive veritas, etsi ea ad principium contradictionis sive necessitatis per analysin in identicas reduci nequeat.
>
> ...accordingly, in the case of contingencies, a connection [and relation] of terms is given, though it cannot be reduced to the principle of contradiction or necessity through analysis into identities.[65]

But in this very passage Leibniz reasserts his idea that God's infinite analysis gives him a view of contingencies that we cannot share. It is, then, only *a priori* knowledge and not necessity or analyticity that infinite analysis yields.

It is likely that the same reflections underly Leibniz's misgivings about necessity in this passage:

> ...non intelligentem quomodo praedicatum subjecto inesse posset, nec tamen fieret necessaria.
>
> ...I did not understand in what way the predicate can be contained in the subject, and yet not make the proposition necessary.[66]

Leibniz did not forget his distinction between necessitating and inclining reasons here. It is just because the containment thesis will always generate an identity that it so strongly suggests the necessity of the analyzed proposition to Leibniz and his readers. But, as we have seen, Leibniz would rather abandon the claim that an identity underlies every contingent truth than regard such truths as necessary.

The best support for the idea that Leibniz makes even contingent truths analytic may come from passages like this one:

> Verum est vel necessarium vel contingens. Verum necessarium sciri potest per finitam seriem substitutionum seu per coincidentia commensurabilia, verum contingens per infinitam, seu per coincidentia incommensurabilia. Verum necessaria est cujus veritas est explicabilis; contingens cujus veritas est inexplicabilis. Probatio a priori seu [demonstratio] Apodixis est explicatio veritas.
>
> Truth is either necessary or contingent. Necessary truth can be known through a finite series of substitutions or through a commensurable coincidence [resolution to identity], contingent truth by infinite analysis, or through incommensurable coincidence. Necessary truth is that of which the truth is explicable; contingent, that of which the truth is inexplicable. A *priori* or apodictic demonstration is explication of truth.[67]

Leibniz never makes it entirely clear in just what way appeal to infinity is supposed to help us to understand contingency. In spite of the large number of passages in which he makes use of the analogy of incommensurability, he never makes it clear just how this analogy is to be understood either. Furthermore, his appeal to "substitutions" in passages like the one just cited sounds menacingly necessitarian. Be this as it may, we can be sure that Leibniz did not think that these analogies go to show that contingent propositions are really analytic. He surely does mean that we cannot complete some kind of analysis which God can complete, and this because the analysis in question is infinite. But to make a proposition analytic, Leibniz would have to say not only that its full analysis requires an infinite mind, but also that that analysis is wholly conceptual and that the *substitutions* employed in the analysis are all of them definitional substitutions. Mere assertion that analyses are infinite does not imply that they are confined to conceptual matters. On the contrary, what God discovers through his infinite analysis is what we have to learn through experience. This prominently includes knowledge of causes of events and of free decisions, that is, of contingencies. In countless passages, including those we discussed in the first two parts of this essay, Leibniz makes it clear that God's foreknowledge is foreknowledge of contingent facts, of mechanically caused events, and of freely chosen actions. The a prioricity of God's foreknowledge is always distinguished from the necessity of what he knows. God cannot reduce actions and causes to definitions because they are not matters of definition.

Leibniz usually, perhaps invariably, combines his idea that God can make infinite analyses with the thought that God can know contingent truths *a priori*. The above passage ends saying that contingent truths are inexplicable by men and that by explicability is meant demonstrability *a priori*. This is the mystery about contingent truths that infinite analysis is to make intelligible. God's powers enable him to prove contingent propositions *a priori*, but that does not convert contingent truths into necessary or analytic propositions.

Here is what Leibniz really has in mind in his discussion of infinite analysis that makes possible *a priori* knowledge of facts. We men have enough understanding of the world to predict a few things like eclipses and next month's tides. The more knowledgeable and brilliant we are the more we can predict. Some of our predictions depend on our knowledge of our own future actions. We can predict that we will not run out of gas on a long trip because we know that we will stop and refuel when we run low. In these ways, God is like us but infinitely wiser and more powerful. He has been able to predict everything from the beginning. "Everything" includes an infinite complexity of mechanically caused events and freely undertaken actions and these are all contingent.[68] God knows all the contingent effects of mechanical causes and all the free decisions that agents will ever take. Everything is connected with everything else, so that the infinite truth of the world appears, from a particular point of view, in the complete truth about any individual. But this enormous truth contains a great deal that is irreducibly contingent.

God's knowledge is wholly *a priori* since he knows everything before he creates the world of which he has knowledge. He knows that this is the way things will turn out, if he creates just such individuals subject to just such natural laws, and also creates such free men acting on such principles. That all this is knowledge of the actual world is a consequence of God's decision to create this "series of things." Here again we have a contingency. He creates as he does in light of a mental comparison with other possibilities each of which is also infinitely complex. God might have created another world, or none. That would not be contradictory. But his creative action is contingent and a great many of the things that happen in the world he created happen contingently. Perhaps we can say that for Leibniz anything that could be said to "happen" is contingent. For he describes necessary and essential truths about the world as conditional.[69]

(3) Leibniz regularly says that every individual has a "complete concept" and that all the truths, past, present and future, about an individual could be read off from the complete concept. This gives rise to the thought that truths about individuals are conceptual truths, for does he not say expressly that they can be got out of concepts? Beyond this, Leibniz is a metaphysical *individualist*. The universe consists wholly of a multiplicity of entities that Leibniz calls substances. These are basic individuals whose existence manifests a true unity and independence. All truths about the created universe are truths about these substances. Again, this is an expression of Leibniz's nominalism. At his most theoretical, Leibniz says that all substances are what he calls monads. His theory of monads is notoriously difficult to relate to discourse at the less abstract levels of physical science, psychology, and ethics. I think it is certain that Leibniz himself never connected his *Monadology* with other universes of discourse in any definite way.[70] Nonetheless, Leibniz also allows discourse in which far less theoretical individuals such as persons and physical bodies are the subjects about which truths may be asserted. At both the most theoretical and the more practical levels of discourse he defends the idea that every individual has a complete concept and he freely uses persons and blocks of marble as illustrations of individual things with complete concepts.[71] When Leibniz wrote to Arnauld saying that the entire history of the individual is contained in its complete concept, down to the minutest detail and once and for all, Arnauld found in this doctrine "a necessity more than fatal."[72] Thus, Arnauld may be the first of those who found in this opinion of Leibniz a philosophy that excludes all contingency. Readers who now say that Leibniz makes all truths analytic in connection with the complete-concept thesis are reasserting Arnauld's initial reaction.

The analyticity interpretation gets support here because we so naturally suppose that to speak about what is in a *concept* is to speak about meanings. If all truths about individual substances can be generated by knowledge of concepts, then they all come from meanings and are, therefore, analytic. This understanding is inadequate for reasons much like those we have already stated in the context of *a priori* proof and infinite analysis. Leibniz is using the term "concept" of a substance so that all features of a substance, and not merely essential, definitional, or necessary features, will appear in the concept. He uses the word "concept" to contrast with talk about the substance itself as an existant thing. The concept is the representation of the thing. The features of the concept follow the features of the thing and include contingent elements, if the thing has contingent features.

Of course, the concept of the individual is accessible to God before creation, so God is not merely forming a representation of an existant. This *a priori* accessibility of the concept is, again, an important part of the doctrine that encourages the analyticity thesis about Leibniz. Since the concept pre-exists the thing of which it is the concept, truths derived just from the concept must be conceptual truths. But, again, this is wrong. We finite minds can have concepts of things before they exist, and whether or not they later exist. We may have a complete concept (relatively speaking, of course) of a certain engine, and then we may build the engine that just fits that concept, or we may build another, or none, if other ideas suit us better. This is the way we should think of Leibniz's God, allowing the appropriate superiority of his power and wisdom. When we think in advance that the bearings we have designed for our engine will not last for more than one year of constant use, we envision a contingent feature of our engine. If we build the engine and are entirely right about the bearings, the fact that they wear out in less than a year does not become a kind of necessary truth. It is a contingent truth that we were able to foresee, so that it was part of our concept of this engine before the engine existed. To call it "a truth about an engine" presupposes that the engine is built. If we do not go on to build the engine, then all we have is a conditional truth. "If we build such an engine, and if the laws of nature are as we assert them to be, then the bearings of that engine will wear out in less than a year." This is a necessary truth, but, as Leibniz himself says, its content is only of the form, "Such a thing posited, such another thing is."[73]

We conclude, that for God and for man, the existence of concepts of things prior to the existence of the things of which they are concepts does not in any way imply that truths about the things, legible from the concepts, are necessary or analytic. In the absence of the existence of the thing, such truths are not truths about individuals at all. With the existence, even the subsequent existence, nothing prevents them from being contingent truths.

(4) Leibniz sometimes says that an individual is a *species infima*.[74] That is, each substance is a least species, a species having only one member, namely, that individual substance itself. Now truths about the relation of species and

subspecies are ordinarily truths based wholly on meanings within some scheme of classification. Let us assume in any case, that such is the status of assertions like, "Cats are mammals." Let us assume that this and other truths like it are necessary and analytic truths. In the example, we can see that being a member of the smaller class, cats, has as an essential requirement being in the larger class, mammals. If sentences about individuals could be assimilated to this pattern they too would be necessary and analytic. It is as though the more defining qualifications one introduces in speaking of a species, the fewer will be the individuals that instantiate that species-concept. Then Leibniz may seem to be saying that the most articulate species-concept, the ultimate definition of a subspecies, is always a concept so full that there is but one individual that can satisfy that species concept. Such a concept will specify everything about the single individual that is, under this understanding, the member of a *species infima.*

This idea is plainly close to the complete-concept theory that we have just considered. The remarks we made about that theory apply equally to the notion of a *species infima.* Leibniz got the idea of a *species infima* containing one individual out of scholastic thought. The scholastics arrived at the concept in connection with the problem of individuation. What is it that really makes one thing, one man, for example, a different individual from another? According to a powerful and plausible Aristotelian view, the body is the ultimate and decisive foundation for the individuality of things. But for scholastics some things, such as angels, differ from men in that angels do not have bodies. The idea that each angel is a *species infima* is a scholastic solution to this problem. It tries to accept the Aristotelian concept of individuation by ruling that there can be only one bodiless entity of each conceptually distinct sort.[75]

Leibniz extends the idea of *species infima* to all individuals whether or not they have bodies. He has in mind that no two individuals, such as two men, will have just the same bodily features, nor just the same physical histories, etc. Therefore, classifications based on subtle enough differences will yield classes containing only one individual. But, as we saw, this will include classification with respect to empirical and contingent features, and not merely with respect to essential features. In fact, Leibniz's special objective here is not complete concepts or *a priori* proofs but rather a vehicle for expression of his well-known view that no two individuals are exactly alike, or that individuals never differ in number only.[76]

I have devoted a lot of detail to this point, that is, the idea that all truths are analytic according to Leibniz, because it is an error that is widespread and an error that, once made, leaves Leibniz's overall thought in hopeless confusion and inconsistency. I think it can be said that this misinterpretation is just based on inappropriate modernizations of Leibniz's use of words such as "*a priori*", "concept", "containment" and "reduction to an identity." Confining ourselves to Leibniz's senses of such expressions, none of his doctrines lend any support to the popular misinterpretation.

4 Possibility and Possible Worlds

Leibniz often expresses his commitment to contingent truth by saying that not everything that is possible actually exists.[77] Spinoza and Hobbes are generally bracketed in his discussions as thinkers who erroneously eliminate contingency and equate what is possible and what is real.[78] If there were no unactualized possibilities, Leibniz says, it would be inappropriate to praise God for his creation,[79] and men could not be free and responsible for their actions.[80] To speak of human freedom presupposes that more than one possibility must be open to a man. To praise God presupposes that other worlds might have been created. This is the setting of the famous concept of *possible worlds.*

The thought of other possible worlds emphasizes a side of our reflections on contingency that easily generates puzzles and paradoxes. The recent great revival of discussions of possible worlds has not neglected to revive these paradoxes and puzzles.[81] The paradoxes turn on the idea of the *existence* of possible worlds. Suppose we agree that Leibniz is right about Spinoza. Then Leibniz asserts and Spinoza denies that there are possibilities beyond those that are actualities. But what can this mean? Both men know that what exists, exists, and what does not, does not. Leibniz says that *there are* further possibilities, and Spinoza that it is not the case that *there are* further possibilities. These perhaps inevitable expressions suggest that the difference is in some way a difference about *what there is.* To say that there are unrealized possibilities seems to be the same as to say that unrealized possibilities *exist* somehow. Of course, they do not exist in the way in which realized possibilities exist. But if Leibniz were to admit that these possibilities do not exist at all, that they do not exist in any sense, then what would be the difference between his view and Spinoza's? Generally, this kind of thinking has led many, and sometimes Leibniz among them, to think of a possible world as a kind of existent thing. Because it gives unrealized possible worlds some kind of ontological weight, I call this the ontological interpretation of possible worlds.

The temptations and advantages of the ontological interpretation can be illustrated in connection with Leibniz's discussions of the "problem of evil." Among the creatures of God are some, some men, for example, whose acts are vicious, whose characters are corrupt, and whose very constitution is deficient. How can an all-powerful and all-good God have produced such creatures? One view of Leibniz's solution to this problem is that, in Leibniz's system, God's creation does not include the fashioning of such deficient individuals at all because all individuals, as possibilities, exist eternally and, therefore, pre-exist all creative acts of God. A recent exposition states:

> Each substance has "always" subsisted, or, strictly speaking, has had a conceptual mode of being that lies outside of time altogether—*sub ratio possibilitatis*. Its total nature was determined, for its adequate and complete notion (including all its predicates save existence) was fixed. For this God is in no way responsible; it is an object of his understanding and no creature of his will.[82]

According to this line of thought, possibilities are completed essences which God knows about but does not make. Creation consists in admitting into actuality certain of these individuals who, actuality apart, are completely formed. In his policy for conferring actual existence on these individuals God sees to it that the best possible world becomes the actual world. This best possible world has some defective individuals in it but it is, on balance, better than any possible alternative. God did not construct these deficient individuals, nor their betters. He merely allowed them, so to speak, through the portals of actuality. I am not particularly concerned here with the success of this well-known formula for the absolution of God. I do want to stress that, insofar as it does absolve him from the responsibility for having created deficient individuals, it gives those individuals, as mere possibilities, a certain considerable ontological standing. God is not responsible for these individuals because *they exist as possibilities* quite independently of him.

The ontological interpretation of possible worlds is especially clear in a passage at the end of the *Theodicée* where Leibniz adds a sequel to the dialogue of Lorenzo Valla that he has retold. The high priest Theodore is sent by Jupiter to be instructed by Pallas Athena so that he will understand how misery and corruption of some men is compatible with the greatness and goodness of God. The goddess meets Theodore on the steps of an immense palace of inconceivable brilliance. After first making him capable of receiving divine enlightenment, Athena tells him:

> You see here the palace of destinies, of which I am the keeper. There are representations here, not only of everything that happens, but also of all that is possible; and Jupiter, having reviewed these representations before the beginning of the existing world, examined the possibilities for worlds, and made the choice of the best of all. . . . Thereupon, the goddess led Theodore into one of the apartments: when he was there, it was no longer an apartment, it was a world.[83]

In this forceful, entertaining and figurative exploitation of the concept of possible worlds, unrealized possibilities are construed on the pattern of other worlds that one might visit or observe.[84]

The high-water mark of this realistic interpretation of possibility in Leibniz is probably his theory of *exigentia*. According to this view, all possibilities contain a certain urge to exist. The actual world is the net effect of the strivings of individuals many of which are incompatible with one another. The result is a world of maximal existence which we might think of on analogy with an ecological system wherein competing organisms fully exploit every possibility and exist in every ecological niche. Both Russell and Arthur Lovejoy point out that, if Leibniz's theory of competing possibilities is taken literally, there appears to be no role at all for God in determining what exists.[85] This is precisely because the theory gives possibilities not only a kind of existence but also a certain activity that is independent of and precedes actuality.

Leibniz seems to have thought of the "urge to exist" of possibilities as at best a convenient metaphor. He usually speaks of unrealized possibilities as existing only as thoughts in the mind of God. In the *Theodicée* he says that the idea of a struggle for actual existence must really be understood as a conflict of "reasons in the perfect understanding of God," and at least once he expressly asserted that possible things, since they do not exist, can have no power to bring themselves into existence.[86] These views of possibility are deflationary in comparison with the ontological interpretation that makes possibilities into things that *are*. When Leibniz follows this ontologically restrained line of thought and speaks of possibilities that God considers before creation as "ideas", he means that something that is *just an idea* contrasts with things that exist in any sense at all. The fact that God recognizes that many different actualities *might arise*, depending upon what he freely decides to create, does not mean that anything already exists, as though ready for his "examination" in its fully formed state, merely leaving God to determine whether or not to license the full-blooded actuality of an already subsisting entity.[87]

Leibniz's writings and life-long interest in the theory of combinations shed light on his thinking about possibility. In the *Ars Combinatoria* Leibniz relates his abstract development of a theory of combinations to truth by way of the reflection that a proposition is composed of a subject and a predicate and is, therefore, an instance of binary combination.

> It is, then, the business of inventive [combinatory] logic (as far as it concerns propositions) to solve this problem: (i) given a subject to find its predicates. (ii) given a predicate to find its subjects.[88]

From the point of view of combinations, Leibniz is thinking of possible truths and not actual truths. That is, combinatory analysis will never enable us to see that the ascription of one predicate to a subject makes a true proposition and the ascription of another makes a false proposition. But if our language were adequate and complete enough, a merely combinatory procedure would generate all the statements about every subject that could possibly be true.

The idea of an adequate and complete language is itself problematic. Leibniz always supposes that adequacy will be enhanced by analysis and definitions that reduce complex predicates to their simpler, and ultimately, to their primitive constituents. The completeness of a language

would require that the miscellany of subject terms of ordinary speech be replaced by terms representing the simple constituents of reality. This kind of project faces a large number of philosophical and technical difficulties. It is certainly a familiar project in twentieth-century philosophy. Ideas very much like those of Leibniz on the subject of possibility, ideal language, and combinatory analysis lie behind the modern development of truth-functional analysis, Russell's "logical atomism", the metaphysics and "picture-theory" of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, Rudolph Carnap's many versions of the theory of "state-descriptions", and the extensional semantics of quantification theory. Like Leibniz's schemes, a few of these recent projects for ideal languages have got beyond the programmatic stage. The scheme itself, however, enables us to grasp and evaluate Leibniz's thinking about possible worlds.

A drastically simplified model for the world will be helpful. Suppose that the universe could only have two constituent substances in it, apart from God. Suppose these substances are two dice and that names for each of them are the simple subject terms of our language. Suppose, further, that the only truth to be told about a die is what number of dots it shows. Then the simple predicates of the language will all be expressions like "shows a three" and "shows a six." Let us imagine that the whole history of the universe is just the outcome of one roll of the dice. The roll itself is not even a part of reality. Then all the truth there is about the universe would consist in saying what number of dots between one and six each of the dice shows. We can write this as a pair of numbers: for example, let the truth be that (5, 6), which is to be read, "The first die shows a five and the second a six." In this representation the subject terms are indicated just by position in the pair. Leibniz's problem of the *Ars Combinatoria* would be this: Find all the predicates of the first die. And the solution would be the set of all simple predicates

{shows a one, shows a two,. . ., shows a six}.

All subjects of a given predicate, for instance, the predicate "shows a two," would be the set of all the subjects or

{the first die, the second die}.

Though creation will be a trifling matter with this attenuated universe, God still has the job of determining which possible world shall come into existence. That means that God will determine which of the several outcomes for a roll of two dice shall be the actual universe. Being wise, God understands that the possible worlds are exhausted in the array of combinations:

(1,1)	(1,2)	(1,3)	(1,4)	(1,5)	(1,6)
(2,1)	(2,2)	(2,3)	(2,4)	(2,5)	(2,6)
(3,1)	(3,2)	(3,3)	(3,4)	(3,5)	(3,6)
(4,1)	(4,2)	(4,3)	(4,4)	(4,5)	(4,6)
(5,1)	(5,2)	(5,3)	(5,4)	(5,5)	(5,6)
(6,1)	(6,2)	(6,3)	(6,4)	(6,5)	(6,6).

Now we need something to distinguish the different possible worlds represented in this array in terms of value so as to make it thinkable in the framework of the analogy that God might judge one possible world better than another. Leibniz says that God combines things so as to produce a maximum of ordered variety. Let us say that the numerical total of dots on both dice measures the quantity of existence and that variety is represented only by evenness and oddness of the number of dots on each die. Under this stipulation, the possible world (6,6) maximizes quantity but not variety, while (4,5) maximizes variety but not quantity. (5,6) offers a maximum of quantity with variety, so this may be our model for the best possible world.[89]

Were the universe as simple as this dice-world, a mentality no more powerful than ours could survey possible worlds in advance as well as any divinity. We could know, as God would, that there are eleven possible totals of dots, ranging from two to twelve. There are fifteen worlds with sums less than seven and fifteen with sums more than seven. On the array, these sets of fifteen possible worlds are displayed above and below, respectively, the diagonal going from the lower left to the upper right. The diagonal itself contains the six ways of getting a total of seven, which is more ways than there are for getting any other total. We could extend this set of analytical truths about the set of possible outcomes indefinitely. These truths about possible outcomes are all accessible to us prior to rolling the dice. Leibniz thinks of such intelligible considerations about possible worlds as themselves necessary truths, as indeed these are when considered as statements of possible arithmetical combinations. Should we point out to Leibniz that, when these mathematical reflections are transferred to actual physical objects, they cease to be necessary truths? Real dice might be so constructed (for instance, they might be loaded) so that certain combinations will never come up. We might then say, for example, that it is not possible to roll a seven with a certain pair of dice. Still this would be a matter of hypothetical necessity according to Leibniz, depending on physical laws and conditions. The outcome (3,4) would not be contradictory, even for loaded dice. After all, God will decide the physical laws too, so He can make uninhibited use of combinatorially analyzed possibilities in connection with possible physical objects.

Thinking in terms of this simple model of the world and alternative possibilities, and in terms of our own real abilities to understand possibilities in advance, reduces our impulse to construe possible worlds as having any kind of existence at all apart from the one possible world which is *the world*. Our own thought and survey of possible outcomes of a roll of dice does not depend on thinking that those possibilities *somehow exist* with fully articulated status in advance of any rolling. No outcomes of rollings preexist the actual rolling in any sense whatever, and speech about possible outcomes only refers to what *may* happen *after rolling*. When Leibniz says that God considers a world or worlds in which Adam does not sin as well as worlds

in which he does, he need mean by this nothing more than a vastly more complicated case logically quite like our reflection that, in some rolls, the first die comes up a one, and in others it does not. That these outcomes are open to intelligent survey does not mean that they must already exist in any sense at all.

In contemporary discussions of modal concepts in logic, the ontologically weighty interpretation of possible worlds is currently defended by David Lewis. In his theory, the ontological standing of all possible worlds is so considerable that "real" or "actual" cease to be ways of making fundamental distinctions between one possible world and all the others.[90] Lewis thinks that "actual" and "real" are *indexical* expressions like "here" and "now."[91] Any place at all is "here" for a person speaking from that place. One time is not fundamentally distinguished from others by being *now*. In a similar way, there is an internal and an external use of "actual" in characterizing worlds. Of course, speaking within this possible world, we say that all the others are merely possible while this one is actual. But the inhabitants of other possible worlds will inevitably make the same claim for the actuality of their world, and with the same justice. To say that other possible worlds are not actual does not diminish them in point of ontological standing anymore than it diminishes the existence of places to say that they are not *here*. This ingenious, perhaps intuitively unconvincing proposal is egalitarian about the existence of all possible worlds. Metaphysically speaking, they are all equally constituents of reality.

Possible worlds are all of them representations like the items in the array that represents thirty-six possible outcomes of one roll of a pair of dice. The real world is not a representation. It is the world. So, too, by our hypothesis, there is but one roll of the dice. The real world cannot be identified with one of the items on the array, not even with the item that represents the world as it actually is. Lewis's theory about possible worlds succumbs, first, to the tempting thought that there are thirty-five items of one kind and one item of a different kind, thirty-five shadowy worlds and one full-blooded reality. On this basis, Lewis is able to propose that full-bloodness or actuality is perspectival. We have to judge, so Lewis thinks, from within one of these thirty-six worlds. Naturally, the one we judge from will be called "actual" and the others "merely possible." But we do not judge from within one of these worlds, for none of them *is* the world. We have, in the dice-world, thirty-six *descriptions* and one world. Nobody lives in descriptions and must judge from such vantage points. The thirty-six possibilities all deserve the old scholastic label: "entia rationis."

Leibniz makes use of this thought when he points out that we have to think even of the actual world as a possible world and as contemplated by God.[92] We will be safe from ontological largesse as long as we make all possible worlds alike, and do not think of them as all shadowy except one.

The most decisive argument against any ontological interpretation of possible worlds in the context of Leibniz's thinking is that it undercuts the view of possibility that he defends. Leibniz himself presents this argument. If possibilities were any kind of subsisting things, intelligible, because they are somehow, *there* like Athena's palace of destinies, to be inspected by God or man, then they would have to be objects of a kind of experience, rather than products of reason and understanding. Inspection of possible worlds, were they to exist in any way, would amount to a further source of *a posteriori* knowledge. Theodore actually observes other worlds and explicitly gains knowledge of them and of the comparision with his own world *by experience*. And that is just what Jupiter has done in contemplating the possibilities prior to creation. But this figure gives us no reason to think that Leibniz actually inclines to the ontological interpretation of possibilities in the *Theodicée*. Athena, herself, calls the contents of the palace "representations" and though Theodore *experiences* other possible events, this is not described as another reality but "comme dans une representation de theatre."[93] In other words, the items from which we learn about possibility are not other worlds with a less robust kind of being, nor are they other worlds with the same being as ours, when viewed from within, as David Lewis proposes. They are not worlds at all but only representations. When thinking about possibilities we are comparing representations of worlds with each other.

The fact that we make an actual object like the array of thirty-six possible dice worlds, or the palace of destinies of Athena, is an accidental feature of representation. Our representations could *be* all of them in imagination only. But, whether the representations are real objects or only thoughts, the important point is that we do not have alternative worlds to compare, but only alternative representations, one of which, by hypothesis, represents the world as it is.

Leibniz makes the point that, if possibilities were to exist as inspectible things, then knowledge of them would be *a posteriori*, in discussing the idea of a "*scientia media.*" Such a middle science was proposed by Luis Molina, among others, as a device for resolving the tensions between the concepts of human freedom and predestination. The middle knowledge was supposed to be a kind of visionary appreciation of things accessible to God and constituting a third option between the absolute necessity of definitional and mathematical truth and the mere contingency of matters of fact which we learn in experience. Leibniz points out that, if the notion of vision actually carries any weight in the concept of "*scientia media*", the knowledge deemed accessible to God will be *a posteriori* knowledge:

> Non ergo in quadam Visione consistit DEI scientia, quae imperfecta est et a posteriori; sed in cognitione causae et, a priori.

> Thus the knowledge of God is not made up of a kind of vision, which is imperfect and *a posteriori*; but in understanding of causes, and *a priori*. [94]

This theme becomes immediately relevant to the thought of existing and inspectible possible worlds when Leibniz rejects the Molinist claim that God might see the future infallibly reflected in a great mirror.

> Secundum autores *scientiae mediae* non posset DEUS rationem reddere sui pronuntiati, nec mihi explicare. Hoc unum dicere poterit quaerenti cur ita futurum esse pronuntiet, quod ita videat actum hunc representari in magno illo speculo, intra se posito, in quo omnia praesentia, futura, absoluta vel conditionata exhibentur. Quae scientia purè empirica est, nec DEO ipsi satisfaceret, quia rationum cur hoc potius quàm illud in speculo repraesentetur, non intelligeret.
>
> According to the advocates of the *scientia media*, God could not give a reason for his assertions, nor explain them to me. To someone who asks why he says that things will be thus, he would be able to say just that it is because he sees this event represented thus in that great mirror, posited among them, in which everything present, future, absolute or conditioned is exhibited. Such knowledge is wholly empirical, and it would not satisfy God himself because he would not know the reason for which this rather than that is represented in the mirror.[95]

A vision in a glass, no matter how accurate and trustworthy, is only another experience which cannot replace rational understanding. In the spirit of this conclusion we have to suppose that God's representations of other possible worlds have the features that they do *because* God understands how things would be related in those worlds. The same holds for the simpler human mind contemplating the simpler dice-world. The array of thirty-six outcomes has the constituents that it does because we understand just what would be possible and we make the representations accordingly. Possible worlds are dependent upon our understanding, and not the other way around. And if other possible worlds did exist, somehow, and God could examine them, that would not give him reasoned knowledge but only a kind of empirical knowledge that is not available to us.

5 Freedom

Leibniz's understanding of freedom is dependent in many ways on his doctrines concerning contingency and possibility. Mechanism perennially challenges the claims of freedom. In the second part of this study, we have seen Leibniz's proposals for the reconciliation of freedom and a ubiquitous mechanical causality covering all motions. The view that all truths are analytic which we have criticized in the third part would also contradict the view that men are free, and the rejection of that interpretation eliminates a general threat to Leibniz's doctrines. The theme of possible worlds, just considered in the fourth part, can also be interpreted in a way that creates a fundamental obstacle to freedom.

The thought that a man could have done something other than what he did do plainly requires that some other action was possible. Insofar as possible worlds are to offer a way of expressing our thoughts about possibility, we can say that, where there is freedom, one action is done in the actual world and other actions in other possible worlds. But can we say that one and the same man exists in more than one possible world? Or is an individual confined to just one world so that other possible worlds could at best contain similar individuals faced with similar choices? If one and the same man cannot exist in more than one world, the prospect for freedom is dark. We shall apparently be forced to construe the idea of the freedom of one individual as equivalent to the idea of the behavior of more than one individual.

This is the problem of transworld identity of individuals. It arises in a clear form in Leibniz's exchanges with Arnauld and it is much discussed in recent literature on identity and modal concepts.[96] Leibniz sometimes seems to imply that a true individual can exist in one possible world only. The thesis that there can be no transworld identity is defended at present, again by David Lewis, among others. It is closely connected with the ontological interpretation of possible worlds just examined. If possible worlds *exist* in any sense at all, they seem to be, to that extent, like other places that one might visit, or at least places of which one might obtain news. Under any such conception, each world will have its own population. At best, one possible world may have an individual in it who more or less perfectly resembles, in history and features, an individual in another possible world. Even if such a similarity were perfect, an individual in one possible world cannot be the very individual that is in another world any more than a man born in New York can be the very same individual as an exactly similar man born in New Jersey.

We have repudiated the ontological interpretation of possible worlds and we have argued that, in his best thought, Leibniz repudiates it too. If the prohibition on identity across possible worlds comes entirely from the ontological interpretation we can expect that it will be removed when that interpretation is set aside. If alternative possible worlds are only representations of different systems and not existing systems of different entities, then it seems that possible worlds will contain different representations of one and the same individual. Freedom would, then, not be threatened.

When he received a sketch of the *Discourse of Metaphysics* from Leibniz in 1686, Arnauld found that the complete concept of the individual enunciated in Article Thirteen destroys the foundations of freedom and responsibiity.[97] The ensuing exchange on this point brought the problem

of transworld identity to the surface. In that correspondence, Leibniz uses the concept of possible worlds in arguments intended to overcome Arnauld's initially negative judgment. God knows all the things that Adam and all his descendants have freely done and all that they ever will do. He also knows all the things they might have done had they chosen to act differently, or were they going to choose differently in the future. This is part of God's knowledge of other possible worlds which he could have created. In other worlds Adam does different things. How does Leibniz think it possible to fit freedom for Adam and his progeny into this picture of God's knowledge and creation? There are two thoughts pertinent to this question and the second of them hinges on transworld identity.

In the first place, God can know in advance what a man will freely choose, so free agents do not present an obstacle to God's complete knowledge of the "series of things." It is this thought that is responsible for the rapid shift in point of view in the *Discourse* from the issue of determinism to the issue of foreknowledge.[98] God contemplates all possible worlds. Some of them have free agents in them and some do not. Worlds with free creatures in them are better than worlds without freedom, so God will surely create one of them. This one is best of all, a judgment that requires knowledge of the actual series of things and of all possible series. But God does not produce the events of the actual world himself. They are produced by the causes that we rightly mention in explaining those events. Actions are really done for the reasons the agent has.

Here we find again the point of "On Nature Itself." Explanations have their footing in the world and not merely in its creator. By analogy, the pistons drive the crankshaft of an engine and we cannot skip over or drop explanatory reference to the pistons and explain the motions of the crankshaft by appealing to the intentions or actions of the builder of the engine. So in the inanimate world it is forces that causes motions and not God. When a man acts freely, he, and not God, determines what he will do. This is the platform for Leibniz's defense of freedom and reconciliation of freedom with the complete concept of the individual and with God's knowledge. Though everything that I do belongs to my complete concept, many things belong contingently, and some because of what I freely choose to do.

> The connection of events, although it is certain, is not necessary, and . . . I am at liberty either to make the journey or not make the journey, for, although it is involved in my concept that I will make it, it is also involved that I will make it freely. And there is nothing in me of all that can be conceived *sub ratione generalitatis* . . . from which it can be deduced that I will make it necessarily.[99]

God's knowledge of what I will do is not the explanation for my free action. God knows my motives and he knows how I will assess my circumstances and this is the basis of his knowledge of what I will freely do. God's knowledge no more impairs my freedom than does another man's knowledge of how I will vote impair my freedom to vote as I see fit.

Leibniz's second line of thought about the freedom of the individual in the correspondence with Arnauld is a good deal less secure than the first line of thought. In the passage concerning a possible journey that we have just quoted, Leibniz touches on the question of the identity of individuals across possible worlds. In introducing the possible journey as an illustration, Arnauld had sought to distinguish those facts about an individual without which he could not be the individual that he is from another range of facts which can vary without affecting identity. Arnauld thinks that this distinction must be pressed in opposition to Liebniz's claim that all the facts about an individual are equally contained in the complete concept of that individual which God is able to consult before creation. Thus, Arnauld says, with echos of the Cartesian *cogito*:

> I am certain that, since I think, I, myself, exist. For I cannot think that I am not, nor that I am not myself. But I can think that I will make a certain voyage or not, while remaining entirely sure that neither the one nor the other will require that I am not myself.[100]

If we put this in the terminology of possible worlds, Arnauld is asserting that the very same individual can exist in more than one possible world. In one possible world Arnauld makes a journey and in another world the identical Arnauld does not make the journey. As we have seen, this claim rules out the ontological interpretation of possible worlds.

In responding to this contention Leibniz comes very close to denying the possibility that the same man may be a constituent of more than one possible world. In his earlier letters Leibniz had fallen into use of the expression "possible Adams" and in response to the statement of Arnauld that we have just cited, he says that the notion of multiple Adams has to be taken figuratively. When we think about Adam from the point of view of a few salient characteristics: "that he was the first man, put into the garden of enjoyment, and that from his side God took a woman,"[101] we speak as though these few characteristics determine the individual so that he will remain one and the same substance whether he has or lacks other features. Different completions will be the various possible Adams, yet, we speak as though they will all be the same individual, differently completed. This is what Leibniz says must be understood as a loose and metaphorical way of speaking. Rigorously speaking, a few salient characteristics do not determine an individual,

> . . . for there may be an infinity of Adams, that is to say, of possible persons [sharing these salient characteristics] who would nonetheless differ among themselves . . . . the nature of an individual should be complete and determined.[102]

If a man were to differ in any way at all from the actual Adam, in his features, in his history, or in his relations to the rest of the universe, then that man could not be Adam but, at most, another possible man similar to Adam.

It seems to me that, if he were to rely on this second line of thought, Leibniz's reconciliation of freedom and the complete concept of an individual would surely fail. It is as though Leibniz is here reducing the idea of two alternative courses of action available to a free agent to the quite different idea of two very similar possible individuals, one of whom necessarily pursues one course, while the other necessarily pursues the other course. If this result is allowed to stand it must be a severe disappointment to those who hoped to analyze contingency in terms of possible worlds. We start by thinking that I could take the journey, or I could not. It is up to me. Possible world analysis then restates this as the fact that one possible world has me taking the journey and another has me not taking it. But now the ontological interpretation exerts its undesirable influence. It cannot be true of one and the same individual that he takes a trip and does not take that trip. So if these possible worlds are like existing things, even with a shadowy existence, it will turn out that it cannot be me that does not take the trip in another possible world but, instead, a man much like me. This is disappointing because the idea of freedom surely requires that one and the same individual may either perform or not perform a certain act. Freedom is rejected if we substitute a conception of two different individuals one of whom performs the act while the other does not. What another does can never be part of the essence of *my* freedom.

Leibniz does not seem to appreciate fully the dangers implicit in the denial of transworld identity. Yet even in these passages he does not foreclose an understanding that will save both the complete concept notion and freedom. Thus, in the same context, Leibniz considers the life of an individual up to a certain point in time, and the life of the same individual after that point. The crucial time is labelled B. B is the time at which the individual does in fact perform some free action such as setting out on a journey.[103] The line ABC then represents the life history of the individual and the issue of identity and possibility focusses on the conditions for saying that the individual in the interval AB is the same as the individual in the interval BC. Since there is a reason for everything, and no free action is a manifestation of arbitrariness or indifference, there was a reason prior to B which explains why the journey is taken at B. Since the event at B is a free action, the existence of a reason means that there is something about the agent's constitution, thought, perceptions, and assessment of his circumstances prior to B which would make it possible to predict with complete certainty that he would make the journey. It is in this sense that everything that he does is contained in the complete concept of the individual. But as we have stressed in Part III, the coercive reason for a free decision does not necessitate behavior. The very idea of a course of action entails that other courses were possible. The individual whose choice could be predicted by a sufficiently well-informed observer is, nonetheless, really choosing. This too must be counted part of the complete concept of the individual.

The complete concept gives the impression of conflict with the concept of free decision. But Leibniz means to include the fact that he makes free decisions in the complete concept of an individual. That he will make the free decision to take a journey is as much part of the concept of a man as is the fact that he will take the journey. We feel a conflict here that is reinforced by Leibniz's assertion that an individual who does not make the trip cannot be the same individual. By the same token an individual who decides not to make the trip cannot be the same individual. Then how can the decision be free? If we set aside the ontological interpretation of possible worlds, there is a way of putting together all of these ideas that reconciles them all. This requires as the focal element the thought that a man deciding what to do is, in the jargon of possible worlds, deciding which of two possible worlds to bring about. Strictly speaking, there are an infinite number of possible worlds in which I make the journey and an infinite number of worlds in which I do not. The set of all possible worlds is the union of these two sets. In a free action, I determine that the actual world will fall into one or the other of these two exhaustive sets of possibilities. In this respect Leibniz's conception of human freedom is modelled in the creativity of God. God's work consists in determining which possible world will be real. He chooses a world which contains free agents. But that means that he does not *fully* determine which world will be real, for that is partly a consequence of all of the free decisions of all free agents. Every free act makes a difference as to what possible world is actual. We have seen that God knows just which world will be real, but that knowledge depends upon knowing how men will freely choose. This means no less than the thought that God's knowledge of the complete actual world depends upon his knowledge of our world-choosing actions as well as his own.

At the point of choice an individual can really do either of two things. If he does one, he makes himself and the world different from what it would have been had he done the other. In this sense, insofar as he is free, it is up to a man to determine which possible individual he is. The result of this decision, like all other features of an individual, contingent as well as necessary features, belongs to the complete concept of that individual. So we can say that, though a man has a real choice, he will not be the same individual he would have been had he chosen differently. This does not at all require that there is, in some kind of existence or subsistence, another individual who does choose differently. The existence of such another would not help us to understand freedom. I determine what individual I will become not in the sense that there is a collection of individuals and I can become identical to just one

of them. Rather, I can represent my future in different ways and my action will determine which of these representations is a representation of the real world. Insofar as he means that, when a man acts freely, he forecloses possibilities that would have made him a different man had they been realized, Leibniz is certainly right.

This ultimate reconciliation depends upon accepting the thought that Leibniz understands every free action as eliminating worlds from the roster of all possibilities. This interpretation would have men sharing in just the kind of creativity that Leibniz assigns to God. Men's power and knowledge remain insignificant in comparison with divine power and knowledge, but the essence of human action is otherwise quite a lot like divine action. In many passages in his writings this seems to be just the conception of human action that Leibniz does adopt. Thus:

> [The rational spirit] is an image of divinity. The spirit not only has a perception of the works of God but is even capable of producing something which resembles them. . . our soul is architectonic in its voluntary actions. . . . In its realm and in the small world in which it is allowed to act, the soul imitates what God performs in the great world.[104]

The following abbreviations are used in these notes:

G: I–VII: Gerhardt, C. J., *Die Philosophische Schriften von G. W. Leibniz*, seven volumes, Berlin, 1885.
Grua I–II: Grua, Gaston, *G. W. Leibniz: Textes Inedits*, two volumes, Paris, 1948.
OF: Couturat, Louis, *G. W. Leibniz: Opuscules et Fragments Inedits*, Paris, 1903.
L: Loemker, Leroy, *Leibniz: Philosophical Papers and Letters* , Second edition, Dordrecht, 1969.
M: Mason, H. T., *The Leibniz-Arnauld Correspondence*, Manchester, 1967.
F: Frankfurt, H. G., Editor, *Leibniz: Critical Essays*, Garden City, 1972.

I have translated the Latin citations from Couturat and Grua, of which there are no English translations, and the French from *Theodicée*, G VI. Other quotations in English translation only are from the works cited in the relevant notes.

1. See "A Brief Demonstration of a Notable Error of Descartes," L: 297–302; also "Critical Thoughts on the General Part of the Principles of Descartes," especially Leibniz's comments on Part II, art. 4 and 36, L: 392, and 393–5. Leibniz restates, summarizes, and refers to this issue in many of his articles and letters.
2. See Mach, E., *The Science of Mechanics*, McCormack, T. J., tr., La Salle, 1960, 360–5, and Papineau, D., "The *Vis Viva* Controversy," *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, vol. 8, 1977, 111–42.
3. *The Passions of the Soul*, Haldane and Ross, editors, *Descartes: Philosophical Works*, Cambridge, 1931, art. xxxv–vi, vol. I, 347–8.
4. See "On Nature Itself," L, 503.
5. *Principles of Philosophy*, art. lxiv, in Haldane and Ross, vol. I, 269.
6. The distinction between primary qualities (as those susceptible of mathematical characterization and thus objective) and secondary qualities (taken to include all sensuous qualities and to be subjective only) was first drawn by Galileo. The terminology, "primary" and "secondary," was first used by Robert Boyle. The distinction plays a fundamental part in the philosophies of Descartes and Locke and has been retained by many thinkers up to the present. See, for example, Jackson, F., *Perception*, London, 1977, ch. 7.
7. See *Meditations*, "Replies to Objections," Haldane and Ross, vol. II, 253–4; and *Meditations*, VI, vol. I, 191.
8. *Principles of Philosophy*, Part II, art. xxxvi.
9. E. g., Letter to Mersenne, Adam and Tannery, *Oeuvres de Descartes*, Paris, vol. III, 648–9.
10. *Principles of Philosophy*, Part II, Art. xliv–lii, Adam and Tannery, vol. VIII–1, 68–70.
11. "Critical Thoughts," L:398–402; and the note to Leibniz's comment on Part II, Art. 53, G: IV, 382–4.
12. "On Nature," L: 505.
13. "On Nature," L: 505; and Letter to DeVolder, L: 516; see also, Naert, E., *Memoire et conscience de soi selon Leibniz*, Paris, 1961, 15–20.
14. Cassirer, E., *Leibniz's System in Seinen Wissenschaftlichen Grundlagen*, Marburg, 1902, Einleitung, art. 7, 90–102.
15. *Discourse on Method*, Anscombe and Geach, editors, *Descartes' Philosophical Writings*, London, 1954, 47.
16. *Principles of Philosophy*, Part IV, art. cciv, Haldane and Ross, vol. I, 300.
17. "But they who observe how many things regarding the magnet, fire, and the fabric of the whole world, are here deduced from a very small number of principles, although they consider that I had taken up these principles at random and without good grounds, they will yet acknowledge that it could hardly happen that so much could be coherent if they were false," *Principles of Philosophy*, 301. Here Descartes approximates the so-called hypothetico-deductive conception of theory formation and confirmation. The degree to which this kind of thinking appears in Descartes' ideas about scientific knowledge has been generally overlooked.
18. *Discourse on Metaphysics*, art. 10, L: 308–9.
19. *Discourse*, art, 22, L: 317–8.
20. *Meditations*, reply to objections, Haldane and Ross, 219.
21. "On Nature," L: 505.
22. "On Nature," 501.
23. L: 498–508.
24. "On Nature," 500.
25. "On Nature," 501.
26. Boyle, R., "*Free Inquiry* etc.," 1692; See Loemker's account, L: 498.
27. "On Nature," L: 502.
28. "On Nature," 504–5.
29. See my "The Scientific Background of Descartes' Dualism," this journal, Winter 1981.
30. "On Nature," L: 502.
31. "On Nature," 503. The writer is Spinoza.
32. ". . .[I]f this world were only possible, the individual concept of a body in this world, containing certain movements as possibilities, would also contain our laws of motion (which are free decrees of God) but also as mere possibilities," from Leibniz's remarks on a letter of Arnauld, M: 43.
33. *Discourse on Metaphysics*, art 10, L: 308–9.
34. See Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Part I, ch. 1–3, and *De corpore*, Part IV, ch. 25. For contemporary materialist conceptions of the mind see Rosenthal, D., editor, *Materialism and the Mind–Body Problem*, Englewood Cliffs, 1971.
35. See O'Shaugnessy, "Observation and the Will," *J. Phil.*, vol. LX, 1963.
36. See my "Teleological Reasoning," *J. Phil.*, LXXV, 1978.
37. For example, Grua, 270–1. The distinction is also discussed in several letters of the Correspondence with Arnauld.
38. *Nouveaux Essais*, G: V, 429.
39. M: 43. See note (32), above.
40. See Clarke's fifth letter, addressed to art. 1–20 of Leibniz's previous letter, Alexander, H. G., editor, *The Liebniz-Clarke Correspondence*, Manchester, 1956, especially 98.
41. Leibniz's second letter to Clarke, art 1, *Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence*, 16.
42. *Discourse on Metaphysics*, art. 5, L: 305.
43. Montgomery, G., *Leibniz: Basic Writings*, LaSalle, 1902, 127.
44. See Russell, B., *The Philosophy of Leibniz*, London, 1902, ch. III, 25–30.

45. Louis Couturat played an especially important role in promoting this interpretation. See *La Logique de Leibniz*, Paris, 1901, ch. VI, sect. 5–18, 184–213. Summing up his detailed investigation, Couturat says, "En résumé, toutes verité est formellement ou virtuellement identique ou comme dira Kant, *analytique*, et par consequent doit pouvoir se demontrer *a priori* au moyen des definitions et du principe d'identité," 210. Couturat's book influenced Russell to change his interpretation from his 1902 exposition, according to which Leibniz makes existential propositions contingent, to the 1903 view that Leibniz did not really believe in contingency at all since he held that all truths are analytic. The prestige of Russell and Couturat has been an enduring support for this interpretation. Among more recent writers, the analyticity of all truth is ascribed to Leibniz by Fried, D., "Necessity and Contingency in Leibniz," *Phil. R.*, vol. 87, 1978, 576; Wilson, M., "On Leibniz's Explication of Necessary Truth," in F: 402; Lovejoy, A, "Plenitude and Sufficient Reason," *The Great Chain of Being*, Cambridge, Mass., 1936, as reprinted in F; 295, 316, and 321; Hacking, I, "Individual Substance," F: 138; Rescher, N., *Leibniz: An Introduction to his Philosophy*, Totowa, N. J., 1979, 23; and Nason, J. W., "Leibniz and the Logical Argument for Individual Substances," *Mind*, vol. LI, 1942, 201–2. Prominent dissidents are Broad, C. D., *Leibniz*, Cambridge, 1975, who recognizes the compatibility of the containment thesis and the complete concept with contingency; and I Ishiguro, H., *Leibniz's Philosophy of Logic and Language*, Ithaca, N. Y., 1972, 15 and 120.
46. Quine, W. V., "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," in *From a Logical Point of View*, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, 20–46.
47. The limitation of this example to the subject–predicate propositional structure has no theoretical implications. Equally compelling illustrations could be constructed to fit any propositional form.
48. Grua, 387.
49. OF: 16–7 and 405; Grua, 273.
50. Grua, 288.
51. See Strawson, P., and Grice, H., "In Defense of a Dogma," *Phil. R.*
52. "Recent Work in the Philosophy of Leibniz," *Mind*, 1902, as reprinted in F: 365.
53. "Recent Work."
54. OF: 16.
55. Grua, 303; OF: 405.
56. *Discourse on Metaphysics*, art. 13, L: 310.
57. OF: 18.
58. OF: 405.
59. "First Truths," L: 267.
60. Letter to Arnauld, M: 63.
61. "Reflections sur Bellarmin," Grua, 301.
62. See especially, Rescher, N., *The Philosophy of Leibniz*, Englewood, 1967, ch. II and III; and the same author's *Leibniz: An Introduction*, Totowa, N. J., 1979, ch. III and IV.
63. Parkinson, G. H. R., *Leibniz: Logical Papers*, Oxford, 1966, 77–8; OF: 388 and 18.
64. OF: 405.
65. Grua, 304; see also, OF: 388, #134.
66. OF: 18.
67. OF: 408.
68. Letter to Arnauld, M: 58.
69. *Nouveaux Essais*, G: V, 428.
70. See, for example, the Correspondence with Des Bosses, L: 596–616. Here Leibniz shows great flexibility, or ambiguity, on the connection between monads and the status of animals as unified beings. The much-discussed *vinculum substantiale* marks his insecurity concerning the adequacy of the theory that all true substances are monads.
71. M: 42.
72. M: 9.
73. *Nouveaux Essais*, G: V, 428.
74. *Discourse on Metaphysics*, art. 9, L: 308.
75. *Discourse*, art. 9, L: 308.
76. This claim appears throughout Leibniz's writings. It makes up one of his arguments against atomism; it is a foundation for his relational theory of space and time; and it is a prominent dictum of the *Discourse on Metaphysics* and of the *Monadology*.
77. Grua, 263.
78. Leibniz thinks that Spinoza and Hobbes held this erroneous view and that Descartes risks falling into it. See L; 273 and *Theodicée*, G: VI, 139.
79. *Theodicée*, G: VI, 145.
80. Grua, 270; and *Theodicée*, G: VI, 122.
81. This revival has been stimulated in major part by the work of Saul Kripke who made use of the concept of possible worlds in constructing a semantics for modal logic. For the revival of the paradoxes see the discussion of David Lewis's theory of possible worlds below.
82. Rescher, N., *Leibniz: An Introduction*, Totowa, N. J., 1979, 72.
83. G: VI, 363.
84. Compare, "I argued against those misuses of the concept that regard possible worlds as something like distant planets, like our own surroundings but somehow existing in a different dimension, or that lead to spurious problems of 'transworld identification' "; Kripke, S., *Naming and Necessity*, Cambridge, Mass., 1980, 15.
85. For Lovejoy's view see F: 327; for Russell's, F: 378.
86. Grua, 286; and *Theodicée*, G VI: 236.
87. This deflationary, non-ontological conception of possible worlds also seems to rule out the solution of the problem of evil that is imputed to Leibniz by Rescher and others. Nothing evil exists prior to the creation of the world. God's understanding that something evil *might* exist cannot be made to yield the idea that something evil *does* exist whether He does any creating or not.
88. Parkinson, G. H. R., *Leibniz: Logical Papers*, Oxford, 1966, 1–12; and Couturat, L., *La Logique de Leibniz*, Paris, 1901, ch. II, "La Combinatoire."
89. It is a defect of the simple dice-world as a model for Leibniz's thinking that the best world can be achieved in either of two ways: (5, 6) or (6, 5). Strictly speaking Leibniz is absolutely committed to the view that there must be just one uniquely best possible world if God is to create anything.
90. Lewis, D., *Counterfactuals*, Cambridge, Mass., 1973, 84–91; and "Counterpart Theory and Quantified Modal Logic," *J. Phil.*, vol. LXV, 1968, 113–26.
91. *Counterfactuals*, 85–6.
92. Grua, 270.
93. G: VI, 363.
94. OF: 26.
95. OF: 26.
96. See the works of Kripke and Lewis cited above and Chisholm, R., "Identity through Possible Worlds: Some Questions," and other essays in Loux, M., *The Actual and the Possible*, Ithaca, 1979.
97. Letter of Arnauld to Leibniz, M: 9.
98. Articles 13–17, L: 310–5.
99. M: 58.
100. G. II:
101. M: 45.
102. M: 45, and see also 60–1.
103. M: 46.
104. *Principles of Nature and Grace*, art. 14, L: 640.

Letter from a Polish Prison

Adam Michnik

Bialoleka Prison
April 1982

Dear Friend,

General Jaruzelski has announced that political prisoners who promise to give up all "illegal" activity will be freed. Liberty is within reach. All you have to do is pick up a pen and sign a loyalty oath...

You don't have to do much to get rid of the barbed wires and bars between you and "freedom." The steel doors of Bialoleka Prison will open. No more prison walks: you will see the city streets. You will see streets endlessly patrolled by armored cars and sentries. You will see pedestrians and automobiles stopped for identity checks. You will see the informer surveying the crowd for people suspected of having broken "emergency security restrictions." You will hear words you know only from having read them in history books: police round-ups, *volksliste*, words suddenly stripped of the patina of time and revived in all their horror by the present moment. You will hear the latest news: summary sentences, the fate of friends arrested, hunted, hidden.

On Loyalty Oaths

But if you make a simple little calculation, the simplest possible—supposing you are able—you will know at once why signing a loyalty oath is of no interest to you: quite simply, because it is not worth the trouble. Here, in prison, no one is going to arrest you "until the situation is clarified." Here, you don't have anything to be afraid of. It's paradoxical, I know. Here, when there's a knock on the door at daybreak, it's not strangers in uniform. It's your flunky bringing you coffee: under his sharp eye you know you are safe from spies. Bialoleka Prison is a moral luxury and an oasis of freedom. It is also testimony to your resistance and your importance. If the government has put you in prison it shows that they have been forced to take you seriously.

Sometimes they try to frighten you. A friend of mine, a factory worker from Warsaw, was threatened with fifteen years in prison; another prisoner they tried to intimidate by threatening to implicate him in a case of espionage. One man has had to put up with being interrogated in Russian, another was dragged from his cell to be transferred to the farthest reaches of Russia. He came to a little while later at the dentist. But these blows are bearable. I think it is easier to resist here than out there on the other side of the barbed wire, where the situation is more complicated, morally as well as politically. ("It may be easier to be in prison than to be free," a friend writes to me. "The waters have all burst and in their whirlpools the slime has risen to the surface.")

The Primate of Poland has called it an outrage that loyalty oaths are exacted under duress. The Pope has called this violation of conscience criminal. It is hard to think otherwise. We condemn with all our heart those who are guilty of extorting these loyalty oaths and brutally destroying another man's dignity. A young woman, the wife of a Solidarity activist, was arrested and her sick child taken away from her. They told her the child would be put in an orphanage. She signed. One of my friends was arrested, and had to leave his mother who was riddled with cancer. "There won't be a lame dog who will dare give her some-

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One of the most courageous and clear-headed of the young Polish political thinkers and leaders, Adam Michnik wrote an important essay on tolerance that has been translated into French, *L'église et la gauche* (Paris, Seuil 1979).

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thing to drink," they said to him. He signed. Useless to give more examples: the brutality of some, the weakness of others, sordid blackmailings, tragic slander, we know all that well, and we also know well that subjected to such pressures people don't all act the same way. The Primate has left it open to each one to make his own choice. Teachers particularly have to choose between two equally important imperatives: to retain their self-respect and to maintain their contact with the young. The decision rests upon the individual; it makes appeal to his intelligence and to his conscience. No one can judge anyone else. To resort to ostracism would only correspond to the desires of the government: isn't it their idea to set us against one another and thereby break down our resistance and our solidarity? But such a tolerant attitude, born of understanding, ought not to lead us to conclude that to sign a loyalty oath is a morally neutral act. No. To sign a loyalty oath is wrong, whatever the circumstances are; it is only that circumstances can make it more or less wrong. A man who signs a loyalty oath always deserves pity, sometimes understanding; praise, never. There are many reasons for this, first among them the imperative of self-respect.

On Self-Respect

To be powerless before armed violence is to be deeply humiliated. Set upon by six thugs, you are powerless. But just because of this powerlessness, if you have the least shred of self-respect, you will not find this the moment to sign agreements and make promises. They force the door, they bash the furniture, they take you to headquarters with handcuffs on your wrists, they knock you down, they squirt teargas in your eyes, and then they request you to sign an oath. Your basic instinct for self-preservation and simple human dignity force you to say "No."

For even if these people were fighting for an altogether honorable cause, they would defile it by such behavior.

At that moment your mind is no longer clear. It's only after traveling several hours, when you find yourself at Bialoleka Prison, shaking with cold (later they'll talk about "humane conditions"), and you can listen to the radio, that you learn that war has been declared against your people. This war has been declared against them by the very men to whom they gave their mandate to govern, to formulate policy, and sign international treaties. These men offer us a helping hand in public and talk about reconciliation at the same time that they order the secret police to arrest us in the middle of the night...

It is immediately clear to you that you are not going to give these people the gift of your loyalty oath; loyalty is something they are not capable of.

You don't as yet know what this war will bring. You don't know as yet how the factories and steelworks will be stormed, or the shipyards or the mines. You know nothing as yet about "Black Wednesday" in the Wujek mine. But you do know that if you sign a loyalty oath you will be haunted by the sense that you have denied yourself and the meaning of your life, by the sense that you have betrayed people who placed their trust in you. It would mean betraying friends who are in prison and friends in hiding, betraying those who are trying to defend you by printing pamphlets in Gdansk or in Krakow, by organizing meetings in Paris or New York. You see before your eyes the face of Zbigniew, in hiding, of Edward, convicted, of Seweryn, waiting in Paris. Nothing is decided, many paths are open, choices are not yet sealed, but you already know, you feel it, that your self-respect is not the currency with which to buy your liberty. At this point, another argument not to sign a loyalty oath emerges: good sense.

It is irrational to sign a contract with people for whom even the term "contract" has no fixed meaning, who blandly renege on their commitments and for whom lying is an everyday matter. Have you ever met a security agent who hasn't lied to you? These people, whose eyes are blank but never at rest, whose minds are dull but keen at the art of torture, debased and greedy for advancement, see you only as an object to be worked over. These people have a particular view of human nature. For them every man can be "convinced": by that they mean corrupted or terrified. The only question is the price to be paid or the blows to be delivered. They go methodically about their business—but your least slip, your least weakness, gives meaning to their lives. To them your capitulation means more than simple professional success: it proves their *raison d'être.*

The Meaning of the Confrontation

You are engaged in a philosophic confrontation with them. At stake in this confrontation is the meaning of your life and of every human being's life—and the loss of meaning in theirs. It is the confrontation of Giordano Bruno with the inquisitor, of the Decembrist with the police, of Lukasinski with the Tsar's destroying angel, of Ossetsky with the blond fellow in the Gestapo uniform, of Mandelstam with the Bolshevik in the uniform of the NKVD. It is a confrontation which has never ended and whose stake, as Elzenberg said, isn't measured by your chance of emerging victorious, but by the intrinsic worth of the idea. In other words, it is not in overcoming the forces against you that you carry off the victory, but by remaining true to yourself.

Reason also tells you that in signing a loyalty oath you give the officials the weapon they'll make use of to make you sign the next declaration: that of collaboration. In signing the loyalty oath, know that you sign a pact with the devil. Be wary of giving these uniformed inquisitors so much as your little finger: they'll soon grab your whole hand. How many men do you know who have destroyed their lives in a moment of weakness? Today they are pursued by phone calls at home and at work, subjected to blackmail every time they go abroad. They pay for a min-

ute of thoughtlessness with years of humiliation and fear. If you don't want to be afraid, if you want to respect yourself, an inner voice tells you, don't make compromises with the government police. The police official inspires in you less hatred than pity. You know he suffers psychological complaints, he is often ashamed in front of his children; you know he will disappear, buried in collective forgetfulness. (Who remembers the informers and executioners of the past?) And this brings us to the third reason for not signing: memory.

Memory

You think about your country's history: to sign a loyalty oath in prison has always been a disgrace; to remain faithful to yourself and your country has always been a virtue. You think of people who have been tortured and who spent many years in prison but who never signed. And you know that you will not sign either because you will not renounce their memory. Especially will you not sign when you remember what happened to those who did give up in prison. You remember Andrzej M., the distinguished literary critic, your friend, who, in prison, wrote a clever pamphlet cooperating with the authorities, evidence of his spiritual death; Henryk Sz., an intelligent and ambitious young man, who rose to the rank of chief informer on his comrades; you remember Zygmunt D., that charming and witty companion who, once he gave in, continued to inform on his friends for years afterwards. You remember with horror this human flotsam, these creatures destroyed by the police; and you wonder what will become of you. Of course, the choice is yours alone, but memory reminds you that you, too, could find yourself in their ranks: no one is born a spy. You and you alone daily forge your lot, sometimes at the risk of your life. You haven't heard as yet the loyalty oaths on the radio, the disgusting interviews, you don't know that Marian K., that intelligent and courageous activist from Nowa Huta, who in his loyalty oath wanted to render unto God that which belongs to God and to Caesar what is Caesar's, ended by rendering everything to the police for want of understanding that in certain situations ambiguity loses its shades of meaning and the half truth becomes a total lie. You haven't heard the interview with Stanislas Z. a worker-activist also from Nowa Huta, cunning, resourceful, whose voice was never clear until it joined the government propagandists; you haven't yet read the statement of Marek B., spokesman for the National Committee, protege of Leszek, the doctor of Gdansk, who dragged the name of Solidarity in the mud; neither have you read the statement of Zygmunt L., from Szczecin, Marian J.'s adviser: it was he who, at that time, whispered him absurdities about the "Jews in government," and "gallows for profiteers"; today he denounces the "extremists." In short, you don't yet know that this time, as always, there will be people who will allow themselves to be manipulated into telling lies (like Zdzislaw R. from Poznan with whom you spoke at the time of the dedication of the monument), influenced by threats. This time, as always, the rats will leave the sinking ship first. But you know that this situation is not new and that you are not going to agree to talk to the official no matter how much he waves your release papers before your eyes. You are not going to explain to him that he is the slave here, and that no order is going to come to free you. You are not going to explain to him that these activist workers, these teachers, writers, students, and artists, these friends and strangers who crowd the smokey corridors of police headquarters, embody the freedom of the country—and that just for that reason war has been declared upon them. You are not going to explain to this official, after he has slugged you with the force of the sadism pent up these last fifteen months, the meaning of Rosanov's essay in which he asks the fundamental question for European culture that arises when the man who holds the whip is face to face with the man who is whipped. You are not going to explain to him that meeting him in this place is nothing but a new version of that old confrontation. No, you will explain nothing; you won't even speak to him. You will give him an ironic smile, you will refuse to sign whatever there is to sign (including the internment order), you will say how sorry you are and...you will leave the room.

On Jailers as Slaves

You will be transfered to the Bialoleka Prison in the company of men who are a credit to the best of Polish society: a famous philosopher, a brilliant historian, a stage director, a professor of economics, members of Solidarity from Ursus and from the University, students and workers. You won't be beaten in prison. On the contrary. They need you as a proof of their liberalism and their humanism. Won't you be shown to the Red Cross delegation? to the deputies of the Diet? even to the Primate of Poland himself? They will be fairly polite, fairly obliging, fairly pleasant. Only occasionally will they make you run the gauntlet of helmets, truncheons, and imported Japanese shields. But the only effect of this masquerade will be to make it even more evident that the regime is like a bad dog who would very much like to bite but cannot because his rotten teeth make him powerless. The day of Pawka Kortchaguine is past. Today it is enough to raise your voice to kindle a gleam of fear in the eyes of the official. Fear and uncertainty are betrayed despite the helmet, the uniform, and the shield. And you will understand at once that this fear on the part of the official is a source of hope for you. Hope is essential. It is perhaps the most important thing there is...

Hope is precisely what's at stake in the present struggle. The officials want to force us to to renounce our hope. They understand that the man who declares his loyalty to a regime of violence and lies abandons all hope of seeing

Poland free from lies and violence. The loyalty oath aims to transform us into servile beasts who will no longer raise our heads to defend liberty and dignity. In refusing all enticement to talk with the official, in refusing him your cooperation, in rejecting the role of informer and spy, in choosing the human condition of political prisoner, you preserve your hope. A hope not only in yourself and for yourself, but one which is also in others, for others. Your declaration of hope is like a bottle you cast from your prison to be carried by the sea across the world to go among men. If you succeed in reaching even one single person, you have won.

The Value of Morality

I know what you will say: he is spouting commonplaces, he is playing the hero, his head is in the clouds. That's not exactly true.

True, I do assert commonplaces. Ordinary truths, however, have to be repeated frequently in order to endure, particularly today when it takes courage to assert ordinary truths. In contrast, relativism, otherwise so useful in intellectual activity, may confound moral criteria and call into question moral principles... Is this attitude synonymous with the cult of heroism? I don't think so. You know you are not a hero and you never wanted to be one. You didn't want to die for your people, nor for freedom, or for anything else... You did not envy Ordon or Winkelride their fate... You wanted to live a normal life, to be able to continue to respect yourself and your friends. You loved the moral ease that allowed you to feel free inside yourself, to love beautiful women, to enjoy good drink. This war caught you with a beautiful woman, not on the point of attacking the offices of the Central Committee.

But since this war has been declared on you, along with more than thirty thousand of your fellow citizens, normal life is out of the question. A normal life, in which self-respect is joined to material security, cannot be found in the midst of police raids, summary sentences, outrageous radio broadcasts, and underground Solidarity publications. You must choose between moral and material luxury. You know that your "ordinary" life today would have the bitter taste of defeat. It is precisely because you want to enjoy life that you won't give in to the seductive propositions of the government bureaucrat. He promises you freedom, he gives you glimpses of ordinary human happiness, but he brings you only slavery, suffering, and damnation.

No, this is not heroism. It is a rational choice. Brecht said; "Woe to the people who need heroes." He was right. Heroism implies an exceptional situation, while the Poles today need a "normal" and "general" resistance to military and police power.

I do not want to be misunderstood. I do not propose romantic intransigeance, but social resistance. It is not, therefore, appropriate to bring up in this context, as Daniel P. did in his article in *Polityka*, the two opposed positions which have become classic in our history: the one of romantic revolution and the other of "organic" struggle. Let us see why.

Romantic Revolt and Organic Struggle

While he acknowledges the validity of both these positions, the writer defends those who espouse "organic struggle" on the staff of *Polityka*, the journalists who continued to ply their trade. At the risk of finding themselves questioned by their own children, "What did you do when guns took the place of reason?", they decided to assume the responsibility of staying at their posts instead of quietly withdrawing. "There's no point in pursuing lost virtue," writes Daniel P. "There's no point in mouthing grand principles and forgetting the practical. There are no spurs on bedroom slippers." (This apropos of the rebellious journalists of *Polityka*.)

It is his view that "it is not in the interest of society that the press disappear in Poland or that it should see its diversity even more restricted. We must work to send the soldiers back to their barracks. Who will do it if we take on easy jobs as spokesmen for exile organizations abroad, as editors for nonpolitical newspapers?" Daniel P. uses here arguments you know well beginning with the controversy about the *Essay on Grubs* by Piotr Wierzbicki. He doesn't beat around the bush, he doesn't ramble, he uses serious arguments and states clearly the dilemmas that weigh upon every Pole today.

To argue these points one must apply two standards, one for particular issues and another one for general questions.

It may be true, as Daniel P. says, that the people who believe in defiance are as essential as the people who believe in organic struggle, but I should like to add, however, that it is important to be "organic" in form and "defiant" in content. We need men who don't befoul themselves in the lies of public life, who enjoy the good opinion of society, who refuse to compromise with the sort of system imposed on our country, but who do not endorse irresponsible actions such as terrorism or guerilla attacks. In other words, the dilemma isn't expressed simply in the terms "organic struggle" versus "defiance" but in the terms "organic struggle" versus "collaboration."

Compromise is an indispensable element of a healthy public life, on the condition, however, that society perceives it as compromise. As soon as public opinion perceives it as a device or a betrayal, compromise loses its validity. It becomes a mistake or a lie. To come out on the side of WRONA* today amounts, as we both know well, to coming out against the country. The loyalty oath the officials demand of you, like the one, couched in slightly different terms, demanded of the journalists of *Polityka*,

*WRON: The Military Council for National Defense; *wrona* means "crow."

has nothing to do with compromise: it is a certificate of collaboration and so conceived. In signing it, those who wanted to save the "renewal" (I don't like this official expression, I prefer "democratic form") put the seal on their final condemnation. [An illegible phrase.] Daniel P. pretends to believe that *Polityka* can once more become an oasis of half-truths and of halfway honesty. I cannot agree with him; the day is gone for this way of thinking. It was gone well before December 13, 1981, even before the first of September 1980. Which brings us back almost to the middle of the time of Gierek when *Polityka* gave up its role as liberal and moderate critic of the government to become its glib apologist. Beginning in June 1976, with the uprisings of Ursus and Radom, *Polityka* lost its credibility. It wasn't even interesting any more; it was an anachronism. The political rise of the editor-in-chief coincided with the political death of the newspaper. Today *Polityka* exists only as a caricature of its former self. Its history is the history of many Polish intellectuals who cherished the illusion that the system could be reformed from above, by finding one's way into the corridors of power, by knocking at the door of the Central Committee, by joining forces with the minister in power. This idea has had its day. Nothing can bring it back. The battlefield of social conflict, and therefore of the social compromise to come, is today the factory and the university, no longer the halls of the Central Committee or of the Diet. Despite the past complexity and the distortion of the relations between Communist power and Polish society, the Party only lost its mandate with its declaration of this last "war." It's easy to replace the policeman's helmet with the traditional *chapka* of the Polish army. But that alone won't change anything.

Resistance to the Government

If we, as an organized society, want to exert the least influence upon the future of Poland, we have to forge that influence by a constant pressure on the machinery of power. To count upon the good will of the military leadership is to rely on miracles. To count on their weakness, on the other hand, has nothing irrational about it. It is not irrational to think that the machinery of power could be obliged to compromise. The obvious ideological and practical vacuum of the Party are proof. The government defends its power and its privilege, not ideas or values. The fact that it has had to resort to the definitive argument of force proves it. To paraphrase Hegel: "Minerva's crow flies at night."

There you are, overwhelmed by the piercing sense of your loneliness and weakness in the face of a military machine which went into motion that December night.

You don't know what developed after that. You don't know that people will gradually recover from the shock, that underground newspapers are going to appear, that Zbignew B. is going to direct the struggle from his hiding place, that Wladyslaw E. from Wroclaw is going to escape from the police, that events at Gdansk, Swidnik, and Poznan are going to make Poland tremble again, and that the structure of the outlawed union will reappear. You don't yet know that the generals direct a machine that jams and sputters, and that the wave of repression and slander has no effect.

Alone, facing police officers who wave their guns at you, handcuffed, with teargas in your eyes, you can see clearly despite the starless night, and you repeat the words of your favorite poet: "A stone can change the course of the avalanche in its path." And you want to be that stone that changes the course of events, even if it is to be flung at the ramparts.

Translated from a French translation of the Polish by Linda Collins

Afternote:
The military regime in Poland has recently accused Michnik along with other leaders of KOR (the Committee for Social Self-Defense)—Jacek Kuron, Jan Litynski, Jan Jozef Lipski, Henryk Wujec—of treason and conspiracy, which carry the maximum penalty of death. The official press treat them as guilty before "trial." In the judgement of the Hungarian writer, George Konrád, in a letter of November 1 (see *The New York Review of Books*, December 1, 1982), they may be shot before the West, or anybody else outside of Poland, notices their danger. L.R.

Not Just Another Communist Party: The Polish Communist Party

Branko Lazitch

Communists parties the world over are much the same in their doctrine: Marxism—Leninism; in their structure: democratic centralism; in their history with its identical periods: Lenin, Bolshevization, Stalinization, destalinization, etc. As anyone can see at the present time, however, the Polish Communist Party is a special case—a party unlike the other "brother parties." No other Communist party in the world has entrusted its fate to the army; taken a career officer for its First Secretary; declared a state of war against its own citizens. This is not the first time the Party has been at war with the people of Poland. They have been at war for more than sixty years.

Summer 1920

The story starts in the summer of 1920: the Soviet Polish War, the first revolutionary war of the Bolsheviks after their victory in Russia. A war in Lenin's conception on two essential fronts. *First*: the collapse of the home front through revolutionary propaganda (*Agit-Prop*). The call to the people, and especially the soldiers, to rise up. A pamphlet in circulation in June 1920 reads:

> Soldiers of the Polish Army! Work for the Victory of the Revolution in Poland. No longer obey your leaders, who are betraying you. Instead of fighting against your brothers, the workers and the peasants of Russia and the Ukraine, turn your arms on your officers, on the bourgeois and the landlords. Whoever fights against Soviet Russia fights against the working class in the whole world and joins the enemies of the people.

Second front of the revolutionary war: under the protection of the tanks and cannons of the Red Army, the organization of a provisional "national" power meant to bring Socialist Poland into immediate existence. In Bialystok a revolutionary committee (a provisional government) was organized under the presidency of the most well-known Polish revolutionary, Julian Marchlevski (Karski), with several other Polish Communists who already held high positions in Soviet Russia and in the Communist International. From the start Lenin counted on the success of this revolutionary war.

At his reception of the French Delegation to the Second Congress of the Comintern on July 28 in the Kremlin, Lenin overflowed in optimism: "The world revolution will have taken a decisive step if Poland gives herself to Communism. Yes, the Soviets in Warsaw means Germany shortly afterwards, the reconquest of Hungary, the revolt of the Balkans against capitalism, Italy shaken—bourgeois Europe cracking on all sides in a fearful hurricane."

The two Polish Communists in his immediate circle did not share Lenin's euphoria. Of the first of these, Julian Marchlevski himself, Trotsky was later to say: "There was an unknown: what attitude would the Polish workers and peasants have? Some of our Polish comrades, for instance Julian Marchlevski, friend and companion of Rosa Luxemburg, entertained considerable scepticism." Later Lenin revealed the doubts of the second ranking Polish Communist, Karel Radek, secretary of the International: "Radek foresaw how it would turn out. He warned us. I was furious. I accused him of 'defeatism.' But he was essentially right."

A military set-back outside of Warsaw followed this political setback throughout Poland. On August 18 the Red Army began its retreat. It would not return for twenty years, and then in the wake, not of revolutionary war, but of the Hitler-Stalin pact in September 1939.

Pro-Trotsky

After this first conflict with the Polish people, the Polish Communist Party was compelled to set itself against Moscow within the International. In the months that immediately preceded Lenin's death (January 21, 1924), the struggle for the succession already raged. The Bolshevik

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old guard had banded together to remove the candidate with the greatest prestige—who, however, had not always been a Bolshevik—Leon Trotsky. The top of the International, the controlling *troika* of G. Zinoviev, the President, and Kamenev and Stalin, were involved in this manuever. Only two voices rose at the highest level of the Comintern to denounce the plot against Trotsky in almost the same words: the leadership of the Polish Communist Party and Boris Souvarine, the representative of the French Communist Party at the Comintern. Made up of the three W's: Walecki, Warski, and Wera Kostrzewa, the Polish leadership declared: "For our Party, for the whole Comintern, and for the world revolutionary proletariat the name of Comrade Trotsky is irrevocably linked to the victorious October Revolution, to the Red Army and Communism."

Six months after Lenin's death, in the summer of 1924, at the fifth Congress of the Comintern, this attitude of the Polish Communist Party came under examination. A Polish Commission was formed, presided over by a Bolshevik who had never spoken during the congresses of the Comintern, and who, unlike the other Bolsheviks involved in the business of the organization, did not know a single foreign language: Stalin. At the time his name meant absolutely nothing to almost all the foreign delegates at the Congress. But the Poles knew him well—and he them.

Unlike the other Committees that, since the birth of the Comintern in 1919, had used German, the Polish Committee under Stalin carried on its work in Russian. The discussion moved immediately from the realm of ideas to the realities of power. Stalin circulated in the corridors of the Congress to assert that the "bones of the obstinate must be broken." "Not those whose bones can be broken for the same reasons as ours but those who have no bones at all are dangerous to you," Wera Kostrzewa replied, not in the corridors, but on the floor of the Congress. Her words pointed to the increasing political, moral, and material corruption within the Comintern. At another time she also objected to the excessive dependence of the foreign branches on the Russian Communist Party, the dominant force in the Comintern: "The most important branches of the Comintern ought to enjoy greater independence in the making of policy within their party and greater responsibility in all international questions." But in the following years in the Comintern things turned out exactly the opposite.

The Russians had already mastered the technique of manipulating meetings both in committees and in plenary sessions at this fifth Congress, the Congress of Bolshevization. The immediate consequence was the removal of the leadership of the Polish Communist Party with a resolution that: "The Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party, under the political direction of the group Warski, Kostrzewa, and Walecki, despite its revolutionary words, has shown itself incapable of applying the line of the Communist International."

This was only a prelude. It took ten years for Stalin to show the Poles his true stuff: to make blood flow. He made blood flow not only in the Russian Communist Party but throughout the Comintern. In the Comintern he began, fittingly, with the Polish Communist Party.

1933: Second Purge

The time came in 1933, the victim was Jerzy Sochacki: member of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party since 1921; Communist deputy to the Sejm; member of the Politbureau; permanent representative of the Polish Communist Party to the headquarters of the Comintern since 1930; member of the two supreme bodies of the Comintern, the Praesidium and the Secretariat. On the fifteenth of August 1933, the Soviet police arrested Sochacki, and accused him of spying from the time he joined the Communist Party in 1921. A complete dossier was drawn up to cover his twelve years "work" as a spy. A secret trial was staged. "I die proud and happy for my leader Pilsudski," were quoted as Sochacki's "last words" before execution. Stalin's justice had moved swiftly between Sochacki's arrest on the fifteenth of August and his execution on September 4, 1933. Sochacki's posthumous rehabilitation, in contrast, had to wait for the destalinization that followed the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1956, and Gomulka's return to power in Warsaw.

A Pole thus became the first foreign Communist to lose his life in Moscow. Shortly afterward, in 1936 and 1938, the Polish Communist party knew slaughter. The Polish Party suffered more victims than any other foreign branch of the Comintern. The Hungarian, German, and Jugoslav Communists suffered Stalin's extermination but in fewer numbers than the Poles. The nature of facts—common revolutionary past, linguistic facility, and geographical proximity—made for more Polish Communist political exiles in Russia than from any other country in Europe. The men and women from the rest of Europe depended on the protection—relative—of their respective Communist Parties, members in good standing of the Comintern. The only branch of the Comintern that Stalin had dissolved, the Polish Communist Party, had no such resort.

1938: Dissolution by Stalin

In January 1938 the official organ of the Comintern, *The International Communist*, published an article called "Provocateurs at Work" that held that agents of Pilsudski had long ago infiltrated the Polish Communist Party up to, and including, its top leadership. After this article, Communist publications ceased to mention the Polish Communist Party. There was no public notice of the decision in Moscow in April 1938 to dissolve it. The party simply no longer existed physically or politically. Alone, Stalin could only undo the Polish CP. The next year, 1939, Hit-

ler's alliance made it possible for Stalin to abolish the Polish State as well.

1942: Resurrection

After his pact with Hitler, Stalin had no need of either the Polish Communist Party or the Polish state. Hitler's attack on Russia on June 22, 1941, however, overturned the situation. Stalin recognized Poland in 1941. In 1942 he authorized the resurrection of the Polish Communist Party. The beginning of 1942 was a critical moment for the Soviet Union: Hitler's military superiority was beyond doubt; the alliance with the democracies was only at its first steps. Two reasons for Stalin to muffle the emphasis on Communism, on its doctrine, practice, and even on the word itself. Stalinist vocabulary saw the disappearance of the adjective "communist." The new Communist parties organized during the war avoided it: in Switzerland, the *Labour Party*; in Iran, *The Party of the Masses (Tudeh)*; in Cyprus, *The Progressive Party of the Working People*; in Poland, *The Worker's Party*.

This new label did not make the Polish CP anymore successful. By the summer of 1944, on the eve of Soviet troops' entry into Poland, the Party numbered about 20,000, a ridiculous total. The Communists who had survived Hitler's occupation or Stalin's *Gulags* could count on only one power, the Red Army. In the summer of 1944, at Lublin, a Committee was formed, a carbon copy of the 1920 Committee of Bialystok—except for the inferior quality of its members. The Lublin Committee became the nucleus of the future regime, because the Red Army occupied the country.

1944–1945: Satellization

Between 1944 and 1945 Poland, like all the other countries under the Soviet jackboot, underwent satellization. The "salami tactic" was the same as in Hungary and elsewhere: first, the gradual elimination of adversaries; then of allies; the compulsory fusion of Communist and Socialist Parties. Soviet colonization offered Poland the prize of a Marshal of the Red Army, Rokossovsky, to head the Polish "National" Ministry of Defense. There was more: the persecution of the Catholic Church: the arrest of Cardinal Wysznski; purges of Party leadership: the pushing aside and the arrest of Gomulka who, however, was neither hailed before a People's Tribunal nor shot.

1956: Rehabilitation

Starting in 1956, the year of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and of destalinization in Soviet Russia and elsewhere, the story of the Polish Communist Party again takes its distance from the "brother parties." The Polish Party took the lead. The Twentieth Congress opened on the fourteenth of September without at first arousing excitement in Moscow. Warsaw, in contrast, felt its effects immediately. Large-scale photographs of the three founders of the Polish Communist Party, Warski, Walecki, and Wera Kostrzewa—all three victims of Stalin—appeared on the front page of the Communist daily *Tribuna Ludu* on the nineteenth of February. The same front page also carried a declaration of the five "brother parties" that for the first time revealed what had happened eighteen years before: "In 1938 the Executive Committee of the Communist International adopted a resolution to dissolve the Polish CP on the grounds of an accusation of widespread penetration of the ranks of the Party by enemy agents. It has now been established that this accusation was based on documents forged by a gang of saboteurs and provacateurs whose true role was not brought to light until the unmasking of Beria". No mention of Stalin. It was as if he had played no role in the history of the Polish CP.

In the aftermath of the Twentieth Congress another exploit distinguished the Polish CP. Khrushchev's *Secret Report* in circulation among the "brother parties" in the East found its way westward through Warsaw. The most explosive document ever to come from leading Communist circles came in this way to have its world-wide effect.

The Gomulka Experiment

In June 1956 Poland also saw another historical event, the first of its kind after the initiation of uncertainty: the revolt of the people in Poznan. The same year in October there was another unprecedented event: Khruschev came to Warsaw at the head of a Soviet delegation determined to impose its will on Warsaw and the Polish CP. The attempt ended abruptly. Gomulka came back to power. This Polish "October Spring" began a new experiment—a reexamination of Communism and a reform from within.

The result was negative. Instead of democratizing the Communist system, the Polish CP only weakened itself. Movements of the workers and people brought about three changes in the top leadership of the CP. In 1956, 1970, and in 1980 three first secretaries fell under pressure from the masses, facts unprecedented in the history of "real" socialism. Once again the Polish CP knew a lot different from the other "brother parties". Its acceptance of powers parallel to its own made its lot unique in addition: the spiritual power of the Church starting in the mid-fifties; the power of the Solidarity Union after 1980. The military coup on December 13, 1981, brought this exceptional situation to an end at the price of a no less exceptional situation: it reversed the roles of Army and Party. The Party now transmits the orders of the Army. Such a situation cannot last. There will be new sudden changes and reversals in the chequered history of this Party—and in the tragic story of Poland.

Translated by Brother Robert Smith and Leo Raditsa

A Nighttime Story

Linda Collins

On the day the president of Egypt was assassinated, Charles Pettit's little boy had stayed home from school with a temperature. In the middle of the morning, his mother found him sitting on the floor of the living room looking at television.

"Let me tie your bathrobe," she said. "It's too chilly to be sitting there with your bathrobe open."

He didn't look around. When she glanced at the screen to see what he was watching, she knew by the chaotic way the camera was moving that again something bad had happened.

A while later Charles telephoned from his office in Greenfield. He had heard the news on the car radio, but he hadn't called her right away, he said, because he hoped it wasn't true.

"It's true," she said.

"I know it's true," said Charles.

She said she thought Robert might not have understood what he had seen. He could have thought he was looking at a movie, she said.

"Perhaps," said Charles.

In the evening, the children made brownies with their mother while Charles watched the news, turning from channel to channel. Then he went outside and breathed the cold night air.

The next day Robert was well, and the following day he went back to school.

On Friday, Charles drove the five miles home from work as the sun set and the sky flamed. Yellow stacks of freshly split wood sat beside each house, and in the openings of sheds and outbuildings he could see the same raw color. An occasional meadow was still bright green, and here and there a dark horse raised its head as he drove by. Remembering they were to use the car later, he left it half way out of the shed, where his own firewood was stacked.

His wife was in the kitchen straightening up after the children's supper. He kissed her on the cheek. She put down the sponge and turned to him for another kiss.

"Make your drink," she said. "I have a few more things to do."

The children were waiting for him in the living room. Robert was in his dinosaur pajamas, and the younger child, Lizzie, wore a thick one-piece suit with padded feet. An outsized zipper ran up to her chin.

Charles put his drink down on the coffee table and took off his glasses to receive their embraces.

When they were all sitting on the rug near the fire he put his glasses back on. Lizzie moved into his lap. "Daddy," she said and pressed his cheek with her hand. She stroked his sleeve, touched the buttons of his jacket, patted his face. She was rosy from her bath and her fingers smelled of soap. He took her wandering hand and held it still.

"Daddy!" she said.

Releasing her hand, he ran his finger over her fine pale hair. She looked up at him with a fierce expression.

"Tell us a story," she said. "Tell."

Robert, who was six, sat with his legs straight out in front of him. He rotated his feet in their new bedroom slippers and watched the elastic stretch and retract. His eyes were brown and his hair was smooth and brown. Where his sister was fat and flushed, he was thin. He was sitting slightly apart from his father and sister, and although he kept his eyes on his slippers, having noticed that the firelight lent them a shine which could be made to slide from the toe to the heel by twisting his foot, every now and then he directed a quick look at his father. He busied himself with slippers, dinosaurs, and whatever diversions the fire could offer: sparks, gleams, the collapse of a burnt-out log, but when he looked up his glance measured the distance between his father and his sister. He waited.

"All right, kitty cats," said Charles. "What shall it be?"

"Ticky tats," said the little girl.

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"Kitty cats," said Robert. "Kitty cats." He was mocking his father who would not have said "kitty cats" had he been directing his attention only at him. His father could make him laugh when he didn't want to, and often did, by saying things like "kitty cats," and worse.

Suddenly he felt tired of keeping this stiff watch and unbending guard. He sighed, acknowledging a kind of defeat, and he moved in closer to Daddy and Lizzie.

"All right," said Charles. "Ready?"

"Ready," said the children.

Lizzie put her thumb in her mouth and then took it out and looked at it. It was wet. "Ready," she said.

Charles began the story: "Once there was a little girl and her name was Frimble. She was a very good little girl. She always did whatever her mother asked her to do, and she always did what her father asked her to do. In nursery school she was good, and she was good in the supermarket. She stayed on her side in the car and she never forgot to brush her hair. She smiled at the good and frowned at the bad—"

"And sometimes she was very sad," said Robert, rapidly and in a slightly confused tone as though surprised to find himself saying anything at all.

"No," said his father. "She wasn't actually ever sad. She was quite happy. Reasonably happy."

Both children looked at him. The little boy moved closer and the father reached toward him and grasped with two fingers of one hand the slender column of the back of his neck. The child put his head to one side to relish the feeling and to bear the happiness that had begun to mount inside him. He let his eyes close.

The little girl shifted her weight on Charles's thigh, and he, feeling a sudden strain in his back, said, "Why are we sitting on the floor? Let's go sit on the couch."

They stood up.

The move meant they had to pick up and start again. From the couch the fire looked far away and formal.

"Daddy!" said the little girl imperiously.

He put an arm around each of them and started again: "But one fine day—"

"Charles, not too long." His wife had stopped in the doorway to look at them. Her arms were full of bath-towels. Later, when the children were in bed, they would have a quick supper, and then, as they sometimes did on Friday evening, as soon as the neighbor's daughter came, they would drive down to Greenfield and go to the movies.

"And then?" said Robert.

Lizzie was standing up on Charles's leg. He could feel her toes inside her rubberized pajama soles as she tried to balance on his thigh. Gently, by pressing his hand against the small of her back, he persuaded her to sit down. "But one day, one fine and cloudless day, when Frimble had gone with her nursery school class to buy fish food for the class goldfish, she got separated from the other children and the teacher, and she found herself all alone in the middle of the shopping center. She looked down the arcade on her right and saw no one. Then she looked to the left and saw no one there. She was all alone." The story went on, almost by itself. He knew he wasn't doing his best. Sometimes his stories amazed him. Some stories poured through him as though they came from somewhere else; they bemused even the teller, and he could imagine that years from now, when the children were grown up, they would remember the best ones, like The Boy Who Had X-ray Vision, or the one about the children who lived in the woods on the far side of the dump.

He went on, speaking in a soft voice, and told them how Frimble was at last rescued from the locked and echoing supermarket by a certain first-grade boy whose intelligence in deducing her location was equalled only by his agility in squeezing into narrow places. "And so the boy, having found his way into the warehouse, edged past boxes and cartons and crates. How dark it was! He knew, however, that he must not let himself be frightened. If he panicked, he would not be able to tell which cartons held paper towels and paper diapers and toilet paper—the large light ones that rocked if you gave them a little push—and which, heavier and pungent, held soap powder and soap flakes. For then he'd never find Frimble whose voice he had heard over the intercom before the power failed, telling him she was between the dogfood and the place where the candy was. 'Courage,' he said to himself, and so, listening and feeling and sniffing, he made his way."

Charles glanced from his son to his daughter and saw by their grave, wide-opened eyes and their parted lips that their hearts lay with the lost girl and the brave frightened boy. His own heart went out to them and he decided, while he was speaking, to edit one or two effects he had had in mind and hasten the denouement.

The fire made a popping noise.

The children were sitting close to their father. Robert was holding one of his father's hands in his hands.

As he finished the story, Charles could hear the children breathing.

"And then she went home?" asked his daughter.

"And then she went home," he said.

The movie took place in California. The camera slid around a house in such a way as to induce apprehension in the viewer. In the house lived one of the main characters, a fifty-year-old woman, played by an actress who was making a movie for the first time in many years. Charles was reminded of his youth by the sight of her face. He had liked her in college and even in high school. There was a lot of driving in the movie, particularly by women, who got in and out of their cars in a way characteristic of women in movies and on television. The way they slammed car doors and drove away said: This is California, this is modern life, this is dangerous and exciting. The woman lived

alone in the house, and in the evening, after her housekeeper and gardener went home, it was clear she was in danger. She had lovers. Someone was going to kill her. One of her lovers was going to kill her. Her death was prolonged. Charles knew at some point his wife would turn her head away. When she did, he smiled and gave her a little pat.

"Tell me when it's over," she said.

"It's only ketchup," he said.

"I don't think so," she whispered back.

During the time the several police officers were weighing the probable involvement of the known suspects, the minor characters were portrayed in places familiar to non-Californians from other movies: at a Pacific beach house, at an orange ranch, and at a dusty gas station and general store at a crossroads in the desert. The killer did turn out to be one of her lovers, but not the obvious one. The shoot-out took place at the tiny motel where the housekeeper's aged mother lived.

"How did you like it?" asked Charles in the lobby, feeling for the car keys.

"Horrible," said his wife. "They said he was an American Lelouch. I'm sorry I brought you."

"You didn't make me come," he said. "Anyway, I liked it."

They drove home through the quiet countryside. From time to time their headlights picked out of the darkness a tree whose leaves had turned yellow or flashed on the black window panes of a farmhouse where everyone had gone to bed. "I think we could use some heat," said Charles, and turned the knob for the heater and the one for the fan. After a minute they felt the warm air. It was soothing to drive through the pale autumn fields. Neither spoke. Just before the road started its rise toward their village it passed through a marshy place where mist was thick on either side and they were plunged into milky obscurity. Charles reached with his right hand under his wife's skirt and felt for the elasticized edge of her undergarment.

At home, she paid the baby sitter and watched at the window while the girl ran across the road to her own house where the outside light was on. When the light went off, she let the curtain drop and went upstairs. She pushed the children's door open over the stiff new carpet and Charles stood in the doorway while she touched both children and adjusted the window and the shade. Then they went together into their own room.

Much later in the night, Charles woke up. The television was still on. Dread had seized him in his sleep. He had dreamed they were all in a train, his wife and both children, and the outside of the train was being pounded by bullets. There was a terrible racket of metal against metal and it was not at all clear he was going to be able to continue to protect them. Awake, he was as afraid as he had been asleep. He lay still and waited for his arms and legs to stop trembling.

After a while he felt calmer. He turned on his side, toward the television. It was a movie, in black and white, set in Prague during World War II, about three Czech exiles who parachuted into Czechoslovakia on a mission to kill the Reichskommissar; one of the three, it seemed, had betrayed the others. Intrigued now, and wide awake, he reached for his wife's extra pillow, which was lying between them, and stuck it under his head. His heart was still beating heavily. The room was silvery. He stretched his legs and began to relax. The wife, or the girlfriend, of one of the exiles came and went, bringing messages. There was a lot of running. It must have been the sound of gunfire from the television he had heard in his dream. In the dream he had tried to lie on top of the children to protect them from bullets. He had tried to lie on top of them without hurting them.

In the crypt of St. Vitus, the two loyal Czechs met their heroic end while gunfire sounded from the street.

When the movie was over, he turned to the news channel and watched a summary of the events of the week. The film had been edited. He was never able to find what his wife said Robert had seen: the arm, the clothing, the expression on the injured man's face.

He saw the sky above Cairo and the plumes of colored smoke expanding as the formation of Mirages flew by the reviewing stand. Within the reviewing stand the chairs were all turned over. It looked as though no one was there, but then, like anemones on the sea floor, the chairs started to move and wave about, and one by one the men appeared from beneath the chairs, their hands first, as they reached from below for leverage to help them rise.

Marx's Sadism

Robert J. Loewenberg

"The death of mankind is...the goal of socialism." Igor Shafarevich, *The Socialist Phenomenon*

It is a notorious fact, or for some an ironic and scandalous one, that Karl Marx's hatred of the bourgeois intellectuals, of liberals, has not prevented them from becoming the heirs and custodians of his ideals. Except for the liberal intellectuals who today dominate the universities and allied institutions, principally the media, there is no respectable Marxism. That is, unless one counts as respectable the wrinkled pedagogues of dialectical materialism and their dozing charges in Russia or the freakish ideological concoctions of Oriental tyrants. Moreover, insofar as the bourgeois intellectuals have inherited the mantle of Marx in a culture that cheerfully submits its offspring to instruction in today's liberal ideals, ideals that in part descend from the abolitionists, the very civilization of America can be called Marxist. In fact it has been called this by the world's most outstanding Marxist scholar, Alexander Kojève, in delight, over twenty years ago.[1]

That Kojève's observation was not entirely wishful thinking by a frustrated communist is suggested by the comments of another more recent Russian emigre, not a Communist, who only months ago confirmed Kojève's judgment. Lev Navrozov was shocked to find that America is "a Left-biased" culture, that is, one in which all political opinions agree upon a vocabulary that is largely Marxist. Navrozov called this discovery, in sadness, "the most eye-opening experience I have had since my arrival...from Russia in 1972."[2] Important here is not the sadness or the delight of Russian observers but their agreement about what is, after all, a commonplace: America is a Left-biased culture. History, it almost appears, has turned the master dialectician, Marx, on his head. Having reduced Marx to his antithesis, bourgeois communism, history now evidently prepares to sweep even him into its ample dustbin. Kojève, a Marxist who transcended Marx, believed he had a more properly Marxist explanation.

"The United States," Kojève said, "has already attained the final stage of Marxist 'communism,' seeing that, practically, all the members of a 'classless society' can from now on appropriate...everything that seems good to them..." The classless society, Kojève continues, is "the end of History [that is, it is the eternal present when] men...construct their edifices and works of art as birds build their nests and spiders spin their webs,...perform musical concerts after the fashion of frogs and cicadas...and...indulge in love like adult beasts....But there is more...the definitive disappearance of human Discourse...[that is, human] 'language'...would be like what is supposed to be the 'language' of bees."[3]

What Kojève tells us then is that the liberal intellectuals, the same liberals that he as well as Marx despised, are not so much Marxists as the products of Marxism. They are witnesses to Marx's truth. America is the realm of freedom. How else, Kojève suggests, shall we understand the conceptual egalitarianism of our culture or relativism? Has it not transformed words into gestures and made a kind of language of bees the law of the land? And do we not approach the free love ideal of Kojève, to say nothing of the character of our edifices and our popular concerts? But impressions can be misleading, at least as justifications for sweeping generalizations such as Kojève's. There is no doubt something wrong or even self-serving about his idea, because his experience of America did not lead Kojève to question his Marxism.

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If we are to accept that America has already achieved the final stage of Marxist communism, the realm of freedom, certain serious problems and questions arise. In the first place such an achievement can hardly be supposed to satisfy Marxists. For them the violent revolutionary overthrow, at least, of bourgeois capitalism is an article of faith. There has been no such event in America as there has been no abolition of property. Nor can today's liberal intellectuals be remotely likened to a revolutionary cadre. Assuredly they are not the descendants of one. But there is another set of questions that arises in connection with Kojève's observation. If it is at all correct to say that America has attained the final stage of Marxist communism, what are we to identify as the sources, both historical and philosophic, of American culture and of the notorious fact that our liberal intellectuals are heir to Marx's ideals? How has American culture arrived at the final stage of Marxist communism without Marx and without a vindication of Marxist historical processes?

Perhaps the obvious answer is the right one: Marx was not radical enough. American culture is not Marxist communism but some other "ism" that looks like Marxism. We may reasonably suppose that our present-day American ideal and practice of freedom has its sources in indigenous traditions and institutions. In fact the historical beginning of what Kojève describes as the attainment in the United States of the final stage of Marxist communism is found in the abolitionist movement, in particular in the thinking of its radical figures. In addition to William Lloyd Garrison and other famous abolitionists, these include two of the more daring, and as they were called, ultraist reformers of that day, Stephen Pearl Andrews and John Humphrey Noyes. And, although Emerson and Thoreau were not active abolitionists, their contributions to the movement in the form of conceptual elaboration of the ideal of freedom were great. Finally, we are guided by the abolitionists' vision, actually by the movement's most acid and brilliant contemporary critic, George Fitzhugh, who was a socialist and the nation's top defender of slavery, to the philosophic source, that is, to the source of the institutions that have grown up from abolitionist seed to become the "final stage of Marxist 'communism'."

Fitzhugh's judgment (and it is important to know that he was a proto-Marxist of the kind to attract favorable interest from communist historians in our day) was this: the abolitionist ideal of freedom did not really differ from his own ideal of slavery.[4] The difference between slavery and abolitionism was, he said, that abolitionists would cure the problems of free society, above all the problems stemming from inequalities created by profit, by giving men yet more freedom rather than less. Fitzhugh, however, said the abolitionists' ideal of freedom would lead them to free love and this, he concluded, would lead them to despotism.

The discovery of Fitzhugh that abolition must lead either to Southern slavery or to free love, which would lead to despotism, was an insight of genius. He made this discovery after reading the abolitionist and communist writer Stephen Pearl Andrews who later became the Pontiff of Free Lovism in America, and the first American to print the *Manifesto*. What Fitzhugh did not see was that free love was a radicalization of the socialist labor theory of value, or the principle of Marx that man is "nothing but the creation of. . . labour."[5] This discovery, in particular the uncovering of an infallible linkage between the timeless and universal fact of human sexuality and the founding doctrine of modern political theory, the state of nature, according to which man has no *telos*, was made by another man more radical than Marx. Historians should now begin to recognize that the lines of liberationist reasoning reaching into our time from the abolitionist and reform movements of the nineteenth century have their philosophic source much less in Marx or even in Hegel than in a certain Frenchman. Donatien Alphonse Francois de Sade (1740–1814), a self-described "libertine" (his American editors remind us that this word is drawn "from the Latin *liber*: 'free'—an exceptional man of exceptional penchants, passions and ideas") is an author whose real thought, as these same editors rightly say, "remains. . . unknown."[6]

Unlike Friedrich Engels, the Marquis de Sade did not find it "curious. . . that in every large revolutionary movement the question of 'free love' comes to the foreground."[7] Sade understood that free love is the revolution. Neither have the liberal epigones of Engels as yet uncovered their intimate connection with the man who is defined by the "Latin *liber*: 'free'." This is striking considering that these same thinkers have not been slow to count men such as Engels among the great leaders of the international anti-slavery movement.[8] Even more important, today's liberals regard themselves as the descendants of the abolitionists who, like them, "dream of extending the intimate love of the private family to a wider circle of social relationships . . . [and] debate. . . the justifications for monogamous marriage, the proper role of woman, and the best methods of child-rearing."[9] In sum, the oversight regarding Sade's proper and central place in the history of modern freedom is a grave one. Except for a few daring poets, for the Surrealists, and more recently a handful of avant garde literary critics all of whom consider him a heroic figure, Sade is in truth "unknown."[10]

First and foremost a political writer and theorist, Donatien de Sade is, however, known only as a pornographer. Certainly he was a pornographer. But it seems unlikely today that anyone except the most hopelessly prurient or naive student could doubt that pornography is intrinsically political even if it is more subtly, and more effectively, political than utopian or science fiction. Pornography stands in automatic rebellion against civility and against the social as such. Indeed, as we shall see, it stands in opposition to the human condition. Unlike theft or prostitution which cannot easily thrive without honesty and chastity respectively, pornography, especially in Sade's expert hands (and especially in its written form) is the enemy, rather like mur-

der, a crime Sade prized, of everything civil. Sade sought to found a critique that would justify the destruction, as Marx put it, of "everything existing."[11] His aspirations, also like Marx, were cosmic. To men living in the last third of the twentieth century when pornography of the sort Sade wrote secretly in jail can be bought in supermarkets, and when the ideals he promoted are legal or social commonplaces or soon to become so (for example, homosexuality, incest, abortion, murder, cannibalism), it seems fair to say that Sade had a better understanding of the role of "the abolition . . . of the family" than his more famous revolutionary successor who regarded it as a mere "practical measure."[12] Sade had a profound understanding of why "the attack on the family . . . could not be shirked," as a student of the socialist idea and of Robert Owen, its most famous popularizer prior to Marx, has said. This attack is in truth "central to the whole communitarian position."[13]

The failure of our historians to grasp Sade's great importance in the history of the communitarian movement cannot be explained by any secret writing in Sade or by any lack of historical interest in an approach such as Sade's that emphasizes material factors. We cannot read very far in Sade, in Marx, or in the history of American radical reform movements before we come upon an intersection that relates property and freedom. Property, they all concur, has its roots in the self, in *amour propre* or vanity. This of course is Rousseau's idea, the foundation of his critique of civilization. Moreover, it was Marx's solution to the problem of civilization considered as exchange deriving from the division of labor, his solution, that is, of the problem of the labor theory of value, that made him famous. A critique of human enslavement based upon unequal exchange, Marx's idea was that man's freedom lay in the principle that all labor is equal. Men shall be freed by work. Sade (and the American abolitionists as well) agreed that the inequality arising from the division of labor was man's slavery. But Sade's solution to this problem was more radical than Marx's. As for the solutions of Fitzhugh or the abolitionists, they were more Sadean than we have guessed until now. Sade's idea was that men shall be freed not by work but by pleasure.

Marx, we know, shared the assumption of his time that labor is the basis of all value. It was, however, Marx's revision of this idea, his "trenchant distinction," as a recent Marxist writer and admirer of Fitzhugh has put it, that the ground of exchange was not use-value (for example hats and corn are not commensurable in use.)[14] Rather the basis of exchange is labor as such or labor measured by duration. Where the means of producing hats and corn are privately owned, and where labor itself is therefore an item in exchange (labor power), and also privately owned in its right (by the laborer), it follows, said Marx, that profit, hence also alienation and unfreedom, is precisely a consequence of exchange. Exchange serves capital, not needs. Marx then radicalized the labor theory of value by applying it to labor itself. He counted profit as the sale or exchange of labor-value. According to this view, labor as work is credited or paid its value at the same time that the product of the labor is paid its value. The "surplus value," or profit, is then a legitimate theft from labor.

The abolition of the division of labor and exchange, thereby of civil society and all that goes with it, is tantamount to the appearance of man as absolutely free. Freedom, in other words, is no other than the abolition of *amour propre*, of vanity. Vanity in the sense of selfish is understood by Rousseau, as by Marx, to be the product of *meum et teum*; all relationships are founded in property and are property. This commutative proposition makes relationship as such, or dependence, property. But the substance of this freedom in Marx and in Rousseau as well is problematical. What is this nonselfish, or as we say in common speech, unselfish being? What is freedom?

Marx did not explain the realm of freedom perhaps for the same reason that he was at pains to insist, at the other or starting end of his thought, that the inevitable question regarding the origins of man and nature is impermissible—an "abstraction," as he says.[15] Instead, Marx explains the source of freedom. Sade, however, admits of no such restraints. He merely drew out to its fullest extent the idea that all labor is equal, that what Fitzhugh called skill and wit and what Andrews called natural wealth is nature's gift.[16] Like water from a spring this natural wealth is free to all men.

If one's natural wealth, actually one's possession of those endowments of nature which make for inequality, is as free to everyone as air and water, then it follows that all exclusive relationships, especially marriage, are radically unfree. It was Andrews who had said, in explaining natural wealth, that "when man deals with Nature, he is dealing with an abject servant or slave . . . man is a Sovereign and Nature his minister. He extorts from her rightfully, whatever she can be made to yield. The legitimate business of man is the conquest and subjugation of Nature."[17] This was Sade's opinion, too. Man's overcoming of the involuntary or natural distinction between the sexes, the distinction at the root of all division of labor (thus the source of all property and pain), is the final, actually the first freedom; it is the highest pleasure. Pleasure, not labor, sex, nor reproduction explains man's origin and his purposes. Where Marx had said that "the *whole of what is called world history* is nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man . . . has the evident and irrefutable proof of his *self-creation*, of his own *origins*," Sade proclaimed that man's origin is in pleasure.[18] In fact he does not distinguish pleasure or creation from masturbation or pornography. Human freedom places the endowments given by Nature to oneself and to others, like air and water, at the disposal of all.

Sade's idea of freedom looks forward to the replacement of selfhood and the unmooring of all selves for use by others. This is free love. And Sade realized, as would Kojève, that this objective involved the "definitive annihilation of Man

properly so-called" along with the destruction of language and philosophy.[19] Sade realized the need for an attack as a kind of self-rape on all creative powers, human and divine, by the liberating and death-defying pornographer. This is a political and philosophic undertaking, and because it flies with greatest daring in the face of all human history and fact, it begins with seizure of the world.

It will be obvious to the reader that Sade's ideals, whatever else may be said of them, do not entail revolution. He regarded the abolition of private property, following the politicization of all human affairs that attends the liberation of the sexes, as a mere "practical measure". Any vestiges of "this barbarous inequality" might legitimately be cured by so traditional a means as theft: "Is theft, whose effect is to distribute wealth more evenly, to be branded as a wrong in our day, under our government which aims at equality?" The state must indeed stimulate this useful if simple equalizer in view of the admirable way that it "furthers equality and. . . renders more difficult the conservation of property."[20] Sade had no need of dialectical materialism. A pragmatist in economic matters as in others, he would have dismissed Marx's contemptuous labeling of his ideas as bourgeois radicalism while attacking Marx as an absolutist. If man is made by pleasure and not by labor he requires only pornography and a certain education in the "sublimities of Nature."[21] Sade's elaboration of these ideas is found in an ingenious essay entitled "Yet another Effort, Frenchmen, if you Would become Republicans."

The positioning of this essay is part of its meaning. Sade embeds it in the middle of his pornographic novel-play entitled *Philosophy in the Bedroom* in which sexual acrobatics is the main theme. In addition to the amorous relationship between a brother and sister with which the story begins, the plot turns upon the efforts of the protagonist, a homosexual named Dolmance, a paramour of the brother, to instruct a fifteen-year-old virgin, Eugenie, paramour of the sister and the daughter of "one of the wealthiest commercial figures in the capital" (thus the story's predictable anticapitalist element), in libertinism and debauchery.[22] Dolmance's success, of which there was never any doubt, is illustrated at the book's theoretical center, the womb of the book, when Eugenie delightedly leads the revelers in the near murdering of the story's sole antagonist, her mother. The crime of this woman, easily guessed for all of its implausible oddity, is that of being a mother. She confused the act of sex with its consequence, or children. The woman is also guilty of failing to recognize that she has no rights as a mother except that of instructing a child in sexual matters. Fittingly, then, the daughter administers just punishment for her mother's crime. Eugenie's sewing together of her mother's womb "so that you'll give me no more little brothers and sisters" is the occasion for a carnival flow of blood and semen. Like the mingled screams of pain and pleasure, they flow as one. Dolmance, overwhelmed by the scene's perfection, is immediately aroused.[23] Eugenie has been educated. She has seen with her own eyes that life is being unto death by means of sex. This is freedom. Eugenie has witnessed, actually participated in, the fact of man's equality with all other men, indeed with all other beings. Sade has demonstrated that in making love like an adult beast man severs the connection between sex and reproduction. But this is death.

Freedom is death. In Kojève's words for which Marx is his source, "Death and Freedom are but two. . . aspects of one and the same thing. . . . "To say 'mortal' is to say 'free'."[24] And what of future generations, of reproduction simply? Where freedom is death and reproduction is separated from sex, the danger and the hope of the future is transferred from God to man. The future is no longer a providential matter. Sade intended, as did Noyes, as we shall see in a moment, that the control of reproduction by means of abortion, infanticide, and promiscuity would take the power of childmaking and childrearing from the private sphere and from God and place these powers in the hands of mankind, that is, of the state.

It is Dolmance who reads the essay, "Yet another Effort, Frenchmen," to his partners. As the group's leader and an advertised "cynic," his action on the occasion of Eugenie's triumph over her mother is the essay's meaning. Dolmance is the apparent author of the essay just as Sade is the apparent model for Dolmance. But Dolmance, although he admits that his thinking "does correspond with some part of these reflections," is not the real author.[25] Here, brilliantly, Sade insinuates the theme of his work into his characterization: the theme is creation by each self of new selves. Each self, generated by sex not by reproduction, is interchangeable with other selves. Of course a homosexual imitator of Sade shall be Sade's hero and persona.

The essay that Dolmance reads but has not written is said to have been picked up at a Paris newsstand. That Dolmance does not take credit for "Yet another Effort, Frenchmen," or that he is not named Sade, is a joke at the expense of philosophy and truth: philosophy is an undertaking appropriate only in the bedroom; more exactly philosophy is action, sexual action particularly, of which the ideal is "philosophy" raped or pornography. The ideal of philosophy so conceived is "realized" in a scene such as the one just described.

Philosophy is action which expresses the self in context of the most liberated sexuality. This activity puts all false philosophy, and all reality which is less than pornographic sexual activity, out-of-bounds. Philosophy in the bedroom is the highest action. This is idealism or theory conceived as the goal for action to achieve. It is the restriction of language to sense objects, but sense objects created by a pornographer. Reality, here susceptible of definition, is also achievable or nearly so. The action of the mind in creating the standard for action is the highest activity because it defines action and precedes it. Sade's creativity places reality at the service of mind. Sade imagines libertinism, therefore he exists.

Consider the extent of Sade's onanism. For him the wasting of seed is creation. He is performing an act of cre-

ation by his own standards more obscene and blasphemous than anything even he can describe. Yet because it is not a sexual act but a properly philosophic one he cannot explain it without seeming to undermine his point that philosophy in the bedroom is the sole philosophy. Sade is simulating an act of would-be creation, in particular the creation of non-reproducing or death-seeking beings who, like him, seek new reality, that is philosophic pleasure, by means of a theoretical or hypothetical auto-eroticism modeled upon real auto-eroticism, masturbation, as an ideal. Sade's aspiration here causes us to reconsider the judgment, made by one of the rare philosophic intelligences of our time, that Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach* is "the best world fetish ever constructed by a man [Marx] who wanted to be God."[26]

It is appropriate to note here that it was not Marx's ideas or his influence that affected the thinking of the American communist John Humphrey Noyes, the results of whose ideals Kojève and Navrozov have described as Marxist communism. Noyes, often considered the most revolutionary of modern times, was the founder in Oneida (New York) of a free love commune in the 1840s. But Noyes goes beyond Marx: his ideas are Sadean; for instance, his remarkable system for human reproduction. Only couples chosen by Noyes could mate for the purpose of conception. In this way Noyes intended to efface the real mother and father and make himself, almost literally, the creator of the offspring of others. Insisting, like Sade, upon the sinfulness of egos, of what he called "selfish love", Noyes assured the absolute equality of the sexes by implementing a thoroughgoing promiscuity without the possibility of offspring.[27] (Celibacy would achieve the same result and has been adopted at times, for example by the Shakers in America, to serve the same egalitarian goals Sade or Noyes had in mind.) Noyes's object, the object of sexual equality, was the disconnection of sex and reproduction. The resulting offspring, products of Noyes's command, were touched in only the slightest degree by human intervention.

Sade's pornography or Noyes's system with its denial of reality on principle raises the question how other, lesser men will be induced to follow and to waive common sense. Self-evidently Sade's answer, like that of America's "Left-biased" culture, is that common sense can be seduced; it can be sexually bewitched by pornography. Not the envious desire for equal porridge as Marx supposed but a lust for nirvana, for "mind-blowing", is what Sade supposed as the basis for politics. But because real men differ from creatures such as Sade's Minski, the fantastic and bestial hero of *The Story of Juliette*, who is no more than a fleshed phallic symbol housed in a metaphorical body, something more is needed. Education is needed.

In pinning his hopes for Frenchmen upon education, Sade showed himself a typical bourgeois radical of the type so much hated by Marxists. Sade seeks to educate his fellows in the doctrine of political hedonism, to substitute the pleasurable for the good. A cosmic thinker, Sade promises immortality to his followers. It can be won, he explains, if man will cast off his foolish and cowardly reliance upon the gods. Sade's atheism, like that of Marx, is fundamental to his project. It is in fact the project's purpose.

Sade establishes the foundation of education exactly as Marx does. Sade prohibits questions about man's origin and his end. He prohibits the subject of cosmology. "Let a simple philosopher introduce. . .[youth] to the inscrutable but wonderful sublimities of Nature," Sade says. As for anyone who might ask about man's origins, about God, free will, and good and evil, let such a simpleton be told "that things always having been what now they are, never had a beginning, are never going to have an end." Such questions, Sade indicates, are pointless. They are faintly immoral as well. "It. . .becomes as useless as impossible for man to be able to trace things back to an imaginary origin which would explain nothing and not do a jot of good."[28] Only egotistical people or those with too much time on their hands seek answers to such questions. Compare Marx's treatment of a questioner of this type: "Are you such an egotist," Marx asks, "that you conceive everything as non-existent and yet want to exist yourself?"[29]

So as not to lose the sharpness of Sade's thought it is important to realize that he possessed the firmest possible grip upon the problem posed by the rejection of classical philosophy and Christianity. He understood what is meant by Kojève's principle that where "there is *eternal* life and hence God, there is no place for human freedom."[30] Sade boldly rejected "the grubby Nazarene fraud [and]. . .His foul, nay repellent mother, the shameless Mary," replacing them with "atheism. . .the one doctrine of all those prone to reason. . . .Religion," he said, "is incompatible with the libertarian system."[31] Sade hated the divine with a consuming hate of one who wishes himself to be creator. He was quite clear about the necessity for atheism, actually of nirvana or Nothing which is something more than atheism, to the purposes of creation. Sade is a radical and does not condescend to argue. Instead, he delights to sneer, challenging his reader to doubt, once all the veils are drawn, if cannibalism, rape, murder, sodomy, and incest are other than the most natural impulses to which objections are at best hypocrisy. Indulging these so-called crimes, Sade insists, is noble and also revolutionary, since the performance of, say murder, is liberation and freedom. Such indulgences, Sade believes, and his admirers agree, reflect only the "singularity of. . .tastes."[32]

Like a bourgeois radical, Sade demands absolute toleration and openness as his due. He knows that his tolerant liberal reader, who dares not go so far as he, will grant him the right to indulge his tastes. He knows, in other words, that he will subdue his liberal reader. Yet Sade has only contempt for toleration and for liberal readers. He cruelly invokes toleration as an argument on his behalf. Finally, he does not permit the tolerant reader to evade the consequences of his tolerance.

It is self-evident that Sade is not a liberal or one who discourses on the need for revolution while fully clothed and within reach of a policeman. Sade is radical and insists

upon raping, indeed sodomizing, one's mother and murdering her if necessary for the orgasm of everyone. In this way Sade creates followers whose position, like that of today's liberals in face of their communist colleagues, is to oppose his goal as inappropriate even as they insist that this goal or absolute freedom is the essence of all morality.[33] Sade's appeal to the argument of radical toleration—"We wonder that savagery could ever reach the point where you condemn to death an unhappy person [sodomist, murderer, rapist] all of whose crime amounts to not sharing your tastes"—serves the double purpose of embarrassing liberals while condemning the principle of toleration as evidence of liberal fears and egotism.[34] In other words, Sade demonstrates that the dreadful outcome of liberal egotism and toleration is intolerance (his position), and the destruction of egos (also his position). Toleration permits what liberals call "victimless crimes" which, however, destroy egos (e.g., sadism) and are therefore intolerant. Sade had a perfect understanding that the meaning of radical toleration, the essence of which is a hatred of the philosophic or an embrace of the proposition that all truth claims are equal, is freedom: it is the destruction of language or its mutation into the language of bees. "Debate" on the subjects of "extending the love of the private family" and the rest, Sade knew to be cowardice, for the principle that admits debate concedes the legitimacy of the possibility. The purpose of freedom (of speech and of actions) in the modern context, he well knew, was to liberate men from reality so that good and evil would possess whatever meanings he assigned to them.

Certainly if man is to be free he must be free above all from a standard of good and bad beyond himself. This was especially clear to those American abolitionists and feminists who considered the conscience the primary site of freedom. That many abolitionists could, however, say as much without acting on what they said reflected a failure on their part to realize Sade's point: that sexuality and the overcoming of any distance between men and women was the true test of all liberation.

In this respect it will be necessary to revise the historians' estimate of the abolitionists in light of a more comprehensive and more historical context. They were rather less radical or liberated than previously supposed. As one recent student has put it in a study aptly entitled *The Slavery of Sex*, many of the radical female abolitionists were "limited by their elitism. . .[for example] women who were socially and sexually deviant were not accepted. . . . These women were prudish in sexual matters, and many were willing. . . to impose their moral standards on others."[35] Like Andrews, these women were not quite ready, with Sade, to embrace deviation—what is today routinely called "deviation"—as virtuous, an expression of individuality, or freedom, let alone to tolerate it. Their "elitism,. . . the denial of radical equality to all, brought them up short of the goal of abolishing slavery to sex as a social and a political principle."[36]

It is sufficient to mention only Garrison, widely considered to have been the most radical of abolitionists active in the cause and undoubtedly a feminist. His speech or rather the conceptions he propounded were radical enough. He looked for the dissolution of the Union, of government as such, and considered there was at once nothing more contemptible "than the exclusive spirit toward women," or nothing higher than the "right of every soul to decide. . . what is true. . .[so that] no man can be an infidel, except he be false to his own standard."[37] But he could not bring himself to endorse, much less to engage in, free love. Even the petty anarchism of his sometime pupil, Nathaniel Rogers, caused him to act the tyrant. In identifying Garrison as the head of the "extreme wing of the Socialist, Infidel, Women's-Right" party, Fitzhugh was only partly correct.[38]

What the abolitionists broached and what their historians today praise as true freedom Sade had conceived in 1795, the year of "Yet another Effort, Frenchman." Sade contemplated a revision of personhood or what is today recommended to us as the "twilight of subjectivity."[39] It is doubtful if even now men fully understand what Sade understood so well, namely that this ideal must encourage, not prevent, victimization. Only the most advanced twentieth century thinkers in the abolitionist tradition seem to have grasped this point. For example, Joel Feinberg argues for the necessity to "withhold noncontingent rights from infants. . .[basing] the case for prohibiting infanticide on reasons other than. . . rights."[40]

Sade attempted to resolve the conflict between liberty and equality as posed by the premises of modern political theory. He sought to resolve the claims of individuality versus the community, of liberty versus equality, by transforming rights into needs and needs into pleasure. The problem of liberty versus equality has proven insoluble in all modern systems except the Marxist theory of value and its promise of the realm of freedom, a faith rooted in historical processes. But Marx's solution, as we have said, has no respectable believers but liberals. It is in fact Sade's solution, for which Marxists such as Kojève have taken credit without making clear that it goes beyond Marx, that leads observers to confuse America with the final stage of Marxist communism. Sade simply radicalized freedom: freedom must be free. The enslavement of others that must follow this doctrine Sade greeted amiably as the means of yet greater liberation, that is, the liberation from vanity or natural wealth. Here in fact is the key to his thought. He begins with the primacy of sex or, rather, he substitutes sexuality for reproduction as the basis of human existence. The core of life is the moment of lust.

"There is no moment in the life of man," Sade writes, "when liberty in its whole amplitude is so important to him." But while "no passion has a greater need of the widest horizon of liberty than this one, none, doubtless, is as despotic."[41] Sade's resolution of this apparent dilemma, a form of the essential dilemma of the political conceived as a contest between the individual and the community, i.e., as a form of the theory of unequal exchanges or the labor theory of value, is ingenious. "Never," says Sade, "may

an act of possession be exercised upon a free being."[42] Such an exercise is the acme of tyranny. He supports this assertion with a predictable and telling comparison. The "exclusive possession of a woman," he says, "is no less unjust than the possession of slaves."[43] No one will doubt that Sade was an abolitionist. He was more of one than Engels and a better one than Andrews. Sade's doctrine here, common to abolitionists in America, implies a revision of the idea that labor forms selfhood. Sade, who was impatient with what he considered, rightly in this case, derivative matters, was not interested in the labor question but rather in its source. Unlike Charles Fourier, for whom work could be transformed into play, or Marx, for whom work or production is constitutive of man in the realm of freedom—or like other modern thinkers and leaders who also conceived work as an instrument of liberation—Sade had his own novel and seductive formulation.

If exclusive possession is prohibited for men, must it not work a correlative freedom for women? Sade insisted upon it: "All men are born free, all have equal rights." According to this principle, one of which we should "never . . . lose sight," it is also true that "never may there be granted to one sex the legitimate right to lay monopolizing hands upon the other, and never may one of these sexes, or classes, arbitrarily possess the other."[44] But then what of liberty's need for the widest possible horizon? Has Sade, too, run aground in the narrow passage between Communism or equality and Individualism or freedom?

Sade's response to this challenge shows his position. "No man," he says, "may be excluded from the having of a woman . . . [because] she . . . belongs to all men. The act of possession can only be exercised upon a chattel or an animal, never upon an individual who resembles us."[45] Consider, Sade says, that in permitting all men access to all women, females are freed from possession by a single male. Does the principle of freedom, Sade asks, not give the appearance of the enslavement of women? This is an appearance only. Of course, freedom must include rape, murder, and cannibalism, but Sade does not suppose for a moment that a woman's freedom is affected adversely by this fact. Actually a woman is freed marvelously precisely in the act of rape. The freedom expressed in rape is "a question of enjoyment [i.e., of pleasure] only, not of property."[46] And to this distinction between ownership and pleasure, which is no less trenchant than Marx's regarding the theory of labor, Sade adds an example especially instructive because it occurred later to Andrews.

"I have no right of possession upon that fountain I find by the road," Sade explains, "but I have certain rights to its use."[47] Andrews's example also demonstrates the principle of ownership and pleasure with a reference to the use of water. "So soon as I have dipped up a pitcher of water from the spring or stream," Andrews expounds, "it is no longer . . . natural wealth; it is a product of my labor."[48] But his example, in contrast to Sade's, tells us why American abolitionists moved, as Andrews himself complained, *festina lente* in sexual matters. If natural wealth becomes property through the intervention of labor, all hope of resolving the dilemma of freedom and equality, of Individualism and Communism, vanishes. Again Sade had the better answer.

The radicalization of the labor theory of value is Sade's solution to freedom's conflict with possession or ownership. The taking of natural wealth, water from a stream, on the principle of pleasure—not labor—insures that the object taken does not become a possession. As Marx turned the labor theory of value back upon itself to show how capital was a theft from labor, Sade radicalized the labor theory of value by making all possession, the product of labor, an encroachment upon pleasure and upon natural wealth.

The effect of Sade's reasoning in practical, or at least in "philosophical," life (i.e., in pornography) is surprisingly, we may say dialectically, a boon to women. Women are liberated by submitting to men. But because pleasure, not possession, is the basis of ownership and at the same time destroys ownership, pleasure liberates men from self-possession or egotism in the act of possessing women. That every man has of right equal access to all women is simply justified: women are no different from other natural objects such as water and air. Moreover, women do not choose to be beautiful to men or indeed they do not choose to be women. Rape is then liberation in a fundamental sense of overcoming womanhood or the outward self, the unfree or involuntary element of a "woman's" being.

Of course no woman can be said to possess womanhood or to choose it. What women do not possess and what costs them nothing is free, like water, to all who wish it for the sake of pleasure. Regardless of any egotistical or possessive and selfish objection women may have, men have the right "to compel their submission."[49] Sade proclaims in the name of freedom that "I have the right to force from her this enjoyment, if she refuses me it for whatever the cause."[50] But because pleasure, the purpose of rape, is not labor, the raped woman is not a possession of the rapist. It follows finally that men can have no rights to pleasure itself as a possession as this would be a contradiction in terms.

The apparent enslavement of women, or rape, which liberates women from the slavery of womanhood, hence from unfreedom, thus pain, is also the means for women to liberate men. If it is allowed to all men that women, and "all sexes . . . [and] creatures," shall yield to lust, it cannot be doubted that men must equally yield to women.[51] Is not the basis of right found in pleasure the most complete freedom? But what is pleasurable is by definition not a possession. What is pleasurable is free. Natural wealth is free to everyone on the same principle that women are free to everyone. The pleasure of men, guaranteed by their freedom of access to all women, is itself a natural product like air and water.

Certainly it would be unnatural and irrational for an individual male to deny himself pleasure, i.e., to deny himself freedom. Such a denial, moreover, would constitute

exclusivity and egotism, a hoarding of natural wealth, his own or others. This would be precisely that elitism deplored by antebellum abolitionists and by neoabolitionists. It would be to suppose that one's own special pleasure, like one's own special skill or wit, was his when in fact it is everyone's. In other words, individuals may not discriminate or distinguish egos or persons where pleasure is concerned without contradicting the principle of pleasure itself, thereby committing an act of self-enslavement. Certainly pleasures may be various—in fact, must be so. But pleasure as such, whatever its variations, is common to all. It must be free to all if it is to be free to any.

Pleasure or freedom, the opposite of labor or slavery, having no costs, works the same effacement of ego and selfhood in men that male access to women works upon women. This is why love, ego, and self-interest are evils for Sade as they were for John Humphrey Noyes. Again Sade, however, is far ahead of most contemporary neoabolitionists. It is only in recent times that the possibilities of "sex without love" have begun to expose themselves to radical scholarship.[52] Sade realized that "love . . . is no more a title [to a man or a woman], . . . and cannot serve the happiness of others, and it is for the sake of . . . happiness . . . that women have been given to us."[53]

Sade was not affected by elitism. He was its constant enemy. Moreover, as pleasure is the instrument to cure men of egotism, it is especially effective in the hands of women who are, in Sade's view, capable of greater pleasure, hence of greater freedom and selflessness than men. "Women [have] been endowed with considerably more violent penchants for carnal pleasure then we," Sade contends.[54] For this reason he considers it necessary to say, "I want laws [sic?] permitting them to give themselves to as many men as they see fit . . . [U]nder the special clause prescribing their surrender to all who desire them, there must be subjoined another guaranteeing them a similar freedom to enjoy all they deem worthy to satisfy them."[55] Laws, it appears, are instruments of permission. But why laws at all in the reign of freedom and pleasure? Sade has a special conception of laws in mind.

Sade yokes the seeming extremes of absolute liberty and abject tyranny in a perfect mutuality. Of course this is possible only in the realm of the pleasure-made man who has donated his selfish ego for a better human future. The drift of Sade's thinking leads one to suspect that he is about to counsel the effacement of man as such and the merging of the human with the natural in a kind of species cannibalism. Perhaps the refusal to go beyond a hint of this possibility is the only concession Sade makes to his reader in *Philosophy in the Bedroom.*

Describing the sexual, and the transsexual, meshing and entwining of bodies and beings, of "all parts of the body" among "all sexes, all ages, all creatures possible," Sade calls finally for an annihilation of every possible distinction among humans.[56] Here is equality. It is a doctrine of salvation. Sade calls for an engorging of the human by the rest of nature. Celebrating the immortalizing effects of a kind of enmaggoting of the human, Sade makes no distinction between humanity and plants and animals.

Sade announces his ontological contribution in a formula characteristic of the modern liberator as suffering servant. "The philosopher," he says, "does not flatter small human vanities . . . [but in the] ever . . . burning pursuit of truth," he utters huge verities regardless of the consequences and the squeals of conformists.[57] Because the truth is philosophic, that is, because it is an action idealized, or philosophy in the bedroom, a disquisition can do no better than ask, and with a rhetorical sneer, how anyone dares to suppose that man is different from a rat or a manure pile. "What is man?" Sade inquires, "and what difference is there between him . . . and all other animals of the world?"[58] In fact man is reducible to his physical being. But this is no bad thing. Far from it. Man's natural condition is the source of the greatest liberation of all.

Because man is part of nature and does nature's bidding, he is freed from the greatest enslavement. What is more repugnant and more completely contrary to all desire and freedom than death? And what, if not the fear of death, enslaves men to religion, that is, to superstition? Sade proclaimed immortality or liberation from death because he could also proclaim man is liberated from the divine. Above all, immortality is the fitting reward of those who bravely reject the "absurd dogmas, the appalling mysteries, the impossible morality of . . . [Christianity], this disgusting religion."[59] Christianity promises immortality in order to control and limit nature. But just as pleasure is liberation because it is sensual, atheism is knowledge of the highest things because it too is sensual. Atheism is a true judgment because, like "every [true] judgment [it is] the outcome of experience, and experience is only acquired by the . . . senses."[60]

It is also perfectly obvious that, as man has no beginning except in sex, there can be "no . . . annihilation; what we call the end of the living animal is no longer a true finis, but a simple transformation, a transmutation of matter . . . . According to these irrefutable principles, death is hence no more than a change of form, an imperceptible passage from one existence into another . . . what Pythagoras called metempyschosis."[61] Sex and all allied pleasure insure everlasting life, but it is the orgasmic, not the reproductive aspects of sexuality, which do so.

Self-sovereignty, absolute liberty and pleasure having made necessary the elimination of egos, requires as well the abolition of man. But the cost is only pleasure and the reward, or immortality, is the highest pleasure of all. Sade's inversion of Christianity includes necessarily a vision of the good regime since his kingdom is emphatically of this world. The philosopher in the bedroom speaks not only to Frenchmen, whom he urges to make "yet another effort if they would be republicans"; he speaks as well to the "legislator" whom he also openly addresses in the course of his essay as *you.*[62] He speaks to *us.*

The republican regime of liberty is unquestionably a regime of laws. It is already clear that the freedom of women is to be assured by laws. But radical individualism and self-sovereignty are manifestly incompatible with laws in the accepted sense. How could one possibly "devise as many laws as there are men," asks Sade. He answers by promising that laws shall "be lenient, and so few in number, that all men, of whatever character, can easily observe them."[63]

Laws must suit the variations of people, their tastes especially. Laws must be particular, not general; they must be value-free. But of course there is a universality in this version of law, namely *every* case is special. The man above the law or the philosopher is here everyman. And unlike the classic philosopher, the lawgiver, everyman, conceived by Sade denies nothing to himself in the way of pleasures. Indeed, law is solely for the sake of pleasure. The purpose of law so conceived is to incite passions and indulgences, not to control them. This is all there is of virtue and law in Sade. He explains why the law, in the accepted view, is unfair, that is, unjust to human nature. His rationale proceeds in light of a dialectic of sorts to the effect that man has a nature, but in a special sense. Man has no fixed nature. "It has been pointed out that there are certain virtues whose practice is impossible for certain men...," Sade begins. Since this is so, he continues, "would it not be to carry your injustice beyond all limits were you to send the law to strike the man incapable of bowing to the law?"[64]

What kind of laws should the republican regime devise? What meaning might law have at all? Sade's answer is a model of the bourgeois radical's vision of the liberation of individuals. "The legislator...must never be concerned with the effect of that crime which strikes only the individual."[65] In other words the republican regime, which sets about to liberate the individual and to fashion laws for him particularly, is now to be unconcerned about individuals and care only for itself, the state. Sade describes here what Kojève commends as the universal and homogeneous state, the state that has the appearance of having attained Marxist communism.[66] This is the realm in which we are to witness what Rousseau called a "change...[of] human nature...transforming each individual, who by himself is a perfect and solitary whole, into a part of a much greater whole."[67] The objective of law in such a state is the enlargement of the public sphere and the destruction of the private sphere in the name of and for the sake of the individual's liberty. But this object is no other than the widest horizon of pleasure or liberty, namely the elimination of all distinctions and exclusivities. The object of law is equality. This object, Sade realized (much before Tocqueville and with less evidence for his inferences), demands the destruction of what sociologists call mediate institutions. This destruction is to be done by the omnicompetent state in the name of liberty, a procedure that must enhance the power of the state and its reputation as the source of benevolence. "Equality," said Tocqueville at the conclusion of his famous study of 1835, "prompts men to think of one sole uniform and strong government....In the dawning centuries of democracy, individual independence and local liberties will always be the products of art. Centralized government will be the natural thing."[68] Historians, who have of course paid great attention to Tocqueville, have wondered if Tocqueville considered this tendency benign or malevolent. Sade is not ambiguous on this point. He considered this tendency Sadean.

It remains only to address the vestiges of exclusivity and inequality, of elitism, in the residual superstructure of life. Sade turns to this subject with relish.

Because ego and selfishness are melted in the furnace of pleasure and all sexual or natural distinctions turn to ashes, the state must do its part to extinguish all derived distinctions. Sade encourages with vigor the work of man's compulsory education. Surely life is the absolute possession of the state, first of all. A human being who does not possess a self cannot be said to possess life either. Rather he "possesses," as aspects of his (more properly "its") immortality as matter, those feelings and functions which he shares with all other humans and indeed with all nature. The urge of self-preservation, for example, does not convey a right to self-preservation in the individual. This right is the state's. In fact Sade's position that "the freest of people are they who are most friendly to murder" further underlines his ideal of liberation of the self from egotism.[69] The instinct for self preservation is in Sade's view outmoded. Moreover, it is man's finitude or death that justifies Sade's reasoning on all forms of murder. Murder, infanticide, and abortion result from the principle that severs the relation of sex and reproduction. All of these murderings sever man from the divine or eternity. Sade writes: "If all individuals were possessed of eternal life, would it not become impossible for Nature to create any new ones? If Nature denies eternity to beings, it follows that their destruction is one of her laws."[70] The logic of these sentences, in addition to licensing all murder that will cut the connections of sex and reproduction, is that the state may murder at will just as it may create at will. "Every individual born lacking the qualities to become useful...has no right to live, and the best thing...is to deprive him of life the moment he receives it." Likewise the state may "prevent the arrival...of a being."[71]

Undoubtedly the independence, the freedom and equality of each being, warrants such measures. These measures will appear harsh only in the eyes of those individuals who persist in selfish and egotistical ways. The source of self-possession is vanity, after all. Rousseau was not the only one to see that the absence of freedom, that is, dependence, means vanity and egotism. Sade simply decreed dependence a crime against freedom, its contradiction. The extinction of what the American communist John Humphrey Noyes called the "I spirit" can mean only that the I who acts and speaks must be We. Elimination of egos or creation of the we spirit is critical to the interdepen-

dence of the community and to the freedom of all to do what they desire to do. A weeding out of those who are dependent because they cannot participate in their own liberation and that of others, while superficially an act of cruelty, is in the larger view an act of magnanimity.

Sade does not flatter small vanities. The truth is that the elimination of useless individuals is a function of freedom. "It is not unjust," Sade proclaims, that "the human species... be purged from the cradle; what you foresee as useless to society is what must be stricken out of it."[72] Of course uselessness is defined only by whatever suits the ruler's pleasure. First of all men and women must be made to give way to others without qualifications of any sort, and as all must yield their egos to pleasure, so government must enforce these activities and promote them. In addition to providing free and certainly compulsory state education (Sade understood the necessity of compulsory and free education in a regime founded in equality and freedom), the legislator must encourage every effort in the direction of freedom and equality.[73]

The government must promote the most complete independence of every individual, the freedom of each person. As we have already seen, the state shall encourage theft as an instrument of equalization. Much more important, the state must prohibit those activities with a tendency to establish vanity. Offenses tending to inhibit sexual indulgences must be rooted out and punished with utmost severity. The government for its part will establish "various stations, cheerful [and] sanitary" for the satisfaction of every possible lust. "The laws... will oblige [women]... to prostitute themselves... [This] is... the most equitable of laws... all egotistical sentiments quite aside."[74] What other law could be more useful to freedom?

But the fundamental purpose of the state's provisions for individual freedom is "absolutely destroying all marital bonds."[75] Because sexual activity is not for the sake of reproduction but serves the opposite purpose, suicide, murder, annihilation, and nothingness are as much to be encouraged as other pleasures. Incest, for example, is a new virtue: "It loosens family ties.... [It] ought to be every government's law."[76] Sade means it must not simply be permitted. It must be forced. Whereas certain ancient gnostics, seeking to free men from the body, urged activities designed to extinguish human life, Sade put sex in the service of these goals. Offspring are not only an annoyance rightfully to be disposed of, they are an affront to pleasure-seeking liberators. Only the state is the creator of beings. Sade turned the business of reproduction over to the state, to "you", the legislator, much as Noyes took this task upon himself at Oneida. In other words, the creation of human beings is taken from men and women in the name of their liberation. This reverses the way of civilization as well as the first commandment given to men in the book of Genesis to multiply and replenish the earth. Opposite principles are set in their place. These are the substitution of man's power for God's power, finitude and mortality for infinitude and immortality; above all death for life.

Sade invites a new view of children, thus of being. "There are no longer born, as fruits of the woman's pleasure, anything but children to whom knowledge of their father is absolutely forbidden." Children, instead of "belonging to only one family... must be... purely *les enfants de la patrie*."[77] The formation of a family of man, deriving from the "annihilation" of the traditional family, is the special duty of republics.

> Every individual must have no other dam than the nation... from her alone all must be expected. Do not suppose you are fashioning good republicans so long as children, who ought to belong solely to the republic, remain immured in their families. By extending to the family, to a restricted number of persons, the portion of affection they ought to distribute amongst their brothers, they inevitably adopt those persons' sometimes very harmful prejudices; such children's opinions, their thoughts, are particularized, malformed, and the virtues of a Man of the State become completely inaccessible to them... [Those who], love... their children less but their country more [are most free].[78]

Sade's reference here to "particularism" summarizes his thinking. As a quintessential bourgeois radical for whom particularism means tribalism, egotism, and selfishness, Sade proposes instead the family of man. But we have just seen in Sade's essay that the core of the family of man lies with the reduction of philosophy to action, in particular to sexual action. Sade's purpose reverses the meaning of philosophy in two ways. Philosophy distinguishes act and contemplation; Sade combines them by reducing thought to act. He is pragmatic. Philosophy regards thought as universal and action as particular; Sade insists upon the opposite. But acts cannot be universal. They are particular. Sade's inversion of philosophy, his reduction of it to action is profitably compared to the better-known efforts of Marx and Hegel, the materialist and the idealist, who also attempted to transpose the realm of philosophy to action, to history.

Marx and Hegel, as we know, invested history with meaning, that is, with philosophy or universality. Kojève has described this as making the concept equal to time.[79] Sade also made this equation but with a difference. This difference is the institutional substance of that reality Kojève thought he found in America as the attainment of Marxist communism. Sade equates the concept (philosophy) with time as pleasure. In other words he equates the concept with temporality, with every moment of time. The meaning of such an equation in practice would be the eternal present or the realm of freedom. Philosophy in the bedroom is then a universal language or the language of bees.

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17. Andrews, *The Science of Society*, 81.
18. Karl Marx, "Private Property and Communism," 166.
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Meetings, Recognitions

Meyer Liben

1 ——— How do you know him?
——— Oh, we met about a month ago at a party, at a friend's house, he didn't know anybody there, he had just moved into the city—he's from out West somewheres—and came with a girl who was a friend of the hostess, really of the host's wife, that was more the effect, met the girl through a fellow he used to go to college with, I think they roomed together for a year and then he (I mean the one you're asking about) switched to another school, didn't like the place or maybe it was his marks, anyway he's in some phase of T.V., or maybe he just watches it a lot, I don't know him very well, we just met him at this party, and hardly spoke to him at all.

2 ——— I didn't know that you knew him.
——— Oh yes, we met about seven years ago, one of those relationships where, if you pass in the street, you nod without talking, never quite sure whether she remembers who you are or not (or sometimes imagining that she thinks about you quite often, covering the interest with a nod) and then when someone mentions her name you say: Oh I know her slightly, or, after a while: I've met her but don't really know her, I think we actually met at the beach, she was with mutual friends, people I'm still friends with, tho I've never seen her with them again, you know how it is at the beach, everything stands in the way of real contact, the ocean's vastness, solar somnolence, we're all half-naked and insignificant, the meetings are unreal, so you nod, faintly, when you pass in the street, or say: We've met, but I don't really know her.

3 ——— I didn't know you knew them.
——— Are you kidding? We've known them for years, we don't see them as much as we used to, they used to live across the street from us on 84th Street, that was before the West Side was making its comeback, the kids used to play together, and we used to visit back and forth, naturally see each other in the park. Then they moved, and we moved. For a while (especially when we were still on the old block) we'd see each other, but now I don't know, maybe they moved into another bracket or something, not that they're highhat or anything, anyway we kind of drifted apart once we were in neighborhoods to which the other was strange, we know them at least sixteen years, lived on the same block for let's see, nine years, our kids practically grew up together.

4 ——— How did you meet?
——— It was a foggy day, I was standing on the beach, looking out into the mist, and she suddenly appeared from the water, pretty weird, because I'd been there for about an hour, and hadn't seen anyone, but we didn't talk, and I actually met her a week later at a friend's house, we recognized one another right off, but we never have said anything about that first meeting, I'm pretty sure it was the same girl, I mean how can you forget, under the circumstances?

5 I don't really remember how we met, I mean I don't remember the exact occasion, it's funny how the exact moment of meeting tends to be forgotten, we can place it by years, or season, or place, but things seem to conspire against the exact moment, maybe it's because we rarely meet a person for the first time, but have seen him, at a distance, on a number of occasions, or have heard about him, so the first meeting is blurred by those views from a distance, or by the previous mention, and it becomes quite impossible to pin down.

6 I can tell you the exact moment that I met her, I came down to the dock with a friend, and she was sitting there with a group of youngsters, reading, that was absolutely the first time that I laid eyes on her, never saw her in a background of other figures, had never heard her name men-

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Meyer Liben's (1911–1975) collection of short stories, *Street Games and Other Stories* will appear in 1983 (Schocken Books). *Justice Hunger and Nine Stories* appeared in 1967 (Dial Press). His stories have often appeared in the *St. John's Review* (July 1980, Summer 1981, Winter 1981).

tioned, that was absolutely the first contact, when I came down to the dock, a meeting of strangers, loveliest and purest of all meetings.

7 The first time we met we didn't seem to have very much interest in one another, but then we met for the second time and fell very much in love, and as the years went by, remembered *that* as the first meeting, but it wasn't it was really the second meeting, and we've put the first meeting out of mind, as tho we're ashamed not to have fallen in love then, but that was really the important meeting, for had we not met then, the second meeting would have meant nothing at all, we're both sure of that, and yet we keep forgetting that first meeting and think only of the second meeting, when we fell in love, but not as strangers.

8 He claims that he knows me, tells me exactly where we met, at whose house, the company present, what was said, even the actual date, but I don't remember him at all, know that I never saw him in my life, and the more precise he is in his details, the surer I am that I never saw him, tho I have been at the house where he claims we met, been at parties there, and if indeed he was there on an occasion when I was there, then all I can say is that our meeting created absolutely no impression, so that it's as tho I never met him, but is it really possible to meet a person and have absolutely not the slightest remembrance, is it possible that his recollection is accurate (but I know that I've never seen him) that things happen to people, and then it's as tho they never happened?

9 We've met, we know one another, we used to see one another as parts of a group (I don't mean as individuals who also happened to be part of a group), and we occasionally meet now, for we work in the same area, but it doesn't mean a thing, in the sense that we have no interest in one another, no concern; if one of us died, the other would shrug condolingly, part of the news of the day; there's an edge of hostility, but not enough to create real interest, and all in all it would have been much better had we never met at all, for our connection is a kind of waste of human energy, we have nothing to say to one another, and have learned nothing from one another (such things happen) except the knowledge that we ought never to have met, call it, if you will, one of Fate's discards.

10 I had actually met him in the park, we were introduced by a random acquaintance, but then we met a few weeks later in the company of my husband and his wife (I mean to say that I was with my husband and he was with his wife), we were introduced and acted as tho this was the first time we had ever met, but I don't quite understand why we acted that way, because our first meeting had been casual, and, how shall we say: innocent?

11 You know how it is when you meet a person you haven't seen for maybe 40 years, since you were in the same elementary school class, you recognize him immediately, but make no sign because you are not sure that he has recognized you, tho it is entirely possible that he has recognized you and passes you by because he thinks you have not recognized him, at any rate you pass one another by, maybe both of you knowing that you have recognized one another and both chary of picking up the ancient strand.

12 ——— I thought that you were old friends.
——— Oh, we used to be old friends.

13 How we met? A blind date—you know, one of those dates where I'm wearing a grey suit, red tie, and you're wearing a yellow dress and what color necklace would go with yellow, and then we stand in the lobby and look around wonderingly or anxiously, and then we recognize the color combines, but that is not the true recognition, the way it is after a long, grim, separation, or the way it is when eyes meet for the first time, and bring old dreams to life.

14 We met just once and I've never seen her since, and you can carry an impression like that for a long time, for it will not be sullied by experience, but buried warm and secretive, lives its own life.

15 We met just once, and I can tell you exactly where and when. It was four years ago, on New Year's Eve, at the home of a person, who, it turned out, neither one of us knew. We got into a bitter argument, over immortality, he held that it is morally indefensible even to discuss the question, being an escape from reality and from the demands of terrestrial life. That was the only time I ever saw him, I'm sorry to hear of his death. I usually remember people by what we talk about, but in this case it was not only the topic of conversation, it was also the time, the occasion, I don't think I've ever forgotten any person I've ever met on New Year's Eve.

16 We neither one of us recognized the other, but as we spoke, it turned out that we came from the same neighborhood, and then we discovered that we had gone to the same school, and then it turned out that we were in the same class for a year, there was no question about it, we double-checked graduation dates, etc., we recalled (he admiringly, I with reverse emotion) our teacher, a number of the kids in the class—there was no one not remembered by both of us—various episodes in which we had both apparently participated, but we did not remember one another at all, looked at each other blankly as we recalled the childhood scenes we had lived through together.

17 It's kind of a joke between us, we argue about it, she claims that we met, briefly, at a friend's house about two weeks before my recollection of the time we met, at a

cocktail party which she too recalls very well, but I don't remember the first occasion at all; and every now and then (jokingly) she reminds me of that earlier occasion, saying that she apparently didn't make much of a first impression on me, but I frankly don't remember seeing her, I stayed at the party for only a few moments, she was probably in a corner, out of sight, we joke about it, I say she was probably absorbed in an interesting conversation with some handsome gent, cornered off, but she says she definitely saw me, even remembers the suit I wore (blue serge), we joke about it, she brings it up at argumentative moments, and as the years go by, fills in more and more details of that party, that party seems to be more important to her than any social event of her life, she is constantly adding figures to it, coming up with new scraps of conversation, new interpersonal connections, nuances of the behavior of strangers, comments on people who have since become celebrities, I was there for just a couple of minutes, being late for a dinner date, but I know I didn't see her there, sometimes I wonder if I actually was at the party, if only I could prove that I wasn't.

18 You have to be of a certain age before you *meet* people, otherwise you see them or are exposed to them, the way it is with children and parents, no formal introductions necessary.

19 I'm very pleased to meet you, it was very nice to have met you, haven't we met before, don't I know you from somewhere, it was very interesting to have made your acquaintance, I trust we'll see each other again soon, I didn't quite catch your name, I hope this will have proved to be the beginning of a long and fruitful relationship, I've looked forward to this for years, it's a great thrill to shake the hand of the man who, h'ya, how do you do, sir, I trust this will have proved to be, an unexpected pleasure, I didn't quite catch the name.

20 He says that he doesn't know her, in the sense that he doesn't know her name, or anything at all about her, but that their eyes met across the room, and he feels in that sense (not the Biblical) he knows her, in fact he says that when he meets anyone (particularly an attractive girl) he prefers not to know anything about her, in that way, he contends, he is not distracted from the essential, the real presence, and he knows this girl, he says, by the mixing of the glances.

21 One of those telephonic connections—we've had occasion to speak to one another for some twenty years now, business-wise, his voice is as familiar to me as that of my closest friends, but I've never seen him, we're very friendly on the phone, not quite personal, of course I've built up some notion of what he looks like, building a body from a voice, of course the sound of a voice is more substantial than you might think, more than air, but we could be in the same room and not recognize one another (much harder if we were in different rooms), in fact, after all these years—we've done an awful lot of business together—I'm kind of scared to meet him, the voice has become disembodied, spectral almost, I really don't want to meet him, I hope the occasion never arises, I don't want to bring that familiar voice and that strange body together, I just hope that our relationship remains telephonic, friendly, faintly personal.

22 What bothers him, you see, is that I met his wife before he did, I met her almost a year before he did, I don't know why that should annoy him as much as it does, but it does annoy him, it upsets him in fact, it isn't as tho I went out with her seriously (but even if I had, why should that upset him?), we were friendly, and apparently he keeps throwing it up to her, he seems to blame her for my knowing her before he did, I can't understand his attitude, of course I met her first, it was at least a year before he met her, it might have been more than a year, but what of it, it's just a matter of chronology, it's of no intrinsic importance, absolutely no other kind of priority is involved, why does he make such a big deal of the fact that I knew his wife before he did, met her perhaps two years before he did?

23 How do I know her? In the ancient meaning of the word. As a youth, in a great midwestern university (name disclosed on request), we went off, on a Saturday night, for a little fun in town, rounded the bars, and then wound up in a house of prostitution, poorly reputed, the address of which one of us had unbelievably remembered from a conversation he had overheard between two seniors two weeks back, and that woman was my bed-mate, I imagine that's her husband next to her, she's put on weight, but I recognized her immediately, I doubt if she remembers me, do you think she would, after all these years, I don't think we even spoke at the time.

24 He has a very odd habit when he meets children of bowing in a very grave and courtly manner, shaking the hand of the boy, kissing the hand of the girl; the children tend to be very impressed, they feel the importance of a first meeting, they like something to be made of it, for these are strange figures, coming from a distance.

25 Having met for the first time, and now taking our departure, we say: nice to have met you, or: very pleased to make your acquaintance, or: it was a pleasure meeting you, or: very nice meeting you.

26 When he meets you, it is not like one meeting you for the first time, and either glad or sorry for the opportunity, but rather he is sizing you up for some reason which you cannot comprehend—as a prospective buyer (or a pro-

spective friend), as a subsidiary character in a novel he is working on (or the main character in an unwritten novel), as a most-wanted criminal, as a sexual rival, he looks carefully at the cut of your clothes, tries to figure out your income, the state of your health, your weaknesses and strong points, not at all interested in making your acquaintance.

27 I'm sorry, you're making a mistake, I don't know you at all, you're mistaking me for someone else, absolutely a case of mistaken identity, no, I've never seen you in my life before, you're confusing me with another person, it's possible that the resemblance is there, no I don't have a twin sister, I've never been in Detroit, I never went to George Washington High School, I never spent a summer in a camp near Berlin, New Hampshire, I never worked in Kresges, I never went to summer school at the University of Washington, never been on a cruise to Haiti, I've hardly been anywheres, and you definitely don't know me, this is positively the first time that you've ever seen me.

28——— It was very embarrassing, she said, I went up to him, thinking that he was my old teacher, my old favorite teacher, then as soon as I said hello and introduced myself, I saw that I had made a mistake, that at close range he didn't resemble my teacher at all, tho he seemed to from a distance, I guess I must have been thinking about him, anyway this fellow was pretty fresh, I guess he thought I was introducing myself because I was attracted to him, or something, anyway he was very nasty and suggestive, and I walked off fast, there couldn't be any two people more unlike than this man and my old teacher.

29 Have you ever noticed how two children act when they meet for the first time? But of course you have, what man yields to what other man when it comes to closeness of observation, we all of us note the most delicate nuances, the slightest tremors of change or novelty, seismographers all, so you've certainly noticed how two children, small ones, act when they meet for the first time, and I am talking here of the relief they experience in meeting a person of the same height, they look straight ahead, they do not have to look up (that looking up is the primary cause of all future neck troubles, orthopedists' bonanza) the strain is taken out of their world view, and then too there is that joyful recognition of the contemporary (for only contemporary peers understand one another), no talking down, no struggling to make yourself understood (seeking neither the disciple nor the sage) and that accounts for the way they move apart from the first movement (the way it is when things are too good to be true) and then they joyfully turn to one another and begin—joyfully—to wreck Paradise.

30 Their hands clasped, one was dry, one was clammy, their eyes met, one pair frank, open, the other conniving, sly, they spoke, one straightforwardly, to the point, the other circuitously, avoiding the issue, but do not think that (in this introductory meeting) the dry hand, the frank eyes and the straightforward speaking style belonged to one of the men, because there was a division (obviously unequal).

31 Last night, for the first time, I met Death, in the naturalist, the Lucretian manner. Exhausted, I fell asleep after dinner, but as is my habit, I heard and was aware of all the significant events in my household—the phone ringing, the sibling quarrel, the peal of laughter—I heard the bell ring and knew that my daughter's escort had arrived, I heard another child leave for her party, I heard the familiar introduction to the T.V. program, telling me the time, but asleep nevertheless, and then I fell deeper asleep, and in that sleep heard nothing, not the voice of my wife reading our youngest to sleep, not the 11 o'clock voice of Ron Cochran, I did not hear the one child return and did not hear the other return, did not hear the front door open and close, or the Frigidaire open and close (formerly known as raiding the pantry), did not hear the silence of the house asleep, the milkman's approach and departure, awoke to greet (without ceremonial) the dawn of a glorious summer day, realizing, the way it is when you meet Death in the Lucretian manner, that life goes on, and you not aware (maybe not even aware that you were not aware).

32 It was pretty funny—we passed each other in the middle of the block, looked at one another, with that air of vague familiarity just short of recognition, went on, both looked back, the recognition on the tip of the unconscious, and when we reached our respective corners, we turned around and rushed back, meeting again in the middle of the block, crying out each other's names, in an orgy of delayed recognition.

33 I've seen the oddest things in the way of introductions—a man forgetting the name of his oldest friend, his mind an absolute blank, until his friend (luckily remembering his own name) announces it; a woman introducing 24 people—half of whom she had met for the first time, skipping 14 people mutually known—in drumfire order to the most recent arrival at a party; a man introducing himself by a wrong name, or introducing an arrival by the introducer's name; a woman introducing her husband by her lover's name, a man introducing his third wife to her first husband; a man who introduces people by names and occupation; and other oddities at the moment of bringing strangers together.

Achilles

His heel, just a palm-full when
She held him there, now is gone
As far as body can; arch-ended,
Is walked under stone.

Myth will recall what bone
Forgets: so heroes burn
In their own flame desired beyond all,
O beyond beauty, beyond love.

All changed now, all he looked
At, even what he never truly saw:
Monuments, ribs of old ships
Stuck through sand; ribs of cattle.

And culled across an open mouthed sky
Birds chirp at breakfast. Their acid
Droppings scald the outraged marble, toppled
Capitals of such and such a style,

Rubbed to ether, to cinders of
A pureness so intense the hands melt
Touching them. Silence like a blade's
Unfelt acuity parts flesh from blood.

Never under the sun did a friend
Warrant more violence for daring
To die first, or lover less faithful
Require more deaths for slaking

Than such a thirst loosened by dusty
War into the shape of sobbing:
That lovely throat now dust
Itself in no known place, and nowhere known.

In Memoriam: John Downes

Annapolis (1909–1926)

Above the bay he lies, bone-dead to dreams
Protected from desires by flowers and grass,
Young Jack asleep whose parents on their way
To bed admired an instant by the light of lamps.

Deep deep in loam, his grief is uncompared
By birds that rise to argent dawn and cloud;
This sleeping sailor, narrowed to his name,
No legends make him prince, no crown his doom.

For in his youth the merry dancers stopped
Behind his eyes prepared to scan the sea.
The dolphins bright as love removed his life
From wave to wave to final silent beach

Where enemies and friends alike are good.
Not lost at sea but on the land betrayed,
To sickness logging down his youth he fell,
Landlocked by tides before he shot the sun.

His lovers, now already less than strangers,
Like stars, like drifting wood, like tides,
Curve through the night-course of his memory
Remembering him who cannot say their names.

O may his death be brief, appear no more
Than banks of cloud between whose clearing poles
The hill he lies in, with its flags and stones,
Moves slowly out upon the unsafest wave.

LAURENCE JOSEPHS

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The Lost Continent
The Conundrum of Christian Origins

Joel Carmichael

The countless thousands of books devoted to Christian origins, including hundreds and thousands of lives of Jesus and Paul, while deploying a vast amount of scholarship in a variety of fields, are all obliged to concentrate, finally, on a very small number of documents: the New Testament (essentially the Four Gospels and Paul's Letters) and the works of Flavius Josephus, especially *The Jewish War*. Aside from these, the number of references to Jesus and to early Christianity fill no more than a handful of lines.

The critical analysis of Christian origins began only two centuries ago: until very recently it was hampered in its criticism by preconceptions that even conscientious scholars were unaware of. In the case of Jesus and Paul it has been difficult to escape from the bondage of tradition, which is itself the product of the documentation under examination.

It took many generations of scholarship before it was possible to discuss seriously what was really obvious at first glance: if Jesus had been executed by the Romans for sedition, might he not, in fact, have been a rebel against Rome?

The reluctance to ask this simple question is all the more surprising since Hermann Reimarus, the first critical student of the historic Jesus, flatly laid it down in the eighteenth century that the Kingdom of God agitation carried on by Jesus had a political aim. After Reimarus, however, the question was not to be raised again until our own day, and then only in a few scholarly and semi-scholarly books that have not affected most people.

Our sources, taken together, do not create a unified picture: the facts they include must be disentangled from tendency, apologetics, and obscurities, both intentional and unintentional, to allow a real-life picture to emerge. In the case of the Four Gospels, especially, the warp is embedded deep in their very conception and purpose—in the very reason they came into being.

There are two factors in the genesis of the First Three Gospels (the historical and chronological basis for our knowledge of Jesus):

On the one hand there was a global transformation of perspective between the events of Jesus' own lifetime and the germination of a new belief founded shortly after the crucifixion on Simon the Rock's Vision of Jesus resurrected.

On the other hand this shift in perspective was paralleled by a socio-political upheaval—the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70, the consequent emancipation of the new belief from its institutional restraints, and the concomitant fact that for generations after the destruction of the Temple the new sect of believers in Jesus was opposed by the Jewish elite—the rabbis who had inherited the Pharisee tradition.

Thus the writers and editors of the Gospels after the destruction of the Temple, whose belief in the Vision of the Risen Jesus necessarily distorted their view of events beforehand, found it natural to transpose their own contemporary disputes with the rabbis to the lifetime of Jesus, especially since by then the Jews were no longer regarded as targets for conversion and the leaders of the new sect were directing their propaganda at all mankind.

Paul's Letters are, of course, by far the oldest source for the history of the earliest phase in the formation of the new sect. But Paul, though a slightly younger contempo-

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The above essay summarizes the conclusions of a new study, *The Unriddling of Christian Origins*.

rary of Jesus, tells us almost nothing of the flesh-and-blood Jesus: he was preoccupied with working out his own ideas concerning the significance of the resurrection of Jesus. The historical material that can be extracted from his Letters is, however, invaluable.

The Gospels, too, contain nuggets of historical information, though they were written under the pressure of a specific situation and are biased in a characteristic way. They have, in addition, an air of timelessness, of motionlessness, in which Jesus expresses various ideas without the reader being able to see their meaning against an historical background: it is hard to see, from the text alone, just what there was about the Kingdom of God, or about his ideas in general, that could have led to his crucifixion. When we consider, further, that his whole career as outlined in the first three Gospels could scarcely have lasted more than a few weeks, and that the Kingdom of God he proclaims at the outset of all three accounts seems peculiarly abstract and anodyne, we are bound to be baffled.

It might be thought that the works of Flavius Josephus, which cover a lengthy period before the Roman-Jewish War, would fill in all this background. And for anyone studying the first century of the Roman Empire they are, indeed, indispensable.

Josephus was an aristocratic priest, and a commander in the war against Rome. After defecting to the Romans during the war he became an outstanding propagandist of the Flavian dynasty that came out of it victorious. The Church Fathers took over the texts of Josephus's works very early on—he died at the end of the first century—because it was the *only* account covering this densely packed epoch and because it served as a vehicle for a very early forgery designed to make Josephus a "witness" to the supernatural status of Jesus, a forgery whose blatancy, while obvious in any dispassionate examination, was not exposed until the sixteenth century.

Josephus has become a special subject: specialists concentrate on fine points called for by each one's specialty. By segregating Josephus's chronicles within a special area of biased, though recondite, scholarship, and by projecting its own version of events as exclusively authoritative, Church tradition insulated the whole era against empirical enquiries.

Josephus's account is packed with action and personalities: it conveys unmistakably the throb of life in Palestine for the generations preceding the outbreak of the Roman-Jewish War. It is steeped in blood: murders, revolts, cruelty, rapacity, cataclysms of all kinds are intertwined. Grinding oppression on the part of the Romans, desperate uprisings on the part of the Jewish Kingdom of God activists, against a background of well-nigh total corruption, ferocity, and deceit, are routine. His descriptions provide a blanket contrast with the eerie calm of the Gospels.

The Gospels and the Church tradition founded on them indicate no friction at all between Romans and Jews in Palestine. Everything that happens to Jesus takes place in a Jewish milieu; even his trial before the Roman procurator is explained as a Jewish plot. The stateliness of the seemingly simple anecdotes, shot through with camouflaged theological motifs, casts an atmosphere of motionless pageantry over what we know was a most turbulent era. And in our own day the countless books describing the life of Jesus from a traditional point of view make life in Palestine at the time sound well-nigh idyllic.

The Gospels suppress *any* criticism of the Romans. The word itself, indeed, occurs only once (Jn 11:48), and the Romans are assigned a role only twice—Pilate himself and the Roman centurion who on seeing Jesus on the cross calls him "Son of God" (Mk 15:39).

The Romans, who crucified countless thousands of Jews, so that the cross became the conventional symbol of Jewish resistance to Roman power, go completely unnoticed by the writers and editors of the Gospels. Contrariwise, the Pharisees who were equated with the rabbis, the chief opponents of the nascent sect by the time the Gospels were composed, after the destruction of the Temple, are more or less constantly reviled (though here too numerous indications of the opposite peep through the web of apologetics).

It was the global transformation of outlook inherent in the germination of a new belief inspired by Simon the Rock's Vision of the Risen Jesus, reinforced by the reaction of the new sect to the Jewish debacle of 70, that distorted the Gospels systematically: all the basic ideas that had a living context in the life of Jewry beforehand—Kingdom of God, the Messiah, Son of David, salvation—were wrenched out of their true context: national insurrection.

In Jesus' lifetime not a single day could have passed without some inflammatory incident; the mere presence of the Romans constituted a constant provocation. All of this is glossed over in the Gospels.

Nevertheless, the mere fact that Jesus was announcing the Kingdom of God—i.e., a total transformation of the universe in which the pagan powers, pre-eminently Rome, were to be destroyed—together with his execution by the Romans for sedition, irresistibly brings to mind the Kingdom of God agitation that had dominated life in Palestine from the installation of direct Roman administration in 6 A.D. until it brought about the Roman Jewish War in 66, and even later flared up in the abortive Bar Kochba revolt in 132–35.

It is evident, in short, that any discussion of Jesus' career, even if it is limited to the Gospels alone, will bring us face to face to face with the Zealots, Kingdom of God activists *par excellence*. If these diehards were capable of swinging the bulk of the Jewish population of Palestine into the desperate rebellion against Rome, their mood must have been incubating for a long time. Josephus's account, dense with real-life detail and vivid characterizations that articulate a long-drawn-out process of alienation leading to a last-ditch insurrection, fills in the background of the Zealot agitation.

He has, to be sure, a bias of his own: he comprehen-

sively vilifies the Zealot movement in all its variations, partly in the conviction, no doubt sincere, that the Kingdom of God activists were destroying Jewry and that God himself had favored the Romans by giving them victory, and partly, of course, because he was making propaganda on behalf of his Roman patrons.

Nevertheless, the texture of his chronicles is so closeknit that the broad outlines of the Zealot movement, beginning with Judah the Galilean's agitation in 6 A.D., are unmistakable. It is easy to allow, so to speak, for Josephus's bias: when he describes people he calls "thieves" and "brigands" as being tortured to death for refusing to call Caesar "Lord," we are bound to conclude that they could not, after all, have been mere thieves and brigands.

Josephus, however, says nothing whatever about Jesus (aside from the forged paragraph mentioned above); he does mention John the Baptist, innocuously, and also Upright Jacob, in a brief and equally innocuous passage. But for the fleshing out of the realities of life in Palestine around this time he is our only source. He is also priceless for the study of the earliest phase of the new belief in Jesus. His chronicle creates an infinitely broader, deeper, and more ramified framework for judging the historical material in Paul's Letters, the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles.

If we compare Josephus's treatment of the Zealot movement with the treatment given by the Gospels, especially *Mark*, to the complex of ideas, personalities, and events involved in the Kingdom of God movement, we see a striking parallel. Both, for substantially the same reasons, ignore the true content of the whole movement: Josephus describes the Kingdom of God activists in such a way as to downgrade their ideological, idealistic concerns; the Gospels wholly disregard their political aims, too.

Most illustrative of this negative attitude of the Gospels is Jesus' complete silence about the Zealots. The Gospelwriters, intent on whitewashing the Romans and dissociating the nascent sect from any connection with the Kingdom of God activists who, after harassing the Romans for so many decades, had brought about the ferocious war of 66–70, would surely have found it very convenient to set down Jesus' denunciation of the architects of the catastrophe, if he had ever made any. In Rome, especially (where *Mark* was written during or shortly after the war), some negative remarks attributed to Jesus would have eased the embarrassment of his followers. But since the author, or authors, of Mark could not actually forge anything, they were obliged to disregard the subject altogether; this disregard is all the more striking since they did find, in the reminiscences they had at hand, echoes of Jesus' opinions about real people (Pharisees, "Herodians", even occasionally, Sadduccees).

Taken together, however, both Josephus and the Gospels enable us to divine the presence of a remarkably energetic, grandiose movement capacious enough to bring the Jewry of Palestine to destruction during the Roman-Jewish War in 66–70. Both accounts, accordingly, radically contrasting with each other in all respects, confirm, through this same negative attitude, the existence of a vanished movement that in the desert of our documentation can be pieced together only through analysis.

Paul's Letters, taken together with the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, disclose a baffling enigma—the dense obscurity overhanging the two decades, roughly 60–80 A.D., between the Letters written by Paul, a real individual, and the anonymous compilations in the Gospels that came into being one by one after the destruction of the Jewish State and Temple in 70.

Consciousness of this obscurity allows one to sense a profound, inexplicable, and of course camouflaged contrast between the official version of Christian origins in the Gospels and the realistic glimpses tantalizingly suggested both by Paul's urgent, passionate, real-life struggle, and by the random nuggets of historic actuality embedded in the Gospels themselves.

From this point of view the indifference of both church historians and academic scholarship to the fate of the Jesist coterie in Jerusalem, headed by Jesus' brother, is bewildering. If the "Mother Church," in distinction to the Jesist coterie, actually existed before the destruction of the Temple, the total silence of scholarship is incomprehensible: if its leaders had ever had anything self-aware to say it would have been easy and natural for whatever it was to circulate throughout the far-flung Jewish Diaspora. It is obvious that the very concept, "Mother Church," as well as the phrase itself, is a retrojective fiction.

Around the middle of the Fifties, that is, the time of the riot occasioned by Paul on the Temple premises, it is possible to infer a crisis in the history of the Jewish state and hence within the coterie of the Jerusalem Jesists. From then on all remains blank; we are thrown back on the evolution of the Zealot crisis that erupted in the Roman War of 66–70, and then, as the earliest documents of the new sect began to be assembled afterwards, beginning with *Mark*, we can once again see the beginning of a continuity, in which, however, the first phase in the evolution of the new faith—the lives of Jesus, John the Baptist, Upright Jacob, and Paul himself—is twisted about to conform with the later tradition embodied in *Mark, Matthew, Luke, Acts,* and *John.*

I have mentioned the omission, suppression, and distortion in the Gospels, and also referred to the nuggets of information embedded in them: there was no question of forging, but of selecting and stressing and, conversely, neglecting.

If the Gospels had been fabricated, after all, there would be no way of knowing anything whatever about the career of Jesus the man. If we recall the sweeping powers assumed by the Church when Christianity became a state institution under Constantine the Great in the first quarter of the fourth century, and the severity of the censorship he authorized, which from the fifth century on was applied with energy, the survival of the few scraps of information we have is remarkable. We owe such scraps es-

sentially to an indifference to mundane history and to the reverence for traditional texts that piety forbade tampering with.

Some principle for distinguishing between grades of evidence is indispensable; it seems sensible to me to take as a starting-point the global transformation of perspective, i.e., the germination and spread of the belief in the special status of Jesus entailed by his Resurrection and Glorification, which intervened between the events of Jesus' life and their chroniclers.

In my *Death of Jesus* I established a "cardinal criterion": *Anything that conflicts with that global transformation of perspective is likely to be true.*

If a document records something countering the prevailing tendency in the Gospels to exalt Jesus, to preach his universality, and to emphasize his originality, it should be regarded, other things being equal, as being *ipso facto* likely.

Very soon after the execution of Jesus and until the Roman-Jewish War the predominant attitude among the believers in the Vision was that of the Jerusalem coterie. At the same time, a contrary tendency—against the Torah and toward the escalation of Jesus as Lord of the Universe—had already made itself felt even in Jerusalem, when the so-called "Hellenists" epitomized by the name of Stephen were expelled and took their characteristic views to Antioch and no doubt to many other centers in the Jewish Diaspora.

Paul himself, after attacking the new sect, as he himself says, was then converted and began to express a point of view he shared with some unknown predecessors. Indeed, Paul's own initial hostility toward the Jesists was doubtless a reaction against the anti-Torah views of such "Hellenists," since before his conversion Paul had applied his passion, as it seems, to the defence of the Torah, and only afterwards went to the opposite extreme.

At the same time it is evident that Paul's views were not predominant among the Jesists in general. When they were made known in Jerusalem they put him in a predicament that undid him.

It is evident, moreover, not only that he ran afoul of the Jesists in Jerusalem led by Jesus' brother Upright Jacob, but that throughout his own lifetime he had no serious influence. A moment's reflection on the background of conflict—totally divergent from the sugary, harmonious version of Paul's relations with the Jesists in Jerusalem as recorded in *Acts*—shows Paul's unimportance during his lifetime: While the Temple was at the peak of its majesty—the most celebrated edifice of antiquity, a citadel and magnet for all Jewry—Paul was necessarily overshadowed.

It is plain from Paul's Letters themselves that he must have written far more than have come down to us. He was intensely active, apparently, for some two decades—from about 35 to about 55. It is hard to believe that all he wrote is summed up by the small number of letters that now form the backbone of the New Testament.

The condition of the Letters themselves indicates as much: they are plainly random selections, often fragmentary to boot. One of the major ones—2 Corinthians—is practically incomprehensible; it is best understood as a mosaic of scraps of other, left-over letters gathered together after the phenomenon of "Paulinism" made its appearance.

Moreover, it is evident from the content of the Letters we have that a dominant theme in all his major Letters—the theme that often makes them sound hysterically demanding—is his rivalry with others; he is plainly describing a situation in which he is promoting his own ideas against *rivals*. And the rivals are, equally plainly, precisely the leaders of the community of Jesists in Jerusalem.

It is obvious, in short, that during Paul's lifetime his Letters were disregarded. It was only later, with the destruction of the Jewish State and Temple in 70 and the consequent disappearance of any institutional brake on the spread of the new faith among the Jews, that Paul's ideas, originally conceived as an explanation of what was for Paul a current historical crisis, became, through a systematic misunderstanding of the key phrase, the Kingdom of God, the foundation of something he could never have dreamed of—a timeless theology.

The Jewishness of the first Jesist coteries, under the leadership of Jerusalem, can scarcely be exaggerated. This also applies to the coteries Paul himself was connected with, for despite the development of his own views it is plain that in developing those very views Paul takes for granted the overwhelming authority of the Scriptures as, quite simply, unchallengeable: not only does he use Scriptural texts in a rabbinical manner (which might of course have been a mere personal mannerism taken from his training), but he expects his readers to realize that the Messiah had come, died, and been raised again "according to the Scriptures" (Rom 1:2, 1 Cor 15:3); he takes it for granted that they will get the point of the examples he gives of Abraham and Isaac (Rom 4:2,3; Gal 4:28), Sarah and Hagar (Gal 4:21–31), and, even more striking, Moses' Tablets of Stone (2 Cor 3:2, 3), the Covenant (2 Cor 3:6), Adam's Sin (Rom 5:14), and the Stumbling-Block (Rom 9: 32,33). He makes flat statements assuming the unquestionable acceptance among his readers of the Hebrew Scriptures: "Through the comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom 15:4).

Whatever might have been the background of the pagans whose lives had become linked to the Synagogue, once they had become involved either as God-fearers or something similar their locus of authority automatically had become the Hebrew Scriptures. This in and of itself entailed the giving of respect to the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem, in this case, of course, the Jesists.

The original centrality of the Jerusalem Jesists is, in short, evident from all the earliest documents on: even *Acts*, which takes pains to harmonize the disputes that separated its hero Paul from the Jerusalem Jesists, concurs with Paul in accepting the centrality of the Jesists in Jerusalem.

In their own way the Gospels disclose a profoundly Jewish substratum: it peeps unmistakably out of texts that include additions or changes designed to camouflage that substratum or focus it differently. The Gospels were written and compiled to serve an apologetic purpose, but the many elements they contain, if detached from the *tendency* of the editors, can point to some historical realities.

The idea of the Chosen People was taken for granted by Jesus' immediate followers with unquestioning matter-of-factness: it is graphically illustrated in the story of Jesus and the pagan woman: it surely goes back to the first community: here Jesus rejects the pagan woman's appeal for help by saying: "Let the children first be fed, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

Whether this was said by Jesus himself may not be certain, but its preservation must surely imply its being embedded in documents too revered to be disregarded: it means, plainly and simply, that the Jews come first: i.e., that the pagans—"dogs"—are outside the Torah. Jesus relents in the story, but only after the woman modestly asks no more for herself and her daughter than a few crumbs of the "children's food" (Mk 7:24–30).

This theme of the Chosen People is repeated a number of times in the Gospels—as where Jesus is seen sending out his twelve "apostles" to go through Palestine, but to "go nowhere among the pagans and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel" (Mt 10: 5–6).

There are countless other remarks—recalled, no doubt, from Jesus' actual life—that indicate the same Jewish substratum.

Jesus is asked a fundamental question: "Which commandment is first of all?" He answers:

> The first is, Hear Oh Israel, the Lord our God is one: and you shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your might. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. [Mt 22: 36–39]

The first statement is the key affirmation of Judaism; the second sums up its ethics.

> Think not that I have come to abolish the Torah and the Prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. [Mt 5:17]
> And day by day, attending the Temple together... they partook of food... praising God and having favor with all the people. [Acts 2:46]
> Now many wonders were done by the... apostles... all together in Solomon's portico. [Acts 5:12]
> God exalted (Jesus)... to give repentance to Israel [Acts 5:31]
> [The pilgrims en route to Emmaus] We had hoped that (Jesus) was the one to redeem Israel. [Lk 24:21]

For that matter it seems likely, in accordance with our Cardinal Criterion, that Jesus, despite his constant arguments with the Pharisees, was in fact a Pharisee himself: he says *only* Pharisees can interpret the Torah (Mt 23:1–3).

These nuggets of history, however, have been tucked into a framework contrived to accommodate a much later situation. Essentially, *Mark* plucks Jesus out of his place in time and space and transcendentalizes him beyond his own politics. And the historical rationale for this is obvious: On the face of it it must have been a source of acute embarrassment for believers living in Rome during the years just preceding the Zealot war against Rome that their own leader, Jesus of Nazareth, had himself been executed only a few decades earlier for just the same reason—sedition. It was vital for them to dissociate themselves somehow from the opprobrium naturally clinging to followers of an enemy of Rome at a time when Rome was engaged in a ferocious struggle against Kingdom of God activists. It was just this crisis in the Roman Jesist community, indeed, that led to the composition of our first Gospel, *Mark*.

Since there was, however, no way of twisting the basic facts out of shape—i.e., the indictment and execution of Jesus as "King of the Jews" by a Roman procurator—it was necessary to create a narrative structure that, while accommodating the irrefragable facts of Jesus's execution, plausibly explained them away.

This was by no means due to hypocrisy: In the Jewish Diaspora Jesus the Messiah had been escalated into Lord of the Universe, Son of God, and Savior of Mankind. Psychologically, indeed, the same impulse that divorced the real-life Jesus from his historical background after the destruction of the Temple, was a parallel to the original impulse in the psyches of Diaspora Jews like Paul that made them, too, transcendentalize all traditional Jewish national ideas while remaining convinced, like Paul, that that itself represented a realization of a Jewish concept.

In any case, the problem confronting the author of the ground-plan of *Mark* was simple: he had to obliterate the possibility that Jesus would be linked to the Zealots the Romans were fighting. He had to exculpate him from the charge of being an activist in general, and an enemy of Rome in particular. To do this he had to denature the Kingdom of God—to depoliticize it by twisting its undeniable association with Jesus out of its socio-political background and by giving it an elusive other-worldly meaning. The corollary of this was to slide past the attack on the Temple and the resulting trial of Jesus for sedition.

The convergence of two concerns led to the apologetic distortion of the historical account in *Mark* (and subsequently in *Matthew*, *Luke*, and *Acts*, which all accepted the ground-plan of *Mark*).

One concern was to stress the transcendentalization of Jesus that had been going on in the Jewish Diaspora side-by-side with the Jewish tradition of Jesus the Messiah and his Glorious Return as Bringer of the Kingdom of God; the other concern, desperately urgent because of the bitterness surrounding a war, was to free the Jesist congregations in the Roman Empire from the stigma of the Zealots.

Whoever wrote *Mark* solved the problem more than adequately: he created a model, in fact, that still enthralls

the hundreds of millions of people indoctrinated by the Gospels and by the vast cultural heritage they underlie.

Though by and large details are missing in all Gospel accounts of Jesus' attack on the Temple, it is impossible to escape the implications of the enterprise, whatever its specific shape. It is indissolubly linked to the primary fact of the tradition—the most solid, unchallengeable fact of all: that Jesus was executed by the Romans as King of the Jews.

If we start from this fact, and consider the skimpy details embedded in the Gospels, to the effect that Jesus

On this and opposite page: 67 A.D. Silver Shekel, Obverse (above), legend: "Shekel of Israel." Chalice. These coins were issued for five years, from 66 to 70 A.D. (Roughly twice actual size.)

"preached" in the Temple for three days, "overturned the tables of the money-changers" and "drove them out with a whip of cords," we see that the whole incident, presented in the Gospels as though it were symbolical, or in any case non-violent, becomes portentous: *Jesus held the Temple.*

Now, how could he seize the Temple, and hold it for *any* length of time? The Temple was a vast edifice, guarded by a Roman cohort of 5–600 as well as by a Temple police force of 20,000. How could Jesus have scattered the money-changers and overturned their tables in the face of the armed police units? (To say nothing of the money-changers themselves.)

The group led by Jesus must have been armed themselves. This simple fact makes understandable the many references to arms lurking in the present text:

> One (of the party) drew his sword, and struck at the High Priests' servant, cutting off his ear. [Mk 14:47]
> Look, Lord, we have two swords here. [Mt 22:49]
> (and parallels)
> Lord, shall we use our swords? [Mt 22:38]

Jesus could seize the Temple only by armed force; his execution by the Romans as "King of the Jews" was directly linked to his seizure of the Temple. Behind the skimpy, distorted, and obscure Gospel references to the events preceding his arrest there was a real-life, stark event —an abortive insurrection.

If we recall that the Temple had been standing in Mark's own lifetime, that the insurrection he was camouflaging had taken place only the generation before, and that the reminiscences he himself was making pious use of must have referred to some of the events, we can see that Mark had to contrive an overarching aesthetic framework to achieve plausibility. Some oversights, perhaps inevitable, were to survive.

The echo of the Zealots, for instance, is arresting:

Simon the Rock (Peter) is called "Baryon," as though it meant "Bar Yonah," or son of Yonah, but "Baryon" meant a "rebel, outlaw," a political or social outcast living "on the outside," i.e., away from the settled areas controlled by the state. Judas "Iscariot" must surely refer to *sicarius*, or Daggerman, an extremist Zealot group; the two sons of Zavdai (John and Jacob) are called "sons of rage," echoing the violence associated with the Kingdom of God activists.

Also, two Kingdom of God activists, called "bandits" and "thieves," were crucified alongside Jesus: these were simply pejorative expressions for such rebels used by Flavius Josephus as well as by the Romans, for tendentious reasons: Barabbas, too, "arrested in the insurrection" (Mk 15:7), was likewise a Kingdom of God activist.

Simon the "Kananean" (in the list of the Twelve appointed by Jesus [Mk 3:18]), is revealing: "Kananean," a word incomprehensible in the Greek text, is evidently a transliteration of a Hebrew-Aramaic work (*Qanna'i*) for "Zealot". Now, it was Mark's habit to explain such words: just before this, the epithet "Boanerges" ("sons of rage") for the sons of Zavdai, has been explained by the narrator. Mark's avoidance of an explanation in this instance makes it obvious that a real translation of the meaningless "Kananean" would have been embarrassing in the atmosphere of Rome at the time. Later, to be sure, it lost its odium: A half-generation or more after the destruction of the Jewish State it was possible for Luke to translate it, for a different readership, quite straightforwardly as "Zealot" by using the Greek word "Zealot" instead of a transliteration of the Hebrew-Aramaic (Mt 10:4).

In the Palestine of Jesus' day the statement "Pay Ceasar what is due to Caesar, and God what is due to God" (Mk 12:13–17), would be taken by any Kingdom of God agitator in a real-life situation as self-evidently insurrectionist. To such an agitator it went without saying that the Holy Land was God's alone and no pagans could profit from it, and in particular that the taxation imposed in 6 A.D. was an outrage. But Mark places it in a context in which it sounds unmistakably as though Jesus were *endorsing* the tribute to Rome: he uses the phrase as Jesus' response to a trap set for him by the "Pharisees and the Herodians." It was natural for the Romans to expect a subject people to pay tribute, just as it was natural for a Kingdom of God agitator to refuse to pay tribute; by transposing the context of the question, accordingly, the

architect of the Markan theme extracted its political taint, as it were, and soothed his readers among the Jesists in Rome as the Zealot war erupted.

In general, *Mark* depicts the Jewish authorities as hostile to Jesus from the outset: "Pharisees" plot with "Herodians" (the pro-Roman Jews headed by sons of Herod the Great and ruling Galilee at the time) against Jesus (even though it is the High Priests who finally engineer the crucifixion [Mk 15: 10–11]).

By the time of the spread of the Gospels the High Priests had vanished with the Temple cult, while the Pharisee tradition was sustained by the rabbis, now the chief opposition to the new sect: for the Gospel-writers, the word "Pharisees" stood for the Jewish authorities in a comprehensive, absolute sense.

Jesus in turn vilifies all Jewish authorities as cultically, legally, and spiritually sterile, even evil. The hostility to the Jewish authorities is extended to the Jewish people as a whole, who fail to perceive that even someone they are familiar with since childhood is meritorious: hence Jesus' comment that "a prophet is without honor in his own country, and among his own people, and in his own house" (6:1–6); the Jewish people as such is condemned for ritualism (7: 6–8); to cap the process the Jewish mob actually calls for his death and derides him (15: 11ff., 29–30).

Moreover, Jesus is described as cutting himself off from his kinship not only with his people, but with his own family:

> And his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside they sent to him. Jesus replies: "Who are my mother and my brothers?" and goes on: "Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and my sister, and my mother." [3:31–5]

Mark tells us, in short, that mere biology is meaningless: the Roman Jesists can be as close to Jesus as his own family. If we recall the importance of the dynastic factor in the emergence of Upright Jacob in the Jerusalem coterie before the Roman-Jewish War, we discern a polemical thrust at Jesus's family that must have entered the story at the time the Gospel was set down after the destruction of the Temple.

When the pre-eminence of Jesus's family in the Jerusalem coterie was made obsolete by its extinction together with the Temple, it was possible to defy the vanished authority and virtuously separate the Roman Jesists from it. Thus, the family of Jesus is presented as having thought him out of his mind, to begin with, and as explicitly repudiated by Jesus.

This is complemented by the contemptuous description of Jesus' Jewish companions, called the "Apostles," who of course also constituted, together with Upright Jacob, the core of the Jesist coterie in Jerusalem. They are constantly described as bickering over precedence and rewards (9:34, 10:34–45) and as devoid of Jesus' own remarkable powers (9:6, 10, 18) One betrays him (14:10, 11, 20, 21, 43–5); on his arrest they all abandon him and flee (14:50). For that matter the leading apostle, Simon the Rock, though acknowledged as the first to see in Jesus the Messiah, is said to "rebuke" Jesus for speaking of his resurrection and because of that, indeed, is called by Jesus "Satan". On top of that there is an account of Simon the Rock's unappetizing denial of any acquaintance with Jesus: not only is it excessively long in such a short document, but it is negative through and through.

That Simon the Rock recognized Jesus as Messiah but denied the salvational function of the resurrection shows

Reverse, legend: "Jerusalem the Holy." Stem with three pomegranates.

that the Jerusalem group headed by Upright Jacob did not believe in Jesus except as the Jewish Messiah—that his role as Lord of the Universe, of Divine Savior of Mankind, meant nothing to them. In short, the viewpoint of Paul is put forth in *Mark* in such a way as to take advantage of the Jewish defeat in war.

The ground-plan of *Mark* goes far beyond details: it has a profound apologetic aim.

While bound to accept the historic fact that the Roman indictment was followed by a Roman execution, Mark tells us that Pilate was forced by the Jews to do what they wanted. In the narration this has already been built up—"planted," in literary parlance—by clear-cut suggestions of a Jewish conspiracy to destroy Jesus.

The assignment of an executive role to the Jewish authorities in explaining away the Roman indictment and execution of Jesus in and for itself expresses the anti-Jewish tendency of Mark's ground-plan.

It is more than likely, of course, that the Kingdom of God agitation engaged in by Jesus would have set him against the Jewish aristocracy as well as the Romans, but there was no need at all for them to be involved in an actual *trial*: in view of the public nature of the agitation, indeed, it is hard to see why the Romans had any need for a trial either: a perfunctory hearing would seem to have been sufficient.

In any case, any number of Kingdom of God agitators,

would-be Messiahs and pretenders of all kinds were routinely exterminated by the Romans. There was no need for the Jewish authorities to intervene at all.

Moreover, since the tendency in *Mark* is in any case to highlight the evil intentions of the Jews, had there been, in fact, any Jewish intervention to undo Jesus it would have been both natural and easy to build up that theme and omit the Roman role altogether.

The fact that the original writer of the ground-plan for *Mark* was obliged, despite his reluctance, to record an important role for the Romans, confirms the matter-of-fact historicity of the Roman charge on the cross itself—"King of the Jews"—and demonstrates the tendentious artificiality of *Mark*'s emphasis on the role of the Jews.

The theme was vital for *Mark*: to amplify it he enlarges on how Jesus, though of course a Jew, was not appreciated by Jews and how he expressly denied the importance of any kinship.

Since the Jews in the Roman Empire were suspect at the time because of the Kingdom of God agitation, which had even penetrated the Diaspora, and because of their success in proselytization (cf. Tacitus's sneer at Christianity for its Jewish roots), *Mark* has set himself the task of splitting Jesus away from his original background.

From the very outset, the reader is informed that Jesus did not follow the tradition represented by the "scribes": he, in contrast, "has authority" (Mk 1:22). Jesus, by absolving the sins of a paralytic he has just healed, forces the scribes to charge him with blasphemy (2:6–7); then he attacks the "scribes of the Pharisees" for their objections to his eating with "tax-collectors and sinners"; and, in explaining that his disciples do not fast like "John [the Baptist's] disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees," uses a metaphor—the futility of using new cloth to repair an old garment or of putting new wine into old wine-skins—evidently intended to drive home the point of Judaism's obsolescence.

This metaphor would have had compelling force precisely in the wake of the destruction of the Temple, *and not before*: it gives lapidary expression to what has now become an historic fact—that the Roman Jesists, with a large admixture of converts and semi-converts, have found the solution to a problem that, as we know from the evolution of Paul's ideas, must have begun to weigh on them beforehand—i.e., the reinterpretation of the Torah and of Jewish traditions in general in the light of Simon the Rock's Vision.

The theme of *Mark* can be tersely summed up: the Jews, both leaders and masses, are responsible for Jesus' death; his immediate family thought him crazy; his "Apostles", having misunderstood him, also abandon him.

Jesus himself provides the counterpoint to this series of negatives: he rejects those who reject him, emphasizes the importance of worshipping God through him in contrast to loyalty to blood-relationships, and denounces the chauvinistic limitations of Simon the Rock, his pre-eminent follower.

In short, *Mark*, while depicting Jesus in a Jewish environment, has extracted him from it and placed him beyond it.

This point is driven home explicitly in what is, thematically, the climax of the Gospel: after demonstrating how the Jews had failed to apprehend the divine nature of Jesus, the narrator puts a key phrase—"verily, this man was the Son of God"—into the mouth of the Roman centurion directing the Crucifixion.

Perceived beforehand in *Mark* only by demons (responsible in antiquity for the supernatural knowledge ascribed to madmen), this basic idea is expressed by a normal human being, that is, a pagan, like, perhaps, the bulk of the Jesists in Rome. (The fact that *Mark* uses a Latin word, when *Matthew* and *Luke* use a Greek, reinforces the impression that *Mark* was indeed composed in Rome.)

The preliminary stage for the deification of Jesus has reached its climax: Jesus has been crucified, the Gentiles have seen the Light, Judaism has been definitively superseded.

The original author of *Mark* has solved the problem set for him by the historical circumstances of Jesus' arrest, indictment, and execution by the Roman authorities. He has demonstrated that it was a machination of the Jews, who had either misunderstood or opposed him, that Jesus had not been executed as a freedom-fighter in a nationalist movement against the Romans at all, but was, in fact, a divine figure whose fate was part of a cosmic plan.

By elevating the drama to this supra-terrestrial terrain *Mark* has wrenched Jesus out of his historical framework. He gives the remark about paying tribute to Caesar, which in a historical context would have been understood as an insurrectionist slogan, a seemingly natural background in which its meaning is reversed, and Jesus, in his only comment on politics, seems to be endorsing tribute to Caesar, and blandly slides past the Zealots in Jesus's entourage by misrepresenting Simon the Zealot through an unintelligible transliteration.

Mark's extracting of Jesus from his folk heritage bridges the main chasm between Judaism and the world outside by making it entirely unnecessary for pagans to become Jews for any reason whatever, and facilitates their conversion by showing that belief has nothing whatever to do with communal or biological bonds. Although *Mark* did not specifically strip the traditional Messiah of a martial function, by transcendentalizing Jesus out of his political background he promoted a conception of Christ that also transcended the provincial background of politics in Palestine and thus laid the underpinnings for a cosmic role to be played by an eternal, divine Christ.

There is no reason to assume that Paul's writings, which were not paid much attention to in his lifetime, necessarily served as matrix for this idea. An anti-Torah, transcendent view of Jesus was adumbrated, if not elaborated, only a few years after the crucifixion; there is no reason it shouldn't have been represented in Rome as well as in Antioch, or indeed in any Jesist coterie anywhere at all.

It surfaced very naturally, just as Paul's ideas in general were recovered, after the destruction of the Temple, and came to embody the official view of an evolving religious fellowship.

Once a sharp contrast was drawn between Jesus the Jewish Messiah and Jesus Lord of the Universe, the contrast itself became the pivot on which all subsequent speculation turned, and once the contrast was grasped by the believer, and internalized, it became in and for itself a natural matrix for still further speculation.

Mark solved the primary problem involved in the transformation of a cluster of Jewish beliefs into a universal, transcendent religion expanded far beyond the horizons of Judaism: his solution, by explaining away the real cause of Jesus' execution and shifting it to a theological plane involving a radical and unbridgeable difference with Jewry, served simultaneously as the model for the dehistorizing and theologization of the new religion.

Just as Paul's ideas were to create a universe of ideas for the new sect, so the ground-plan of *Mark* created an original historic basis for it. By camouflaging a simple fact —that Jesus was executed not as a reformer of Judaism but as a rebel against Rome—*Mark* provided an historical foundation from which Paul's ideas could soar aloft.

But before that something else had to happen: the idea that the World's End was imminent had to be given up.

The Gospels recorded a number of postponements of the advent of the Kingdom of God—from the "at hand" of the very first fervor, to the few weeks implied by the disciples going through the towns of Israel, to the end of the lives of the listeners to one of Jesus' speeches. It may well be that even by the time the first draft of *Mark* was written the writer was no longer so sure of the imminence of the World's End; by the time *John* was composed, around the turn of the second century, the notion of the World's End has been totally dislocated from the author's cosmology: for him there is to be no Glorious Return at all—the Lord has *already* come. On the other hand, some scraps in the New Testament—such as I and II Peter and Revelations, as well as small fragments of the Gospel *John* itself—seem to return to the perspective of an imminent Final Judgement (Jn 5:27–29; 6:39ff).

Though it took varying lengths of time before the World's End idea was wholly extinct, it is plain that by the time *Luke* was written, some decades after the destruction of the Temple, the idea had become at least quiescent. It was no longer held seriously.

Thus the general feeling had moved definitively away from Paul's state of mind: he wrote because he felt the World's End was imminent *despite* delay. By the time this had evolved into the conviction that the delay was no longer a delay but a condition of nature, it was possible, indeed indispensable, for something to be put down on paper. Thus, some decades after *Mark*, *Luke* and *Acts* were drafted (parts of both of which were, as it seems, the work of the same hand).

Acts is, indeed, our sole source for the earliest period of the new sect after the destruction of the Temple: it carries the process of socio-political accommodation begun by *Mark* still further.

The sources embodied in *Acts* are so fragmentary that no coherent account is possible; still less does it say anything about any individual except Paul himself. There is almost literally no information about anyone mentioned. The individuals are given names, to be sure, and an occasional sentence or two purports to flesh out an inchoate narrative, but there is no way of apprehending motive, character, or activity.

The writings set down in this very early period had the function of defining, that is, establishing the leadership of the new sect: they were a major attempt at organization. And to do so, decades after the destruction of the Temple and two generations after the death of Jesus, it was vital for the leaders to claim a living link between Jesus and themselves.

Accordingly, the newly evolving Church was "defined" by the Twelve Apostles, or rather, more accurately, by apostles in the plural. This claim, wedded to the claim, implicit and explicit, that the founding Apostles' authority was *binding*, became the theological principle underpinning the Church.

This principle of the binding authority of the Apostles in and for itself was never to be challenged by the great divisions of the later Church (Catholics, both Roman and Greek Orthodox, and Protestants); the only dispute was to be the manner in which the authority attributed to the Apostles was, in fact, binding (the Protestants, of course, accepted the Scriptures alone as binding; the Catholics considered the "Church tradition" equally binding.)

But in fact the "Apostles" were simply part of a theory. In the very beginning there was no such institution as "The Twelve": the figure itself, reflecting the World's End expectations of the Kingdom of God activists, merely stood for the Twelve Tribes of Israel. "The Twelve" never played a role of any kind, even in the sources that mention them: after their first mention (in late sources) they are never, except for Simon the Rock, mentioned again as "Apostles." A major associate of Jesus, Jacob ben-Zavdai, lived for a decade after Jesus' crucifixion and must have been both eminent and active, since he was executed in 43 by Agrippa I. But after the first mention he is not called an "Apostle."

Most striking of all, in discussing his trips to Jerusalem Paul makes no mention of "The Twelve" whatever—he talks only of the three "pillars," the only ones he confers with: they are obviously the leaders of the Jerusalem coterie. That is, even if there was such a group as "The Twelve," it was no longer in existence in the middle or perhaps end of the Forties (44 or 48). Later on only Upright Jacob, Jesus' brother, is mentioned as leader of the Jerusalem coterie (*Acts* 32:15ff).

It is obvious that the statement that there were apostles is part of the early Church tradition itself: it is the way the tradition substantiates itself.

Though the church "theory" is very old, it goes back, accordingly, only to the time when there was already a huge break with the real-life background of the historic Jesus, and an awareness of that break—that is, to about 100, when the Jewish Temple had been extinct for a whole generation and when the Jesists themselves were swiftly being transformed into the first stage of what could now be called "Christians," or perhaps only "proto-Christians." Although Paul was now accepted and the foundations of the religion accordingly laid, the organization of the Church itself was still rudimentary and uncertain, and a dogma that was to be indispensable—the Trinity—had not yet been thought of, let alone worked out.

But the generation of 100, aware that they were different as it were in essence from the historic Jesus, Simon the Rock, Upright Jacob, and Jacob and John ben-Zavdai, and aware of the gap between them, conceived of themselves as being not the second link in the chain of generations—the break made that impossible—but the third; i.e., they had to create a link between themselves and the first generation. The concept of the Apostles fixed and amplified this link: it became the "Apostolic tradition," as though it were a tradition about an historical situation.

The traditional definition of the "Apostolic age" as ending with the deaths of Simon the Rock (Peter), Paul, and probably Upright Jacob rests on the claim that until a few years before 66 reminiscences directly derived from Jesus were still alive. This "living tradition" about Jesus itself consists, however, of assertions made about it by the tradition.

Hence the *Gospels* and *Acts*, while containing nuggets of historical fact or probability, as I have indicated, no longer reflect the circumstances of Jesus's real life, but the pseudo-tradition about them embodied in revered documents. The handful of what might have been historic reminiscences committed to writing as the real-life first generation began to die off, survive merely as fragments embedded in theologically tinctured and slanted texts that began to be assembled as a "canon" around the middle of the second century.

It is plain that the earliest current of belief in Jesus had already been expressed in two different styles. One had to do with the homely tradition of Jesus the Jewish Messiah who had lived in Palestine, been executed by the Romans, and been seen resurrected at the Right Hand of God; the second was the visionary Jesus stripped completely of all earthly attributes and embodying a simple principle, to wit, that he had died and been raised again. But basically the two traditions were to become one, since the tradition about the earthly Jesus, though it underlies what seem to be the facts in the Gospels—sayings, miracles, snippets of statements etc.—in fact has been twisted around as a form of adaption to the disembodied, spiritual, abstract, principled framework of the confessional formula inherited by Paul from his own predecessors very early on. The significance of the seemingly historical framework of the Gospels is in fact found only within the capsule of the confessional formula of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The seemingly factual framework of the Gospels was itself an adaptation of historical or semi-historical fragments about Jesus's life on earth only from the point of view of fleshing out the formula of the confession.

This fusion of two beliefs about Jesus had little to do with a lapse of time—it was a transformation of view that took place very rapidly: it was already given a sort of schematic representation by Paul: whereas before his resurrection Jesus was the son of David—i.e., the Jewish Messiah—afterwards he was the Son of God, Lord of the Universe (Rom 1:3–4). Thus the process of transforming historical into theological materials that took place after the destruction of the Temple was the same, writ large, as the transformation already seen at work in Paul's Letters, written before 55.

For Paul, too, a communal repast had already become sacramental. It can be summed up in a single sentence:

> When we bless "the cup of blessing", is it not a means of sharing in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, is it not a means of sharing in the body of Christ? [I Cor 10:16].

The transition from the time in which the early Jesists interpreted the Lord's Supper as a Passover meal—a *seder*—to the time, much later, when Christ was himself called a Passover lamb, is evident.

Though the factual information in Paul's Letters is peripheral as well as scanty—he was arguing a case, exhorting his audience, justifying his position—it is, to be sure, illuminating: it gives us an insight, for instance, into the authoritative position of Upright Jacob and his possible role in Temple politics just before the Roman-Jewish War; negatively, too, his Letters tell us something: before the Destruction of the Temple Paul was overshadowed by the Jerusalem Jesists. We can also estimate the speed of expansion in the very earliest tradition: when Paul mentions the appearance of the Risen Jesus to more than "500 brethern" (I Cor 15:6) he is already employing a formulaic expression typical of an already fixed tradition to events that occurred fairly soon after Simon the Rock's Vision.

The Jerusalem coterie did not interfere with the new speculations that under Hellenistic influence began in the Jewish Diaspora after the Vision: no doubt they were shapeless and unsystematic. Perhaps such speculations came to the surface in only a few centers—such as Antioch—that were to become important after the extinction of the Jerusalem coterie in the debacle of 70. And it was just this fact of their later importance that was concealed after the debacle by the instinctive creation of a legendary, mythological fabric to manifest the continuity claimed by all institutions.

The conventional view of theologians today would have it that the anti-Torah, transcendental conception of Jesus held by Paul and Stephen had already struck deep roots

throughout the "Christian" community long before the destruction of the Temple in 70. From that point of view, accordingly, the elimination of the "Mother Church" —the Jesist Coterie—and all the more so of the Temple and the Jewish State meant nothing—a mere clearing away of the debris long since left behind by the evolving faith.

This conventional view, is also, of course, the grand theme of *Acts*—indeed, its purpose. Yet it can hardly be correct: Paul's Letters, written many decades before the destruction of the Temple and long before the evolution of any theological "views" at all, show his second-class status. They show his irritation with the contending "Gospels" he kept colliding with, the hostile attitude of the Jerusalem "pillars," the atmosphere of contention and self-justification. The impression left by these striking motifs in Paul's Letters is reinforced negatively by their random and fragmentary survival.

From an historical point of view it is plain that Paul was dead long before the triumph of his ideas: the destruction of the Temple cleared the way for the tendentious slanting of the Gospels, beginning with *Mark*, away from the real-life career of Jesus, executed by the Romans for sedition, into the Pacific Christ, Lord of the Universe, and Savior of Mankind, whose salvational powers were to be mediated to believers via the magical apparatus of the Church.

In one respect proto-Christianity carried on the tradition of Judaism: it was grounded in mundane history as well as in reflections on its meaning. Yet the contrast with Judaism, in which the Creator of the Universe stands apart from his own handiwork, was fundamental: Incarnation, propped up on two great events, the Crucifixion (and its meaning) and the Vision of the Risen Jesus (and its meaning) was the very core of the new faith. For Judaism, the Incarnation was inconceivable.

The surviving Letters of Paul provided a theological framework for the pseudo-historical Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. The combination of these writings into a canon made necessary the obfuscation of the facts they contain.

It seems fair to say that until very recently the sum total of all scholarship dealing with Christian origins has been confined to tendentious documents. Since it reaches conclusions implied in its premises, it constitutes no more than a vast circular argument—a begging of the question. The apologetics, both theological and practical, that generated the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles cannot, without incisive analysis, solve historical puzzles.

The warping of perspective inherent in our sources can scarcely be exaggerated. Because of the very fact that Christian tradition was itself fabricated by writings, the conventional view today accepts without question a transcendental interpretation of those origins, an interpretation that, overshadowed at first by the historical expectations of the first Jesist coterie, later, after the Jewish debacle in 70, swept the field and was amplified, magnified, ramified, and consolidated precisely as the institutional expression of the triumphant tendency.

If the rationale of the Church is summed up in the phrase ascribed to the Risen Jesus—"I am with you always, until the World's End"—and if its institutional continuity is guaranteed by the passage aimed at Doubting Thomas—"Blessed are those who have not seen (the Risen Jesus's) wounds and yet believe" (Jn 20:29)—we see how essential it was for Christian theology from the very beginning to wrench both Jesus and the Kingdom of God out of their historical matrix.

It was thus the course of history itself that created Christian theology—conditioned, to be sure, by the longings of multitudes.

Yet historicized theology is imaginary history: the web of myth has suffocated the history of real people.

What is, perhaps, astonishing is the durability of that imaginary history. Christianity is the only major religion whose essence is substantiated by supernatural claims made on behalf of an historic individual—claims, moreover, expressed in actual documents. One might have thought, once the documents were closely scrutinized, that the real-life background of the supernatural claims would eventually edge aside or at least modify the claims themselves. Yet to this day the tradition has survived all the assaults of commonsense; it has withstood the counterweight of probability, of rank impossibility, of pervasive discrepancies, of manifest contradictions, of outright nonsensicality.

The hundreds of millions of Protestants—recently joined by Catholics, now also allowed to read the Bible freely —who even in childhood read and study the New Testament, which despite its ethereal cast constantly hints at factual situations, look—and see nothing. Huge motion pictures have been made depicting, in a naturalistic setting, the supposed events of Jesus' life in Roman Palestine. These motion pictures, conscientiously made with the guidance of sincere experts, are so foolish when held up against their real-life background in the vividness called for by naturalism that one might well think the insulating walls of traditional perception would surely be pierced.

They seem to elicit no reflection. Audiences are so conditioned by the theological interpretation of the historic setting that the setting itself is apprehended dimly or not at all; the mythology is potent enough to plaster over all the fissures between itself and real-life plausibility.

Accounts of Christian origins that diverge from the tradition are often called "hypothetical," even by skeptics, as though the tradition itself were true to life.

This attitude on the part of believers and non-believers alike seems to me due to a sort of shyness, a reluctance to accept conclusions arising out of the logic of analysis.

Some find it difficult to accept the contradictions in the sources, as when, for instance, the "pacific" passages attributed to Jesus contradict the martial passages, the references to arms and so on. Others, accepting one part of a Gospel but not another, will doubt the likelihood of the Romans' having allowed Jesus to survive as long as he did, instead of arresting him, say, on the spot. At bottom many are put off by the notion that the historic Jesus could possibly have been so utterly different from the Jesus conceived of by Paul; they require a palpable demonstration, however tenuous, of a link between the two irreconcilable portraits.

The "Higher Critics", after almost two centuries of analysis, have not been helpful in filling the empirical void left by the destruction of the tradition. No doubt this, too, is due to a reluctance to venture into conjecture and surmise, away from the buttressing of documentation. For instance, even though the connections between Judah the Galilean, John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Zealot leaders of the war against Rome are unmistakable, they are not, after all, fleshed out in sufficiently copious detail to make a dense chronicle possible.

Still, three facts remain: Jesus preached the "Kingdom of God;" he was executed as "King of the Jews"; everything expressly attributed to him was taken from one aspect or another of Judaism.

These three facts, which after all are also embedded in our sources, entail two conclusions: The first is that for the evolution of the later religion we are thrown back, in sum, not to Jesus, but to what was said *about* him—to the theology that after Jesus' death was layered around the concept of Lord of the Universe and Savior of Mankind. The second is that we can, very reasonably, extrapolate from the nuggets of history I have mentioned a true though, to be sure, scanty account.

These three facts, then, when propped up on the factual matter scattered about even in the Gospels and Acts and downright abundant in Josephus's writings, constitute a tripod sturdy enough to warrant a "new" account of Christian origins. It is possible to extract from the sources a coherent chronicle of the Kingdom of God agitation against Rome during the first century of the Empire that will locate Jesus in time and space and explain how normal history was later transformed—again, in time and space—into the theology of a great Church.

Inevitably, that chronicle will be skimpy; while the factual structure, so to speak, is there, the details are bound to be absent precisely because of the process we have been discussing. The Kingdom of God agitation against Rome—in other words, the Jewish independence movement—is a sort of Lost Continent: the historiography that covered the two centuries between the successful Maccabee insurrection and the abortive Bar Kochba insurrection is, except for Josephus, simply missing. And even Josephus, whose histories stop in any case with 70, is warped, despite his copious detail, by his hostility to the independence movement and in particular by his omission of the background to Christianity (it is, of course, conceivable that self-serving parties might have eliminated references to Jesus in Josephus's early manuscripts).

What remains of the Lost Continent are skeletal vestiges and some glimpses—a few peaks, a spur or two, a panoramic vista. Still, bare bones are better than nothing.

The philosophical implications of such a reconstruction surely demand a re-assessment of our own history. For if this reconstruction of Christian origins is accepted, it will be evident that it was not the career or Jesus, after all, that was the seminal event of the modern age, but the Jewish debacle of 70.

New Year's Eve

Meyer Liben

It was twenty minutes to twelve, but there was nothing to indicate that it was twenty minutes before the New Year. I was sitting next to a man who had introduced himself as Hudson, and I immediately commented that Thomas Hudson was the name of the hero in Ernest Hemingway's posthumously published novel, *Islands In The Stream*, which I had recently read.

"What's it about?" asked Hudson.

"It's about difficult work, desperate love, and death."

"How come you didn't put an adjective before 'death'?" asked Hudson.

"That word can get along without an adjective," I replied.

We were looking north through a window at the familiar nightscape of the city. I do not know what Hudson felt, but I felt the comfort of shelter on a bitter cold night, and that New Year's Eve sense of desolation and futurity.

There were a couple of dozen people in the room, broken up into small groups in accord with inclination, accident, and the arrangement of the furniture.

"You know," said Hudson, "it feels like the end of an Old Year more than the beginning of a New Year."

"Past experience bears more on some than does the expectancy of the unknown," I replied in the sententious manner which many find annoying, including myself.

A nearby couple were having a serious low-keyed discussion about a family matter, and across the room an exuberant drunk was telling a small group a long anecdote which was being listened to with varying degrees of interest.

"When Hemingway died," said Hudson, "a number of critics commented that his stories would outlast his novels."

"Some race," I said.

The sound of a police siren faintly entered the steam-heated room.

"How come he knocked himself off?" asked Hudson. "What's your feeling about it?"

"Well," I said, "if you figure Hudson to be pretty much autobiographical, and that's how it sounds, then he tells you in the novel. He says that work keeps him alive, that if he couldn't get that daily work done, he'd be lost, his day would lose all its meaning. By work he means his painting, which we translate into Hemingway's writing. Indeed, in an earlier book, he wrote: '. . . I felt the death loneliness that comes at the end of every day that is wasted in your life.' In this last book he talks about the matter in a strong, single-minded way. Without work accomplishment, the actuality or strong potentiality of it, he felt he was nothing. The work was a talisman, a defense, a protection against the inroads of mortality. There must have come a time when he felt that the work, actual or potential, was not under his control (Carlos Baker, in his biography, indicates that). That bulwark gone, he did away with himself."

"There's plenty of other kinds of work in the world besides writing," said Hudson. "He could have worked as a fisherman. . ."

"Come on, Hudson," I said, "at this stage it was not a question of livelihood with him. He was a very competitive man, kept comparing himself to the greatest writers, and I suppose that when he was continually creating, he felt that he was struggling with God, with the original Creation. When that ceased to be the case, he left the world. All his pride, duty, defiance, sense of being, and meaning in the world, was tied up with that creative making."

"How about his children?" asked Hudson, "their need for him?"

"The way he saw it, children need a courageous father. Baker quotes him to the effect that the worst luck for a kid is to have a coward for a father. And he maybe equated lack of creative juices with cowardice."

"Well," said Hudson, "courage is a most urgent quality, but there may be other qualities just as important. Charity, for example. He could have spent time, in his own way, helping others, or working with them to transform lives and institutions. The sense of justice."

"I guess for him there was no substitute for the courage of creation."

Just then I heard the first ring of the telephone in a room down the hall. As the second ring began, I was at the phone, having excused myself abruptly to Hudson and skilfully weaved through the scattered groups. My son had promised to call me at midnight, and that young, hopeful voice was indeed there.

"Hi dad. Happy New Year."

"Happy New Year to you. How's the party?"

"Great, really great. All the kids are here, music and everything."

"Marvelous. Stay with it. I'm always with you."

"I know it, dad. I know it all the time."

And then I moved back into the party room, knowing that the sense of the New Year was beginning to stir in the hearts of all those here, and everywhere, all the ones loved and unloved, neglected, forgotten, in the hearts of all *the undefeated.*

Gotthold Lessing

Ernst and Falk: Conversations for Freemasons

Translation and notes by Chaninah Maschler

At Ephesus towards his life's end, when his disciples could barely carry him to church and his voice could not put together several words, St. John the Evangelist used to say nothing at each meeting except this: "My sons, love one another." Bored at always hearing the same words, his disciples and the brothers who were present asked: "Teacher, why do you always repeat the same thing?" John's answer was worthy of him: "Because it is the Lord's command. And if it only be done, it shall suffice."

Beatus Ioannes Evangelista, cum Ephesi moraretur usque ad ultimam senectutem, et vix inter discipulorum manus ad Esslesiam deferretur, nec posset in plura vocem verba contexere, nihil aliud per singulas solebat proferre collectas, nisi hoc: Filioli diligite alterutrum. Tandem discipuli et fratres qui aderant, taedio affecti, quod eadem semper audirent, dixerunt: Magister, quare semper hoc loqueris? Qui respondit dignam Ionne sententiam: Quia praeceptum Domini est, et si solùm fiat, sufficit.

(Lessing concludes his short dialogue, the *Testament of John* [1777], with this passage from St. Jerome's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians [6]*).

Prefatory Note

Lessing died in 1781, the year in which Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* was published. Eleven years earlier he had accepted a call from the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel to settle in Wolfenbüttel, there to superintend the Ducal Library. His original reasons for accepting the Duke's invitation were financial, but he soon came to use his somewhat protected position as librarian to advance the cause of Spinoza, Leibniz, and Locke—the great cause of religious toleration.[1]

Only a few days after settling in at Wolfenbüttel he had discovered a manuscript on the sacrament of the eucharist by Berengarius of Tours (died 1088), which gave support to a Lutheran interpretation of the Lord's Supper. He published it under the rubric *Contributions to History and Literature: From the Treasures of the Ducal Library at Wolfenbüttel.* At intervals he would, under the same heading, publish carefully annotated editions of other manuscripts found in the Woffenbüttel Library.

Thus, in 1774, he announces in print, under the by now established heading, that he has unearthed "fragments" of a mysteriously untitled and anonymous work that was hidden among the more recently acquired Ducal manuscripts. How the pages got into the library and whether they originally constituted one whole he has been unable to establish, though he notes that all the fragments have one and the same objective—to examine revealed religion and test the trustworthiness of Biblical history. The first fragment is sent into the world under the title *On Tolerating Deists.*

It doesn't cause a stir. Three years later he publishes five more "anonymous fragments": *On Decrying Reason*

A tutor at St. John's College, Annapolis, Md., Chaninah Maschler has recently published an essay on Eva Brann's *Paradoxes of Education in a Republic* in *Interpretation* (10,1, January 1982).

from the Pulpit, Impossibility of a Revelation which All Men can Believe on Rational Grounds, The Israelites' Crossing of the Red Sea, That the Books of the Old Testament were not Written to Reveal a Religion, On the Resurrection Narrative.

To protect the laity and needle the professional theologians he appends some "counter propositions by the Editor," the tenor of which can be gathered from the following passage:

> . . . Much might be said in reply. . . But even supposing there could be no rebuttal, what follows? The learned theologian would, perhaps, in the end, be embarrassed, but need the Christian be? Surely not! At most, the theologian would be perplexed to see the supports with which he wanted to uphold religion thus shaken, to find the buttresses cast down by which he, God willing, had kept it safe and sound. But what does the Christian care about that man's hypotheses and explanations and demonstrations? For him it is a fact, something that exists, this Christianity which he feels to be true and in which he feels blessed. When the paralytic experiences the beneficial shocks of the electric spark, does he care whether Nollet or Franklin or neither of the two is right?

This time Lessing succeeds in provoking a reaction: The orthodox, led by the Chief Pastor of Hamburg, Johann Melchior Goeze (1717-1786), proceed to the defense of their territory, though they call it a fight for truth and in behalf of the hearts and minds of the faithful.

Given the manifest mystery-mongering of Lessing's original account of his finding of the Wolfenbüttel Fragments, most readers, unless otherwise instructed by a scholarly note, will think of them as composed by Lessing himself. They will be all the more disposed to take them as expressing Lessing's own beliefs when they read the very long final "fragment," *On the Aims of Jesus and his Disciples.*

Yet the facts are otherwise: Before settling in Wolfenbüttel in 1770 Lessing had been given the manuscript for a book entitled *Apology or Defense of Rational Worshippers of God.* Its author, Hermann Samuel Reimarus, Professor of Oriental languages at the Gymnasium in Hamburg, had allowed it to circulate privately but expressly advised against publication "until more enlightened days." After Reimarus's death his daughter showed the manuscript to Lessing and, either at her initiative or at Lessing's, the two of them plotted to have the book published, thereby to *hasten* the coming of enlightenment. Berlin publishers refused to take on the job, for fear of the censor. But as Librarian to the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, paid to glorify the Ducal House by exhibiting its scholarly treasures to the world, Lessing was protected against the censors! Hence the scheme to publish Reimarus's detailed critique of Revealed Religion in "fragments" ostensibly found in the Ducal Library. Reimarus's argument would complete Spinoza's (in the *Theologico-Political Treatise*) that faith and philosophy are fundamentally distinct, that the certainty of faith is not mathematical but moral, and that freedom of conscience not only *can* be granted without imperiling public peace but *must* be granted in the interest of public peace.

But the power of the orthodox is too great for Lessing: In 1778 he is deprived of his freedom from censorship and must turn in the manuscript of Reimarus's *Apology.* That same year he publishes, anonymously, the *Dialogues for Freemasons* translated below, the year thereafter *Nathan the Wise,* and finally, in 1780 (again anonymously), the essay in which he shows more explicitly in what respects he *differs* from Reimarus and Spinoza, *On the Education of Mankind.* The difference lies in Lessing's different attitude toward human history: The hope for, the faith in the *gradual* though always *partial* and *perspectival* enlightenment of all mankind and some uncertainty about the location and permanence of the boundaries separating "the few" from "the many" is what sets him apart from Spinoza and Reimarus.

At their first appearance, the *Conversations for Freemasons* were dedicated to Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, not the reigning Duke, Charles, but his brother. The dedication is appropriate because the House of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel seems to have had a tradition of supporting enlightment: For example, Duke Anton Ulrich, two generations or so earlier, had invited Leibniz, who then (about 1706) occupied the same position as librarian later held by Lessing under Duke Charles, to design plans for a building that would house the already magnificent Ducal Library, and the plan offered by Leibniz, and executed, was for a kind of "library temple." Again, the persecuted author of the first translation into German of Matthew Tindal's *Christianity as Old as the Creation* as well as of Spinoza's *Ethics,* J. Lorenz Schmidt (1702–49), spent his last years under an assumed name in Wolfenbüttel: The Duke of Brunswick had given him asylum. Moreover, Duke Ferdinand and Duke Charles both were Masons, but according to Heinrich Schneider ("Lessing und die Freimaurer," 169, *Zwolf Biographische Studien*), Duke Ferdinand carried more weight in local Masonic affairs.

Given the fact that not only the immediate addressee of the *Conversations for Freemasons,* Duke Ferdinand, but Lessing himself as well, were Freemasons, sworn to secrecy, the elusiveness of certain passages in the *Conversations* should not be surprising. Given the further fact that many, to this day, seem to be attracted to the Brotherhood because they love to believe that there *are* secrets which, if they live long enough, *they* may gradually learn, while others, uninitiated, have no hope of learning them, the occasionally irritating evasive allusions in the dialogues can, I believe, sometimes be taken ironically, as a joke on insiders. The presence of odd-sounding words and phrases such as "Brother Speaker" or "accept" is due to Lessing's desire to give the dialogues Masonic coloring. How, otherwise, could he convert his brethren?

Translation

Dedication: To His Serene Highness, Duke Ferdinand:

I too stood by the well of truth and drew from it. How deeply, only he can judge from whom I await permission to draw more deeply still. The people have long been languishing. They are dying of thirst.

His Highness' most obedient servant.

Introduction by a Third Party:

If the following pages do not contain the true *ontology* of Freemasonry, I desire to be told which of the innumerable writings occasioned by Freemasonry gives a more exact idea of its *true nature* (Lessing's italics). But if all Freemasons, no matter of what stamp, willingly allow that the point of view indicated here is the only one from which sound eyes can see something genuine (rather than a phantom rearing up before the nearly blind), why has it been so long till someone spoke plainly?

Many and diverse things might be said in reply. But it would be hard to come up with a question more nearly like the one just uttered than this: Why were systematically laid-out handbooks of Christianity produced so late? Why have there been so many good Christians for so long who neither could nor would give a rational account of their faith? Indeed, such handbooks of Christianity as we now have might still be said to have been produced prematurely (since faith itself probably gained little from them), were it not that [certain] Christians had conceived the notion of explaining the faith in a totally nonsensical way.

The application of these remarks can be left to the reader.

First Conversation:

Ernst: What are you thinking about, friend?
Falk: Nothing.
Ernst: But you're so quiet.
Falk: Precisely! Who thinks when he is enjoying himself? And I'm enjoying the lovely morning.
Ernst: You are quite right. So, why not ask me what I'm thinking about?
Falk: If I *were* thinking about something I'd be talking: No pleasure compares with that of thinking out loud with a friend.
Ernst: I agree.
Falk: Perhaps you've had your fill of quietly taking in the fine morning. Why don't *you* talk if something occurs to you.
Ernst: I've been meaning to ask you something for a long time.
Falk: Ask away!
Ernst: Is it true, friend, that you are a Freemason?
Falk: That's the question of one who is not a Mason.
Ernst: Admittedly. But give me a straight answer, are you a Freemason?
Falk: I believe myself to be one.
Ernst: That's the answer of one who doesn't feel quite sure of himself.
Falk: But I am.
Ernst: Then you must know whether, when, where, and through whom you were "accepted."
Falk: I know those things. But they don't mean all that much.
Ernst: How is that?
Falk: Who doesn't "accept." And who isn't "accepted"!
Ernst: What do you mean?
Falk: I believe that I am a Freemason, not because older Masons have accepted me into an official lodge, but because I understand and appreciate what and why Freemasonry is, when and where it has existed, what fosters or hinders it.
Ernst: And nevertheless you speak in such tones of doubt —"I believe myself to be one"?
Falk: I've grown accustomed to that tone, not because of lack of conviction, but because I would not stand in anyone's way.
Ernst: You answer me as though I were a stranger.
Falk: Stranger or friend!
Ernst: You were accepted, you know everything....?
Falk: Others, too, have been accepted and believe they know.
Ernst: But could you have been accepted without knowing what you know?
Falk: Yes, unfortunately.
Ernst: How?
Falk: Because many who "accept" others do not themselves know it[2] while the few who do *cannot* say it (Lessing's italics).
Ernst: But could you know what you know without having been accepted?
Falk: Why not? Freemasonry isn't an arbitrary thing, a luxury, but a necessity, grounded in the nature of man and of civil society. So to come upon it as a result of one's own reflection rather than under the guidance of others *must* be possible.
Ernst: Freemasonry isn't anything arbitrary? Doesn't it involve words and signs and customs every one of which might have been different, and so must be arbitrary?
Falk: Sure. But these words, these signs, these customs do not constitute Freemasonry.
Ernst: Freemasonry a necessity? How did people manage before Freemasonry?
Falk: Freemasonry has always existed.
Ernst: Come off it! What is this necessary, this indispensable Freemasonry?
Falk: As I indicated earlier, something of which even those who know it cannot speak.
Ernst: A nonentity, then?
Falk: Don't be hasty.
Ernst: What I understand I can put into words.

Falk: Not always, and often not in such a way that the words convey to others the idea I have exactly.
Ernst: Approximately, if not exactly.
Falk: Approximately the same idea would be useless or even dangerous here: Useless, if it conveys less than the idea; dangerous if it holds the least little bit more.
Ernst: Odd! If even the Freemasons who know the secret of their order cannot impart it verbally, how, then, do they spread their order?
Falk: Through deeds. They allow good men and youths whom they deem worthy of more intimate association to surmise, guess at, *see* their deeds (as much of them as is visible). Their new intimates find such deeds to their liking and do the same.
Ernst: Deeds? Deeds done by Freemasons? I only know their speeches and songs—more often prettily printed than thought or recited.
Falk: (interrupting his friend)—as are lots of other songs and speeches.
Ernst: Or am I supposed to take the things they boast of in these songs as their deeds?
Falk: Do you think they are just boasting?
Ernst: And what are they boasting about, anyway? Nothing except what is expected of every good human being and decent citizen—that they're so friendly, so charitable, so obedient, so patriotic.
Falk: Are those virtues nothing?
Ernst: Nothing that would set the Freemasons apart from the rest of mankind. Who isn't supposed to be friendly, charitable, and the rest?
Falk: Supposed to be!
Ernst: Aren't there plenty of incentives and opportunities for these virtues apart from Freemasonry?
Falk: Yes, but the Masonic fellowship gives men an additional incentive.
Ernst: What's the good of multiplying incentives to virtue? Better to strengthen one motive to the utmost. A multitude of motives is like a multitude of gears in a machine: the more gears, the more slips.
Falk: I can't deny it.
Ernst: Besides, what sort of "additional incentive" is this that belittles all others, casts doubt on them, gives itself out as strongest and best?
Falk: Friend, be fair! Don't judge by the exaggerations or petty vindictiveness of idle songs and speeches. They're the work of apprentices, callow disciples.
Ernst: You mean, Brother Speaker was talking nonsense?
Falk: I mean, the things that Brother Speaker was praising the Freemasons for are obviously not their deeds, since (whatever else you may say of him) he doesn't talk out of school,[3] and deeds speak for themselves.
Ernst: I'm beginning to see what you are driving at. Why didn't they occur to me before, those deeds, those telling, I'd almost call them shouting, deeds: Freemasons don't just support one another, and powerfully so, like members of any association. They work for the public good of any state of which they are members.
Falk: For instance? I want to be sure you're on the right track.
Ernst: For instance, the Freemasons of Stockholm, didn't they establish a foundling hospital?
Falk: I hope that the Freemasons of Stockholm showed their mettle at other occasions.
Ernst: What other occasions?
Falk: Just others.
Ernst: And the Freemasons of Dresden, who employ poor young girls as lace makers and embroiderers, to reduce the size of the foundling hospital!
Falk: Ernst, need I remind you of your name? Be serious!
Ernst: Well, seriously, consider the Freemasons of Brunswick, who give talented poor boys drawing lessons.
Falk: What's wrong with that?
Ernst: Or the Freemasons of Berlin, who support Basedow's Philanthropin.[4]
Falk: The Masons support Basedow's institute. Who told you that fable?
Ernst: It was all over the newspaper.
Falk: You read it in the newspaper? I won't believe it till I see Basedow's handwritten receipt. And I'd want to be sure that it was made out to *the* Freemasons, not just to some Freemasons in Berlin.
Ernst: Why? Don't you approve of Basedow's institute.
Falk:: Me? I approve wholeheartedly.
Ernst: Then you won't begrudge him such financial assistance?
Falk: Begrudge? Quite the contrary. Who is a stronger well-wisher of Basedow than I?
Ernst: Well, then. . . . You're becoming incomprehensible.
Falk: I suppose so. Anyway, I was unfair: Even *Freemasons* may undertake something not *as* Freemasons.
Ernst: Does that hold for all their other good deeds as well?
Falk: Perhaps. Perhaps the several good deeds you enumerated just now are, to use scholastic jargon for brevity's sake, their deeds *ad extra*.
Ernst: How do you mean that?
Falk: Perhaps these are the eye-catching things they do only to draw the multitude's attention, and which they do only on that account.
Ernst: To win respect and toleration from the multitude?
Falk: Could be.
Ernst: What about their real deeds then? You keep silent?
Falk: Perhaps I have already answered you? Their real deeds are their secret.
Ernst: Ha Ha! Yet another one of those things that cannot be put into words?
Falk: Not very well. But I can and am permitted to tell you this much: The Freemasons' real deeds are so great and so far from realization that centuries may pass before someone can say, "This is what they achieved." Yet they have done everything good in the world, note well, in the *world*. And they continue to work for all the good that is to be in the world, note well, in the *world*.
Ernst: Come now, you are pulling my leg.

Falk: Indeed not. But look—there goes a butterfly that I *must* have. It's a *woepmilchraupe*—a milkweed caterpillar. I want to be off. The true deeds of the Freemasons aim at making most of the deeds commonly called good superfluous.
Ernst: But are these themselves good deeds?
Falk: None better. Think about that for a bit. I'll be right back.
Ernst: Good deeds whose object is to make good deeds superfluous? That's a riddle.[5] I refuse to guess at riddles. I'd rather stretch out beneath this tree and watch the ants.

Second Conversation

Ernst: What's been keeping you? You didn't catch your butterfly after all?
Falk: It lured me from bush to bush, down to the brook. Suddenly, it was on the other side.
Ernst: There are such seducers!
Falk: Have you thought it over?
Ernst: What? Your riddle? I won't catch my butterfly either. But I am not going to worry about mine from now on. I tried once to talk to you about Freemasonry. That's enough. You are just like the rest of them—obviously.
Falk: The rest of them? But they don't say the things I say.
Ernst: They don't? So there are heretics among the Masons, too? And you are one of them? But heretics always have something in common with the orthodox. And that's what I meant.
Falk: What *did* you mean?
Ernst: Orthodox or heretical—Freemasons all play with words, provoke questions and then answer without really answering.
Falk: Is that so? Well, then, let's talk about something else, since you tore me away from my pleasant condition of mute contemplation.
Ernst: Nothing is easier than getting you back into that condition. Just lie down beside me and look.
Falk: At what?
Ernst: At the life and activity in and around and on top of this ant heap. Such busyness—and such order! Every one of them fetches and carries and pushes, and yet none is in the other's way. Look, they even help each other!
Falk: Ants live in society just like bees.
Ernst: And theirs is a society more wonderful than the bees', because there is none in their midst to bind them together or to rule over them.
Falk: Order can exist even without government?
Ernst: If every individual knows how to rule himself, why not?[6]
Falk: I wonder whether human beings will ever reach that stage.
Ernst: Hardly.
Falk: What a shame.
Ernst: Indeed.
Falk: Get up. Let's go: They're going to crawl all over you, I mean the ants. I want to ask *you* something. I don't know your opinion on this at all.
Ernst: On what?
Falk: Civil society, for human beings in general. How do you size it up?
Ernst: As a great good thing.
Falk: No doubt. But do you consider it a means or an end?
Ernst: I don't follow.
Falk: Do you think that men were made for the state or rather states for men?
Ernst: Some, it seems, want to maintain the former, but the latter is probably truer.
Falk: I think so too. States unite human beings in order that—through and in these associations—every individual human being may better and more securely enjoy his share of happiness. The totality of the shares of happiness of the members is the happiness of the state. Apart from this there is no happiness. Every other so-called happiness of the state, for the sake of which some of the members, no matter how few, are said to *have to* suffer, is only a cover-up for tyranny.
Ernst: I would rather not say that so loud.
Falk: Why?
Ernst: A truth which each construes according to his own situation is easily abused.
Falk: Do you realize, friend, that you're already a demi-Freemason?
Ernst: Who? Me?
Falk: Yes, since you admit there are truths better not spoken.
Ernst: Yes, but they *could* be spoken.
Falk: The sage is *unable* to say things better left unsaid.
Ernst: As you wish. Let's not get back to the Freemasons. I don't want to know about them anyway.
Falk: I beg your pardon. But at least you see that I'm willing to tell you more about them.
Ernst: You are making fun of me. All right, civil society and political organization of whatever sort are mere means to human happiness. What follows?
Falk: Means only! And means of human devising, though I won't deny that nature has arranged things in such a way that men would have had to invent political organization sooner or later.[7]
Ernst: Which is why some have held that civil society is a natural end: Because everything—our passions and our needs—leads there, they believed that civil society and the state are ultimate ends of nature. As though natural teleology didn't bear on the production of means! As though nature were more interested in the happiness of abstractions like STATE, FATHERLAND, than in the happiness of flesh and blood individuals!
Falk: Fine! You're meeting me half-way. The next thing I want to ask you is this: Admitting that political constitutions are means, and means of human invention, would you say that they alone are exempt from the vicissitudes of human means?

Ernst: What do you mean by "the vicissitudes of human means"?
Falk: What makes them different from divine, infallible means.
Ernst: What?
Falk: That they are *not* infallible: Worse than being unreliable, they often produce results contrary to their design.
Ernst: Give me an example, if you can think of one.
Falk: Ships and navigation are means toward distant lands but they are also to blame for many a man's never arriving there.
Ernst: Those who suffer shipwreck and drown? I see what you are driving at. But the reasons for a constitution's failure, why it cheats so many individuals of their happiness, can be learned. There are many types of constitution, one better than the next; some very inadequate, blatantly at odds with their purpose; the best may yet be undiscovered.
Falk: Forget about that. Suppose the very best constitution imaginable were invented. Suppose everybody the world over accepted it. Don't you think that even then, under this best constitution, things that are extremely disadvantageous to human happiness would necessarily occur, things of which men in the state of nature would have been utterly ignorant?
Ernst: If such things occur under the supposedly best constitution, I infer it isn't the best after all.
Falk: Assuming that a better one is possible? Well, take that better one as best and repeat the question.
Ernst: You seem to me to be disguising with spurious subtlety that you assume all along that every instrument of human invention, including political constitutions, *must* be flawed.
Falk: I'm not just assuming it.
Ernst: Show me.
Falk: You want examples of the harm that comes necessarily of even the best constitution? I could mention ten at least!
Ernst: One will do for a start.
Falk: We are supposing that the best constitution has been invented and that all mankind lives under it. Does that imply that all human beings in the world make up one single state?
Ernst: Hardly. Such an immense state would be ungovernable. So it would have to be divided into many smaller states, all governed with the same laws.
Falk: People would still be Germans and Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Spaniards, Russians and Swedes, or whatever they happen to be called?
Ernst: Certainly.
Falk: Wouldn't each of these states have its own interests, and the members of each state have the interests of whatever state happens to be theirs?
Ernst: Obviously.
Falk: These state-interests would often clash, wouldn't they, just as they do now? So wouldn't the citizens of two different states be just as unable to encounter one another without the burden of prejudice and suspicion if they lived under the best imaginable constitution as a German and a Frenchman, or a Frenchman and an Englishman today?
Ernst: Very probably.
Falk: When a German meets a Frenchman or a Frenchman an Englishman, he does not meet him simply as a human being, as a fellow man to whom he is drawn because of their shared nature. They meet as German and French, French and English; aware of their nations' competing interests, they are from the start cold, distant, suspicious toward one another.
Ernst: You're right, unfortunately.
Falk: Doesn't that prove that the means for uniting human beings, for assuring their happiness through association, also divide them?
Ernst: I suppose so.
Falk: One step further; these several states, many of them, will have climates that are very different; consequently they will have quite different needs and satisfactions; consequently they will have different moral codes; consequently different religions. Don't you think?
Ernst: That's an enormous step!
Falk: Wouldn't people still be Jews and Christians and Moslems and such?
Ernst: I don't dare deny it.
Falk: In that case, Christians, Jews, and Moslems alike will continue to deal with each other as before, not as one human being with another, but as a Christian with a Jew, a Jew with a Moslem: Each will claim that men of *his* type are spiritually superior to men of other type, and they will thus lay the foundation for rights that natural man could not possibly claim to be possessed of.[8]
Ernst: It's very sad. But what you say is probably quite true.
Falk: Only "probably true"?
Ernst: I would think that, just as you supposed that all the world's states would have the same political constitution, so one ought to suppose that they would be of one religion. I can't imagine how they could be the same politically without religious uniformity.
Falk: Me neither! Anyway, I proposed the hypothesis of the one best political constitution only to prevent your evading the issue [of the possibility or impossibility of a perfect constitution.][9] Political and religious uniformity the world over are equally impossible. [The steps of our argument were:] One state, several states. Several states, several political constitutions. Several political constitutions, several religions.
Ernst: Yes, that's how things look.
Falk: That's how they are! Consider next the second misfortune which civil society, quite at odds with its end, gives rise to. Civil society cannot unite men without dividing them, nor divide them without erecting walls or digging ditches to keep them apart.
Ernst: Those chasms are so dreadful, those walls often so impossible to climb!
Falk: I must add a third: Civil society doesn't just divide

human beings along national and religious lines. Without divisions and separations, that form subordinate wholes, there would be no whole whatever. But civil society divides on and on within each such partial whole.[10]
Ernst: Explain.
Falk: Do you believe a state without differentiation of social classes is conceivable? Let it be a good or a bad state, closer or further from perfection, it is impossible for all its citizens to share the same conditions. Even if they all participate in legislative activity, they cannot all have an equal share in it; at least, not an equal direct share. So there are going to be upper and lower classes. And supposing that originally each citizen got an equal share in the state's wealth, this distribution cannot be expected to last beyond a mere two generations: One man will know better than another how to increase his property; or the poorly administered estate must, nevertheless, be shared among more heirs than the well-administered one. Soon there are bound to be rich and poor.
Ernst: Evidently.
Falk: Consider now, are there many evils that are *not* due to such social differentiation?
Ernst: As though I could contradict you! But why would I want to, anyway? To unite human beings one must divide them, and keep them divided. Granted. That's how it is. It can't be otherwise.
Falk: Precisely!
Ernst: But what's the point of dwelling on this conclusion? Are you trying to make civil society hateful to me? Do you want me to regret that people ever conceived the idea of uniting into states?
Falk: Do you know me so little? If the only good gained from civil society were that human reason can be cultivated there, and there alone, I would bless it even if the evils it produced were greater by far than the ones mentioned.
Ernst: If you want to enjoy the fire you must expect to put up with the smoke—as the saying goes.
Falk: Quite. But granting that fire makes smoke unavoidable, should one therefore prohibit the invention of chimneys? Is the fellow who invented them to be called an enemy of fire? You see, *that's* what I was after.
Ernst: What? I don't follow you.
Falk: And yet the image was most suitable.[11] If human beings cannot be united into states apart from such divisions as we spoke of, does that make the divisions good?
Ernst: Why, no.
Falk: Does it make them sacred?
Ernst: How do you mean that, "sacred"?
Falk: I mean, so that touching them ought to be prohibited.
Ernst: Touching with what end in view?
Falk: This, of not letting them gain more ground than is absolutely necessary, of canceling their ill effects as much as possible.
Ernst: Why should that be prohibited?
Falk: But it can't very well be enjoined either, at least not by the civil law, since the civil law holds only within the boundaries of the state, and what is wanted is precisely something that crosses these. So it can only be an *opus supererogatum* ["a work of supererogation"; see note 5]: That the wisest and best of every state freely undertake this task beyond the call of duty can only be wished for.
Ernst: However ardent, it must remain merely a wish.
Falk: I believe so. May there be men in every state who are beyond popular prejudices and who know when patriotism ceases to be virtuous.
Ernst: I join you in your wish.
Falk: May every state contain men who are not the creatures of the prejudices of the religion they were raised in, who do not believe that everything which they regard as good and true must be good and true.
Ernst: May it be so.
Falk: May every state contain men who are not dazzled by high position and not put off by low, men in whose company the nobleman gladly stoops and the lowly confidently rises.
Ernst: May it be so.
Falk: What if this wish of ours were fulfilled?
Ernst: Fulfilled? To be sure, here and there a man like that might turn up.
Falk: I don't mean just here and there and now and then.
Ernst: In certain epochs and certain regions there might even be several such men.
Falk: What would you say if I told you that men like this exist everywhere today; that from now on there are always going to be such men?
Ernst: Please God!
Falk: What if I told you, further, that they do not live ineffectually dispersed, like the Church Invisible?
Ernst: Happy dream!
Falk: I'll get right to the point—these men that we are speaking of are the Freemasons.
Ernst: What's that you're saying?
Falk: What if the Freemasons were the ones who count it one of their jobs to bridge those gaps and cross those boundaries that estrange men from one another?
Ernst: The Freemasons?
Falk: Yes, I'm saying they count it as *part* of their business.
Ernst: The Masons?
Falk: I beg your pardon. I forgot that you don't want to hear about them. Look—we're being called to breakfast. Let's go.
Ernst: Wait a minute, you say the Freemasons . . . ?
Falk: Our conversation brought me back to them against my will. I do apologize. We're bound to find more deserving matter for conversation once we join the breakfast crowd. Come!

Third Conversation:

Ernst: All day long you have been avoiding me in the crowd. But I've tracked you down to your bedroom.
Falk: Do you have something important to say to me? I'm too tired for a mere chat.

Ernst: You're ridiculing my curiosity.
Falk: Curiosity?
Ernst: Yes, which you so artfully *piqued* this morning.
Falk: What were we talking about this morning?
Ernst: The Freemasons.
Falk: Well, what about them? I hope I didn't give the secret away when I was high on the rhinewine.
Ernst: The secret which, you say, no one can give away?
Falk: All right. That restores my peace of mind.
Ernst: You said something about the Freemasons that came unexpected, struck me, made me think.
Falk: What was that?
Ernst: Come on, stop teasing me. I'm sure you remember.
Falk: Now that you mention it, it does come back to me. That's why you were so absentminded with your men and women friends all day?
Ernst: Right. I won't be able to get to sleep until you've answered at least one question of mine.
Falk: The question.?
Ernst: How can you prove, or at least support, your claim that the Freemasons have these great and worthy aims?
Falk: Did I speak to you of their aims? I was not aware of it. You were quite at a loss when I asked what might be the Masons' true deeds. I wanted to draw your attention to something that deserves to be worked at, something that doesn't figure in the dreams of our clever political theorists (*staatskluge Leute*). Perhaps the Masons are working on it. Perhaps they're working in that area. I merely wanted to cure you of the prejudice that every spot fit for building has been identified and occupied and that all construction work has duly been meted out.[12]
Ernst: Wiggle as you please: From your speeches I conclude that the Freemasons are people who have freely chosen the responsibility to work against the unavoidable evils of the state.
Falk: Such a conception of their undertaking will at least not dishonor them. Hold on to it. But understand it right. Don't include things that don't belong. We're talking about the unavoidable evils of the state, of *any* state, not about the evils that go with this or that particular state of a given constitution. The healing and alleviating of evils native to a particular state the Freemason leaves to its citizens, who must venture and risk themselves according to their citizen insight and courage. Evils of a quite different, higher kind are the object of the Mason's efforts. Though inasmuch as he is also a citizen, he may take part in making civic ills milder.
Ernst: I understand. Without the evils that concern the Mason there could be no happy citizens. They are not the evils that cause citizens unhappiness.
Falk: Right, the Freemasons mean to—how did you put it?—work against the unavoidable evils.
Ernst: Yes.
Falk: "Work against" may be too strong a word, if it is taken to mean "undo them." These evils cannot be undone. It would destroy the state. They should not even be made apparent now to those who do not yet perceive them as evils. At most they can be mitigated, by distantly stirring up this perception in people, by allowing it to germinate and send out shoots, by clearing away weeds and thinning out the new plants. Now do you understand why I said that, whether or not Freemasons have always been at work, centuries may pass before one could say "This is what they wrought"?
Ernst: Yes, and I now also understand the second part of the riddle—"good deeds that are to make good deeds superfluous."[13]
Falk: Fine! Go, then, and study these evils. Get to know them all. Weigh their mutual influences. This study will reveal things to you which, in days of dejection, will seem irrefutable arguments against providence and virtue. But this discovery, this illumination, will give you peace and make you happy without being called a Freemason.
Ernst: You say the word "being called" with so much emphasis.
Falk: Because one may be something without being called it.
Ernst: All right. I understand. But to return to my question, which I need only rephrase: Since I now know the evils Freemasonry combats...
Falk: You know them?
Ernst: Didn't you yourself enumerate them for me?
Falk: I merely named a few of them, by way of test, just those which are obvious even to the most nearsighted, just a few of the most uncontested and most comprehensive. But there are many less obvious and more debatable, but just as sure and inevitable.
Ernst: I limit my question to the evils you have yourself named. Prove to me the Freemasons have these in mind. You are silent. Are you thinking?
Falk: Not about how to answer your question. But why do you want to know?
Ernst: Will you answer my question if I answer yours?
Falk: Yes. I promise.
Ernst: I asked for evidence that the Freemasons think as you say they do because I know and fear your ingenuity.
Falk: My ingenuity?
Ernst: Yes. I am afraid you're selling me your own speculations for fact.
Falk: Thanks a lot!
Ernst: Did I insult you?
Falk: I suppose I ought to be grateful that you call "ingenuity" what might have been given quite a different name.
Ernst: No, no. Only, I know how easily a clever person deceives himself, how readily he attributes plans and intentions which they never thought of to others.
Falk: But how do we infer that people have certain plans and intentions? Don't we reason from their several deeds?
Ernst: How else? Which brings me back to my question—from what individual, uncontested deeds done by Freemasons can it be inferred that in and by their fellowship they mean to overcome the divisions among men of which you spoke? The unavoidable divisions

within the state and among states. Show me that this is even *one* of their objectives.
Falk: And that they mean to do this without threatening the individual state or the continued existence of a plurality of states.
Ernst: I'm glad to hear it. Look, I am not necessarily asking you to tell me of deeds. Oddities, idiosyncracies that spring from or lead to union among men would serve. You must have based your speculations about Freemasonry on some such signs as I am asking for if your "system" is a hypothesis.
Falk: You continue suspicious of me? But perhaps you will doubt me less if I cite a constitutional principle of Freemasonry for you.[14]
Ernst: Which?
Falk: A principle they have never made a secret and in accord with which they have always conducted themselves before the world's eyes.
Ernst: To wit?
Falk: To accept into their ranks any worthy man of fit character, without distinction of fatherland, religion, or civil condition.
Ernst: Really?
Falk: Admittedly, such a constitutional principle seems to presuppose men who already make light of national, religious, and social distinctions. The constitutional principle itself does not raise up such men. But mustn't there be Nitrogen in the air for saltpeter [KNO_3 or $NaNO_3$] to accumulate upon the walls?
Ernst: Yes.
Falk: And may the Freemasons not have been resorting to a perfectly familiar ruse, that of openly practicing some of their secret objectives, so as to mislead such men as are always on the look-out for something different from what stares them in the face because they are driven by suspicion?
Ernst: Perhaps.
Falk: Why shouldn't the artisan who can *make* silver deal in silver scrap, so as to allay the suspicion that he knows how to make it?
Ernst: Why not?
Falk: Ernst, are you listening? You sound as though you are half asleep.
Ernst: No, friend. But I have had enough, enough for tonight. Tomorrow very early I'm going back to town.
Falk: Already? Why so soon?
Ernst: You know me and ask? How long will it be before you conclude your [mineral water] cure?
Falk: I only started it day before yesterday.
Ernst: Then I shall be seeing you before you have finished yours. Good night. Farewell.

Notice to the Reader:

The spark took. Ernst went and became a Freemason. What he thus learned, at first, is the matter of a fourth and a fifth conversation, in which there is a parting of ways.

Of the three conversations here translated, Lessing wrote Duke Ferdinand on 19 October, 1778:

> Since I make so bold as to deem the first three of the conversations in question the weightiest, most laudable, and truest things that may ever have been written about Freemasonry, I could no longer resist the temptation to have them printed. (Da ich mire schmeicheln darf, dass von den bewussten Gesprächen die drey erstern, das Ernsthafteste, Rühmlichste, Wahrste sind, was vielleicht jemals über die Freimaurerei geschrieben worden: so habe ich der Versuchung, sie drücken zu lassen nicht länger widerstehen können.) [Schneider, Stridien, Bern, 1951, 14]

Two years later a fourth and a fifth conversation between Ernst and Falk were published (some say contrary to Lessing's wishes). Their dramatic date is long after the conclusion of Falk's "cure." Ernst is disgusted with his friend for having sweet-talked him into joining a society of fools and charlatans. None of the hopes and expectations that Falk had stirred up in him were met by the flesh and blood Masons he encountered:

> That equality which you gave out as a constitutional principle of the order, that equality which filled my soul with such surprising hope. . . does it still exist? Did it ever? Let an educated Jew ask for admission. "A Jew? Well, the candidate must be a Christian, though we don't care what manner of Christian." "Without distinction of religion" means "without discriminating among the three officially tolerated religions in the Holy Roman Empire." Is that *your* interpretation too, Falk? . . . Let a cobbler come. . . even if he be a Jacob Boehme or a Hans Sachs, they'll say: "A cobbler? Why, obviously, a cobbler. . ."

The fifth conversation takes place after a dinner party also attended by a Mason of whom both friends disapprove, a man who means to defend the American cause in Europe and who believes, mistakenly in the friends' opinion, that the American Congress is a Masonic Lodge and that the Masons are, in America, establishing their realm by force of arms.[15] In this conversation Falk explains what he conceives to be the true history of Freemasonry:

Anderson's history, according to which "speculative" Masons joined already existing lodges of "operative" Freemasons, is rejected. The word "masonry" is linked to "masons" only by an erroneous folk etymology according to Falk. Its true etymology is "*Masonei*," says he, meaning, roughly, *eating club*. One of these eating clubs was, in Sir Christopher Wren's day, close by St. Paul's, in London. During the thirty years of St. Paul's reconstruction, Sir Christopher Wren would frequent this eating club, of which he was a member. All London wanted to get progress reports on the construction of the great church. Hearing that the architect frequented a *masony*, Londoners mistook the word for a *masonry*, a fellowship of builders. Sir Christopher, according to Falk, simply used the popular confusion for ends of his own:

> He had helped conceive the plan for a society that would make speculative truths more directly efficacious in establishing the

public good and in making civic life more commodious. Then it occurred to him that a society that rose from the activities of daily life to speculation would be a fitting counterpart to it. "There," he thought, "men would investigate what in the realm of truth is useful; here what that is useful is true."

Thus far Lessing's Falk.

His etymology sounds so wildly unlikely to me, and the history attached to the supposedly Germanic origin of the word-root so much like pseudo-history, that it is hard for me to read them as anything but a spoof—of the eighteenth century literary industry of fabricating Masonic pseudo-histories, and perhaps of other kinds of make-believe history as well.

Readers of the foregoing translation may wonder why I thought Lessing's dialogues worth translating and why it seemed right that they be made known to members of the St. John's College community. My reasons aren't all in yet, but among them are these: Charlotte Fletcher has argued in detail in the *Maryland Historical Magazine* (vol. 74, no. 2, June 1979, pp 133–151), that St. John's College was *not* named after the Cambridge University College of the same name; rather,

> . . . the Maryland legislators named the Western Shore college for the day when [Washington's Potomac bill] was enacted, the Feast Day of the Evangelist. . . . Not only was it a day which they had enjoyed in the company of their former Commander-in-Chief, it was a day which would have had special significance for Washington, the Freemason [December 27, the Feast Day of the Evangelist, is singled out by many British and American Masonic handbooks as a day for important transactions and special celebration]. . . . Records show . . . that a remarkable legislative performance . . . [took] place on the Feast Day of St. John the Evangelist, December 27, 1784, when on behalf of their good friend, George Washington. Maryland legislators enacted *the first piece of cooperative legislation among the various states in the Confederation following the definitive* "Treaty of Peace" (my italics).

Moreover, she showed that it is worthwhile to ask whether there is a more intimate, even curricular, connection between the college and the fellowship which, as has plausibly been argued in a number of Masonic histories, preserved ancient astronomical, geometric, and architectural lore (in effect, the quadrivium) after the disintegration of Rome in the West.[16]

Second, it is hard for me to believe that there is no "real" connection between the founding of these United States of America and Masonic doctrines such as the one in the "first charge" of Anderson's Constitution (see footnote 14). The Masonic insignia on our dollar bills, which got there from the *verso* of the Great Seal of the United States (designed in the eighteenth century), should not, I think, be written off as boys-will-be-boys-even-when-grown mumbo jumbo. They were put there to *say* something, to Americans and to the world at large, and to those who decided to put them there![17]

Finally, Lessing's name and Lessing's work deserve to be far better known in America than they now are. His every piece of writing is refreshing and instructive. Even brief association with him, merely through his books, makes it easy to credit Moses Mendelssohn's words of condolence to Lessing's younger brother

> . . . I thank Providence for its benevolence in allowing me, so early in life, in the flower of youth, to know a man who shaped my very soul, a man whom I would conjure up as friend and judge whenever I was deliberating about something to be done or written, a man of whom I shall at all times continue to think as my friend and judge whenever I have to take a step of some importance.
>
> (. . . Ich danke der Vorsehung für die Wohltat, dass sie mich so früh, in der Blüthe meiner Jugend, hat einen Mann kennen lassen, der meine Sehle gebildet hat, den ich bey jeder Handlung, die ich vorhatte, bey joder Zeile die ich hinschreiben sollte, mir als Freund und Richter vorstellte, und den ich mir zu allen Zeiten noch als Freund und Richter vor-stellen werde, so oft ich einen Schritt von Wichtigkeit zu thun habe.) Quoted in Karl Lessing, *Gotthold Ephraim Lessings Leben*, Berlin 1795, 450.

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1. Locke's first (anonymously) published work is the *Epistola de Toleratia*. Raymond Klibansky writes: "It cannot be doubted that Locke systematically collected all books on toleration which he could find. . . . Even in one of his earliest notebooks, that of 1674, Locke, having read Spinoza's treatise on Descartes' *Principia philosophiae*, expressed his intention of finding out what other works there were by this author. When in 1674–6 he was Lord Shaftesbury's confidential agent, he certainly had the opportunity of perusing some of Spinoza's works, for Shaftesbury reimbursed him for a sum spent on acquiring these books for him. Later, Locke mentioned in his 'Catalogue de livres differends et qu'on trouve avec peine' the *Tractatus Theologico politicus*. . . . In a catalogue of his [Locke's] books drawn up . . . in 1693 the *Tractatus* [is mentioned]. Perusal of the letter has convinced me that there is also internal evidence for Locke's having read and profited from Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise*. For Leibniz on the subject of toleration, see *New Essays* 416f. I accept the thesis of H. R. Trevor Roper that this tradition of devoting one's life to the cause of toleration goes back to Erasmus (see *The European Witchcraze of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and Other Essays*, Harper Torchbook 1968). But its true begettor may well have been the Dean of St. Paul's, Erasmus's friend and mentor, John Colet." (Oxford ed. by Raymond Klibansky and J. W. Gough of the *Letter of Toleration*, xxxi, ii.)

2. The enigmatic "it" *wants* to be impenetrable and cannot be eliminated from the translation. As Lessing wrote Duke Ferdinand on October 26, 1778,

> I did not desecrate any secret knowledge. I only tried to convince the world that truly great secrets continue to lie hidden there, where the world had at last become tired of looking for them.
> (Ich habe keine geheime Kenntnisse enheiliget: ich habe bloss die Welt zu überzeugen gesucht, dass da noch wirklich grosse geheime Kenntnisse verborgen liegen, wo sie derleichen zu suchen endlich müde ward.) Quoted in Heinrich Schneider, *Zwölf Biographische Studies*, Bern 1951, 15.

3. Lessing's word here is "plaudern," familiar from Mozart's *Magic Flute:* "Ich plauderte, und das war schlecht," says Papageno toward the end of Act ii.

4. Johann Bernhard Basedow (1723–1790) was a German educational reformer who established a teacher training institute in Dessau, where his educational principles, much affected by Rosseau's *Emile*, were taught. This teacher training institute he called the Philanthropin. A

student of theology earlier in his life, he had come under the influence of Reimarus.
5. I haven't cracked the riddle but suspect that in speaking of "Gute Taten, welche darauf zielen, gute Taten entbehrlich zu machen," Lessing's Falk refers covertly and ambiguously to *human charitable works, Church sacraments,* and the supreme, *Divine work of charity,* the sacrifice of Christ. My guess depends on hearing the word *opus*—which figures so prominently in Luther's doctrine of "salvation by faith, not works," in the Catholic Church's rationale of the Sacraments, and in the Bacon passage from the *New Organon* which Kant quotes as frontipiece to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*—underneath the German *Tat.* Lessing himself introduces the Latin word in the second conversation, which is why I retained his expression *opus supererogatum.* It is, unmistakeably, a technical locution—"works of supererogation," beyond the call of duty, figure in Catholic teaching as works by which the faithful gain extra merit.
6. Compare Adeimantus in *Republic* ii, 367 "...we would not now be guarding against one another's injustice, but each would be his own best guardian..."
7. Compare Aristotle's *Politics* i, 1253a30: phusei men oun hē hormē en pasin epi tēn toiautēn koinōnian. ho de prōtos sustāses megistōn agathōn aitios.
8. "Nimmermehr" in "Rechte...die dem natürlichen Menschen nimmermehr einfallen könnten," is ambiguous: it is not clear whether the "natural man" of whom Falk speaks belongs to the past, the future, or neither. This sounds very like Rousseau to me.
9. Compare Leibniz on ours being the best of all possible worlds: He did not mean that it is perfect, as Voltaire foolishly thought. He meant that the very conception of a perfect world is self-contradictory, so that ours is the best of worlds that are *possible.* Lessing was a great admiror of Leibniz.
10. Lessing is borrowing Aristotle's word "whole." Compare note 7. Students of Leo Strauss will recognize the degree to which the arguments, the attitude, the very vocabulary of *Ernst and Falk,* are saved by Strauss. Strauss refers to the work in a footnote on p. 28 of *Persecution and the Art of Writing,* Glencoe, Illinois 1952.
11. Compare *Republic* vii. Much like Leibniz also in this respect, Lessing carried his very great erudition lightly. Thoroughly "modern," he was intimate with the works of the Ancients, *die Alten,* as in "Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet."
12. The use of architectural images is, unsurprisingly, prominent in Masonic writings. I do not think that the extraordinary proliferation of talk about "foundations", "architects", "clearing away the underbrush", "corner stones", "city planning" in the books of Machiavelli, Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Leibniz in some measure, and certainly Kant has been sufficiently noted.
13. See note 5, whence perhaps also "good works that are to make good works superfluous."
14. Lessing is referring to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of London, drawn up by James Anderson at the instance of the then Master of the Lodge, John, Duke of Montague. A copy of Anderson's *The Constitution of the Freemasons* (though in a later edition than the one published in London in 1723) was in the Ducal Library in Wolfenbüttel. The "First Charge" of Anderson's Constitution runs as follows:

> Concerning GOD and RELIGION. A Mason is obliged by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law: and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid Atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charg'd in every Country to be of the Religion of that country or Nation, whatever it was, yet it's now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves. That is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguished; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Unition, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remain'd at a perpetual Distance.

I was unable to obtain a copy of Anderson's book and rely on Jacob Katz's citation in his *Jews and Freemasons in Europe, 1723–1939,* 13 Cambridge, 1970.

Katz's book is a remarkable piece of sociological history. There is hardly a page in it that doesn't throw light on issues far greater than the seemingly recondite one of the title. About the quoted First Charge he writes:

> ...There is no reason to assume that the authors of the English constitution intended, in their universal tolerance, to provide for Jewish candidates in the flesh. Yet, when such candidates did apply for admission, the principle was followed in practice [in England, but not in Germany]....At least some of these Jews sought to retain their own religious principles within the frame work of the lodges. In 1756 an anthology of Masonic prayers appeared in print, among them one to be recited "at the opening of the lodge meeting and the like, for the use of Jewish Freemasons." While the other prayers were addressed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the Jewish prayers contained nothing at variance with the Jewish tradition. [pp. 15ff]

Katz does not comment on the fact that the drawing up of a written constitution, which itself records what the proper procedures for amending it are, was a Masonic practice, and one which may well have influenced the American Founding Fathers, since a written constitution for a state or nation was, in those days, a rarity.
15. There are a number of books on the theme of possible connections between the American Revolution and Freemasonry. The author of one of these, Bernard Faÿ, a Frenchman, maintains that the French Revolution too was "made" by Masons. It is extraordinarily difficult to sort out whether—to speak in the voice of their critics—Masonic Lodges were hotbeds of sedition or rather the reverse, whether indeed Freemasonry stood for anything in particular in the political realm. My interim hypothesis is that it is probably pointless to speak of Masonic politics without specifying the period and the country and perhaps even the particular Lodge. I do not believe that this means that the expression "Masonic teachings" is simply empty: One of my contentions is that what we usually identify as the distinctively modern linking of knowledge and power, or knowing what and knowing how, or *artes liberales* and *artes serviles* is Masonic doctrine.
16. See for example George F. Fort, *The Early History and Antiquities of Freemasonry as connected with Ancient Norse Guilds and the Oriental and Medieval Building Fraternities,* Philadelphia 1875, and Tons Brunés, *The Secrets of Ancient Geometry and its Use,* Copenhagen 1967.
17. Our coins too bear a motto—"In God we Trust—that can be linked to the Masons: It was the motto of the London "operative" Masons in the fifteenth and seventeenth century, except that their motto added the little word "alone" between "God" and "we" (Georg Kloss, *Geschichte der Freimaurerei in England, Irland und Schotland,* 1848, 325. But according to a little pamphlet of the United States Mint, the motto appeared on our coins only in the nineteenth century: Toward the end of 1861 the Secretary of the Treasury received a letter from a certain Mr. Watkinson, Minister of the Gospel, who urged that the lack of some reference to God on our coins might lead "the antiquaries of succeeding centuries" to believe that we were "a heathen nation." In response to this letter, the Secretary of the Treasury wrote the Director of the Mint: "You will cause a device to be prepared without unnecessary delay with a motto expressing in the fewest and tersest words possible this national recognition [of the trust of our people in God]." But it turned out that, because of an earlier Act of Congress, the Director of the Mint could not "cause" the preparation of such a device. Legislative action was needed. Is there another modern nation where such an exchange of letters might have occurred?

The Rainfall in the Pine Grove

After Gabriele D'Annunzio, "La pioggia nel pineto."

Be still.
On the leaf-strewn sill
of the forest I hear
no human words spoken,
but newer words sung
by the drops' tinkling tongue
and the broken
murmuration of distant leaves.
Listen! It is raining
from tattered clouds driven,
raining down from heaven
on the tamarisks burnt,
on the brackish tamarisks.
Raining on the tangled hairy kirtles
of the pine,
on the myrtles
divine;
on the thick-clustered broom,
on the juniper's loom;
Upon our sylvan
faces,
upon our naked
hands,
our vestments and our poses,
on each fresh-quickened thought
that the soul newly discloses;
on the fable richly-wrought
that yesterday
deluded thee, and today deludes me,
O Hermione!

Do you hear?
The rain is slanting
on the lawn's lonely green
with a tinkling silver sheen,
with a rustling and a canting
that varies in the air
as the foliage is there
more rare, less rare;
Listen! the cricket's chatter
replies to all this weeping:
What does it matter?
This flood of austral tears
provokes not his fears,
nor does heaven's windy whine.
And the pine
has one sound
and the myrtle yet another,
and the juniper another:
a pure liquescent round
of instruments
diverse:
played and plucked upon
by the rain's fluent fingers
and choir of the leaves,
O green-mouthed singers!

So verse follows verse
until we are immersed
in the spirit of the wood,
of this life
arboreal
and your face immemorial
is washed in the rain
soft as a leaf;
and your hair

falls fair
as the juniper's caresses;
as the rain's glistening grief
is the streaming of your tresses.
O terrestrial creature
by name and by feature—
Hermione.

Hear! O hear!
the harmonious hammer
of the cricket's shrill trill
fades still and more still,
muffled by the rain's
crescendoing roar.
Yet low
below
from depths unquenched,
from humid shadow
a melody mingles,
is drowned, expunged...
only one note
trembles yet,
plucked from the fret;
resurgent, remote,—
surges...shivers...spills away—
Seems, but is not, the voice of the sea.
And now you hear on every frond
the shattering sound
of the argent rain:
the downrushing Whence
that varies as the verdure
grows dense, or less dense.
Listen. The daughter
of the aria is mute,
but the unseen daughter
of the green-veiled water,
child of the distant bog,—
the frog,—
chants in denser shadow:
Who knows where? Who knows where?
And it is raining on your eyes,
And it is raining on your hair,
O Hermione!

It is raining on your eyes...
And as the downpour dashes
upon your black lashes,
tiny diamonds hang
and you seem to be weeping—
But for joy! but for joy!
No longer wan
you emerge from the bark:
Vigorous, reborn
and freshly we turn
each to each,
And the heart in the breast is an intact
peach,
And the eyes in their lids
are springs in the grass,
And like almonds peeled
is the honeycomb of teeth.
So, slowly we pass
from hedge to hedge,
now together, now apart
(As rude-fingered weeds
ensnare our ankles,
entwine our knees)
Who knows where? Who knows where?
For the curtain of the air
Is a rustle of laces
As it rains as it rains
Upon our sylvan
faces,
Upon our naked hands,
Our vestments and our poses,
on each fresh-quickened thought
that the soul newly discloses,
on the fable richly-wrought
that yesterday
eluded me, and today eludes thee,
O Hermione!

The Donkey Rides the Man . . .

The donkey rides the man
Swallows shoot the hunter
Sun rises in the West
Daisies bloom in winter

Constellations sunder
All singleness is lost
Adam's rod has wilted
Breasts are hard as frost

Contrarities now rule
Two perpendiculars
Fall to a single line
Peace plus peace make wars

O Alice underground
Rise and take command
Scepter us with laughter
Orb with tickling hand

This topsy-turvy world
Spin it with your wand
All boys must be girled
All girls must be manned

Come Alice come from under
Nibble us high and low
Pacify with thunder
the apocalyptic show

Where reins of Yes and No
Ride us to no conclusion
In a dazzling merry-go-round
Of rectified confusion

The Mannequins

Flowing down Fifth Avenue
The shoppers in a churning stream
Flash dazzling semaphors of dew
Between the banks of deed and dream.

Where mermaids—sleeker for their sins—
May view in underseas of glass
Themselves beside the mannequins:
Shipwrecked, headless now. Alas!

Alas for the perfect thigh and breast!
Alas for the perfect lacquered smile!
Alas for the perfect all-the-rest
That lies beside her in a pile!

For he's entered there on sheepsoft feet:
That Devil—O that panderer!
Stripped her on a public street,
With shameless hands he sullied her.

Yes, in the electric glare of noon
(Narcissus, transfixed, saw him do it)
Divested her of dress and shoon
And her lovely head, he did unscrew it.

Take heed, then, Beauties. Blemished be.
For perfect She is lifeless She.

SIDNEY ALEXANDER

Sidney Alexander has translated Francesco Guicciardini's *The History of Italy* (New York 1969). The last volume, *Nicodemus, the Roman Years of Michalangelo, 1534–1564*, of his three-volume reimagining of the life of Michelangelo is planned for publication in 1983 (Ohio University Press). For the last twenty-seven years he has lived in Florence.

REVIEW ESSAY

Defeat in Vietnam

Norman Podhoretz's *Why We Were in Vietnam**

JOSEPH A. BOSCO

For anyone over the age of twenty, *Why We Were in Vietnam* is an unwanted attempt to face a painful past. Norman Podhoretz wants to reopen the Vietnam debate because he thinks we have learned the wrong "lessons" from the disaster. The failure of American policy in Vietnam not only brought defeat without peace. It cancelled out the single most important lesson that the Second World War, the "unnecessary war" in Churchill's phrase, taught those who managed to live through it, the lesson of Munich, that yielding in the face of aggression encourages more aggression. For the lessons of Munich Vietnam's failure substituted "new lessons": that the limitations on American power no longer allowed the arrogance of policing the world; that an "ideologically-based anti-Communist foreign policy" must inevitably fail; and worst of all, that America's actions in Vietnam made her equal to Hitler's Germany in "criminality" and showed that now "the U.S., not the Soviet Union and certainly not Communism, represented the greatest threat to the security and well-being of the peoples of the world."

With evidence available during the war, Podhoretz faces the charges of "genocide" and "atrocity" against American "policies"—the "McCarthyism of the left." The Geneva Convention sanctions the U.S. "war crime" of clearing an area of civilians to spare them before bombing enemy forces. In Vietnam civilians numbered forty percent of the dead, the same percentage as in the Second World War, in contrast to the seventy percent of the War in Korea. He compares the war's suffering to Indochina under Communism: forced mass expulsions with millions dead; total suppression of political, religious, and press freedoms (South Vietnam at war had twenty-seven daily newspapers, three television stations, more than twenty radio stations). " 'Among the boat people who survived, including those who were raped by pirates and those who suffered in the refugee camps, nobody regrets his escape from the present regime.' "

Almost alone of contemporary writers, Podhoretz concludes Americans need feel no shame. "That the U.S. involvement in Vietnam should be described as a moral disgrace is itself a moral disgrace." Reagan's description of the war as a "noble cause" that made headlines during the 1980 campaign, again won a place in the *Washington Post's* recent front-page story on the President's "gaffes".

Podhoretz calls to account the hypocrisy of those who proclaimed their desire for "peace" in Vietnam but who actually supported the Communist victory; the malice of the "Amerika" haters who likened the United States to Nazi Germany. (The invective against America was palpable at teach-ins I attended in Boston and Cambridge as early as 1964.) These "inveterate apologists for the Vietnamese Communists" still do not acknowledge the suffering in Indochina today nor their complicity in it.

He criticizes the "anti-anti-Communists," the teachers and media people who considered anti-Communism unsatisfying, who said they opposed Communism but were against every anti-Communist government from Diem to Thieu, who fancied a neutralist compromise or coalition or "progressive...'third force' ". "[They] should now be ashamed of their naivete and the contributions they made to the victory of forces they had a moral duty to oppose.... In practice, and in its political effect, anti-anti-Communism was often hard to tell apart from pro-Communism." Podhoretz concludes that the defenders of American policy were right about its morality, but that the critics correctly saw its futility.

But this moral calling to account is incomplete. Podhoretz ignores those Americans (many of my friends) who knew which side was right and who certainly preferred our side, but who nevertheless joined the anti-war movement, especially after the Tet offensive in 1968, because, like Podhoretz, they thought vic-

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tory impossible. To succeed, the anti-war movement, as Hanoi realized, had to reach out beyond the Marxist-Leninists, the radical students, the anti-anti-Communists, to the ordinary, patriotic, mainstream American citizens. Despite the finest of motives, these citizens strengthened the Communists. Why and how this happened has to be understood. The prolongation of the war and the absence of a strategy for victory that grew evident with its prolongation had a lot to do with the disillusionment of many ordinary Americans. With the concern for human life and public opinion that distinguishes democracies from their totalitarian adversaries, how could Washington's "war of attrition," that took the place of a strategy for victory, not have failed eventually? Recent Communist statements show that Hanoi, with the experience of the French in Indochina and the Americans in Korea before its eyes, knew the importance of prolonging the war for the spread of the anti-war movement in the United States and throughout the world. From the beginning Hanoi planned to out-last us, whether or not it out-fought us.

Podhoretz argues that the unwillingness (or inability) of the elite in government to make the "moral, political, and strategic" case for the war left a "moral vacuum" for the anti-war extremists. I find that charge curious and unfair. "Why, then, were we in Vietnam?" asks Podhoretz. "To say it once again: because we were trying to save the Southern half of that country from the evils of Communism." The answer is hardly novel; Presidents Kennedy and Johnson gave it from 1961 through 1968. Most Americans, "passive and unenthusiastic," in Podhoretz's description, understood that explanation: they remembered the world wars, Eastern Europe, Korea, and they recognized the evils of totalitarianism.

But the anti-war elites rejected those justifications. In April 1965, Secretary of State Dean Rusk raised a professorial firestorm when he remarked on "the gullibility of the academic community and their stubborn disregard of the plain facts." A teaching fellow at law school, I attended an "emergency" meeting of the Greater Boston Faculty Committee on Vietnam, which included several prestigious academic names, convened to draft an angry full-page advertisement for the *New York Times* to answer Rusk. No one of the hundreds present defended U.S. policy. The chairman, a professor of divinity, told me I could express my disagreement by "keeping my seat and remaining silent." (Later, the protests of a few won me a minute or two.)

Even Henry Kissinger, at Harvard in 1965, objected to the government's defense of the war on "moral grounds," because "in a civil war it is not clear who the aggressor is; it is not like one sovereign nation attacking another." Later Kissinger modified his view which confused a civil war with protracted war of aggression and which refused to see that a protracted, masked aggression did not differ in kind from open war as in Korea. By that time, however, the "civil war" argument had become favorite anti-war mythology.

Podhoretz states that even though the anti-war positions clearly represented a small, minority viewpoint, our government made "the mistake" of believing "this meant that the American people supported the war." He argues that until 1973 the public simply "went along," more or less willing, to give their leaders the "benefit of the doubt." At the same time that he criticizes the elites who had gotten us into the war and conceived and carried out our failed policies, Podhoretz does not shrink from blaming the American people themselves for the 1975 congressional action that stopped further military aid to South Vietnam despite the continuing danger from Hanoi. "At least a measure of responsibility" for this abandonment of an ally "belongs to the people... whose wishes their representatives believed themselves to be carrying out." The original intervention by the elites, he argues, had been "an attempt born of noble ideals and impulses," but "the same cannot be said of what the American people did in 1975." The American public demonstrated its own ultimate lack of "moral capacity" to save South Vietnam—by contrast, they earlier had been "willing to shoulder the burden of Korea."

Podhoretz is wrong to call the American people morally inadequate at the same time that he refuses to recognize their earlier steadfastness. "Going along" and giving the government "the benefit of the doubt" meant seeing sons and brothers die in another faraway place for other men's freedom—without succumbing to hysteria or a new wave of McCarthyism despite provocations from the "wild men of the Left" with their Vietcong flags and anti-American obscenities. In contrast, after only two years of the Korean War the "stalemate" contributed to the rise of McCarthyism and made Eisenhower pledge in the campaign of 1952 to "go to Korea" with the implicit promise to end the fighting one way or the other.

Nor were Americans really ever as "passive and acquiescent" as Podhoretz describes them, until the very end. In election after election they voted for candidates who supported U.S. policy in Vietnam, they supported the deployment of forces and the military budgets to pay for it, and they expressed their belief in the justness of the cause in numerous patriotic and "pro-war" demonstrations over the years—though never in as well-organized or violent a manner as the anti-war activists.

In his mischaracterization of the people in both the Korean and the Vietnam war, Podhoretz seems almost oblivious to the working of the Communist strategy of protracted war and protracted negotiations. Three years passed between the first commitment of American forces in Korea (never to number more than roughly half the American forces, and the dead, in Vietnam) and the signing of the truce agreement at Panmunjom—an agreement still enforced by our troops. In Vietnam it took *twelve* years to get from Kennedy's first introduction of troops to the signing of the hollow, non-enforceable agreement between Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. Despite this, Podhoretz writes: "...Looking back on Korea from a perspective shaped by the experience of Vietnam, what seems most remarkable is the absence of any serious opposition to what Truman decided to do." What seems more remarkable, looking at Vietnam in the light of Korea, is that Americans held on for as long as they did! American patience and maturity through this long national ordeal seem nothing less than magnificent. Where is the "nobility" of the Vietnam cause Podhoretz celebrates, if not here?

The turning point in public support for the war was the 1968 Tet offensive, an overwhelming Communist *defeat*: the Communists suffered heavy losses and could not hold the scores of

populated areas and military facilities they attacked; instead of joining the liberating invaders, the South Vietnamese fled in every instance to areas with more fighting but fewer Communists. But the media devastated support for the war in America by portraying Tet as a Communist triumph. Why? In his important study, *Big Story* (new edition, Yale University Press 1982), Peter Braestrup argues that not media "ideology" but "the limited ability of the press corps to cover so complicated and strange a war" caused the "distortions and misrepresentations." To Podhoretz instead, "Tet provided the occasion for a growing disenchantment with the war to express itself." Both may be right. But Tet shocked me because it should never have happened at all: it showed greater enemy strength and determination (suicidal determination), and weaker allied intelligence, preparedness, and security than should have existed at that point in the war. Tet showed the futility of the "war of attrition" with its gradual and "rational" bombing and troop escalation—with its official guarantees of North Vietnam's territorial integrity and its assurances for the survival of the regime in Hanoi. In response, Hanoi simply threw still more men south to be chewed up by superior American military might—but not without taking their toll of American lives and will. Most Americans were disturbed not by the reasons for our involvement in Vietnam, but, especially after Tet, by doubts about whether our policy was working.

Beneath this disappointment in the American people, nagging at Podhoretz (and at many other Americans) is guilt, not for having defended Vietnam at all that the anti-war critics would have us bear, but guilt at deserting an ally, furtively in 1973, openly in 1975. That this, our longest war, was the first in which the Yanks came back before it was "over, over there," cannot help but bother us.

Most troubling about Podhoretz's moral analysis is his failure to reconcile it with his own pragmatic judgement that we should never have gone into Vietnam in the first place: "The only way the U.S. could have avoided defeat in Vietnam was by staying out altogether... saving Vietnam from Communism was beyond its reasonable military, political... intellectual...and moral capabilities."

The moral and practical questions are intertwined. For if failure was unavoidable, the people of South Vietnam were cursed with the worst of all worlds—the war *and* Communism. Wasn't it deeply wrong—unconscionable—to impose such an unnecessary price on them and us? Bad enough to "destroy the country in order to save it", but to put it through a war with no realistic prospect of saving it? This seems less morally defensible than the "arrogance" Podhoretz finds in the Kennedy and Johnson people who at least *believed* their policies would succeed, or than the "naivete" of the moderate anti-war movement which could conceive of no worse fate for Vietnam than the war itself.

If it is true that American victory was *not* inevitable, as many hawks wrongly believed, does it necessarily follow, as Podhoretz maintains, that American failure *was*? Given the stakes, his fatalism is intuitively and historically unsatisfying. What was tried did not work, but would anything else have? Podhoretz criticizes successive administrations for conducting the war militarily, politically, and strategically "on the cheap." Wouldn't avoiding or correcting their "failures of leadership" have brought a different result? Was America defeated militarily in Vietnam or politically and strategically at home?

The United States in Vietnam forgot the lessons of conventional war in Korea and of counterinsurgency in Malaya, Greece, and the Phillipines. In Korea, a conventional war of open and unambiguous aggression, the first limited war of modern times, the UN/US forces did not bring North Korea to negotiation until they drove them from the South, invaded the North—and threatened its existence with a *non*-Communist reunification of Korea. Until this invasion, numerous troop losses had not moved the North Koreans to abandon their aggression. (Korea also, incidentally, showed that the Soviet Union and China would *not* intervene directly to defend the homeland of their ally—but only to defend their own homeland, in that instance, China.) In Greece, Malaya, and the Phillipines, the West prevailed by providing material support without large troop commitments, because the local Communist guerrillas were cut off from supplies and reinforcements from abroad. A hybrid of conventional and counterinsurgency warfare, our Vietnam strategy ignored the crucial lessons of each: it did not invade the enemy's homeland and it did not cut off the local guerrillas from supplies and reinforcements from abroad.

In contrast to the United States, the Communist world applied the lessons of Korea in Vietnam. With Southeast Asia's largest army, second in Asia only to China's, Hanoi openly proclaimed its goal of Communist reunification; but it did not attack the South directly and in force in 1955, because it feared the response North Korea's open and unambiguous attack had provoked in 1950. Instead it supplied the local guerrillas and infiltrated its own troops, masquerading as guerrillas, into the South. All-out attack by regular mechanized divisions came *twenty* years later, after protracted disguised aggression had led the United States to abandon Saigon in fact in 1973 and by law in 1975. Vietnam ended the way Korea had started, with brutal open conquest, but at a time and under circumstances that prevented the response the lesson of Munich required.

On leaving office, Eisenhower, who had refused to commit U.S. soldiers to stop North Vietnamese advances in Laos and Vietnam, had no qualms about recommending to the new president that *he* might have to intervene there, especially in the increasingly desperate situation in Laos. In early 1961—an incident Podhoretz curiously ignores—Kennedy did in fact dramatically and publicly commit the U.S. to the defense of Laotian "independence." When a few months later, however, it became clear that the defense of Laos required American troops, Kennedy—in contrast to Eisenhower, who had supported a coalition that favored the West—settled for a coalition government with Communists that conceded the Communist guerrillas two-thirds of Laos with its access routes to Vietnam. (In 1965 Kissinger characterized Kennedy's decision as "backing down" and "abandoning an ally," a pattern he saw repeated in the Kennedy administration's, at least passive, involvement in the overthrow of Diem in 1963.)

After his failure in Laos (and the Bay of Pigs and Khruschev's "traumatizing" summit bullying) Kennedy decided to take a stand

in Vietnam. Because of fear of a big-power confrontation, however, his intervention was "timid and hesitant. . . half-hearted and gradual." He decided on counterinsurgency without, however, sealing-off Vietnam's borders. By dealing with a protracted and disguised invasion as if it were a guerrilla war—and not taking the measures necessary for victory in such a war—Kennedy allowed the myth of a "civil war and local insurgency" to take hold of the world.

We cannot know whether, had Kennedy lived, his Irish would have prevailed over his Harvard and he might have decided on a more Truman-like response, or whether (as JFK apologists have argued) he would have followed the cut-and-run model of Laos. Either policy would have had better consequences. But even if, as Podhoretz contends, he would have done more or less what Johnson did, the results probably would have been different. Why? Because *Kennedy* doing it would have made all the difference: unlike LBJ, he had the "style" and "charisma" to mobilize public opinion, and a network of media and academic allies. Kennedy's closet doves would have remained there rather than reacting to fate's cruel blow in Dallas by attacking the besieged sitting president, hinting at a Robert Kennedy "dump Johnson" challenge in 1964, and actually launching one in 1968. (Would we have heard chants of "Hey, hey, JFK, how many kids did you kill today"?) And without its trump card—a combined anti-war and "get Johnson" movement gradually draining America's will—Hanoi would have had the incentive to make peace not war.

But that was not to be. Kennedy's death three weeks after Diem's sealed the fate of Vietnam—and of America in Vietnam. Just as Diem's murder unhinged events in South Vietnam, the assassination of Kennedy permanently altered the course at home. Vietnam almost instantly became "Johnson's war" and then "Nixon's war." But the rules of the game had largely been set, by Kennedy and even by Eisenhower before him: aggression would be resisted, but on the enemy's terms, and not on his home ground. Neither Johnson or Nixon would fundamentally change these terms—Johnson because of the domestic turmoil, and Nixon and Kissinger for the same fear but also because they nurtured bigger "geopolitical" ambitions on the international stage: détente with the Soviet Union and rapprochement with China.

At Home and Abroad

Letter From the Homefront: On Marrying

This is an Apology. The deed for which I must atone, or provide justification, is marriage. My particular faults—youth and gender (I am 23 and a woman in the 1980's)—are incidental. But they have helped to magnify—by making my own situation more extreme—the central issue of marriage. So much for the overall "efficient cause" of this essay.

The more immediate catalyst was my observation of various long-term "relationships" (my use of the term excludes marriage) and their eventual dissolution. What struck me in each case was the couples' surprise at the fading of love and the resignation with which they accepted their parting. I saw a remarkable mixture of innocence and cynicism. The surprise that accompanied the couples' loss of passion showed shallow understanding of the way men and women work together. The easy resignation suggested weary sophistication. But perhaps the combination, innocence and cynicism, ought not surprise. In our time the kind of experience likely to promote such cynicism is readily available, but serious and thorough thought about the male-female relationship is rare. We are jaded by our past, and as pure of any real insight as if we'd led the cloistered lives of our ancestors. Experience rather than understanding has become the god to whom we appeal.

The old rules that governed such matters have been overthrown, but the subsequent void is yet unfilled. No new constitution was born of this revolution but only purposeless freedom. Experience is now available in plenty, to what end no one knows. If wisdom is not the aim, and since we've established no rights and wrongs it cannot be, experience itself must be the end. We are left with a society that uses up mates as it does cars, with equanimity. We have learned to cloak the absence of thought with the jargon of "relationships."

For most of my generation, marriage has been, at best, an irrelevancy. We have slept together—if not carelessly, then certainly without mutual promise or obligation. When we grew somewhat more attached we have moved in together rather than marry. We were "not ready" for marriage although what we were waiting for was never quite clear. We wanted to "test" each other first to ensure that *our* marriage would never end in divorce. We did not see the point of "a piece of paper," because if we loved each other that was enough, and if love ceased it was only reasonable that the union should also dissolve. Lest we bind ourselves to anything that might become difficult, we chose the temporary over the permanent, the safe and casual over the risky and demanding.

Now, months or years later, we find that "something has happened," that we do not in fact feel about each other as we once did. What a good thing we didn't marry! The situation is unpleasant, and it seems a pity to part after so much shared past, but at least no divorce is necessary. Yet if we are not quite satisfied with the knowledge that our caution was justified, if we are perhaps uneasy about relationships with "planned obsolescence," then we may well wonder what "happened," what went wrong.

It is not a very difficult puzzle. The arrangement was from the beginning inten-

tionally temporary. Is it surprising that the love also should be temporary? No promises were made, no future anticipated. Is it surprising that there should in fact be no future? When two people have shared (another word, like "relationships" which has been grossly overused but seems hard to avoid) everything that can presently be shared but have made no promises about future sharing, it is not surprising that they should eventually weary of each other.

Indeed, that very refusal to promise future love must immediately lessen present love. When lover says to beloved, "I love you now, but can't guarantee the future," he has already damaged their present. People who love may, of course, themselves be sensible and cautious, but only insofar as they are and do something other than love. For love, itself, is by nature immoderate and demanding. It is content with nothing less than total commitment: love is itself the food of love. Promise of love—guaranteed future love—enables present love. When we deny our mutual future, we remove the endless supply of love and so begin to starve our present love.

It seems a simple truth, that love which is not fed will die; but it is one which is extraordinarily difficult both to remember and to act upon. Love must grow or decline. Unless the couple is willing to promise a shared future, their love cannot grow, indeed, must fade. The couple have avoided the promise, and as they watch their love weaken, they agree, not surprisingly, to part.

The self-defeating effects of intentioned temporariness seem evident; but we have yet to address explicitly the initially mentioned objection to marriage. The second, that the couple must "test" one another, must live together for awhile to see if things work out, seems obviously mistaken. "Testing" assumes a possible end of love, when it is precisely the opposite which must be assumed if the love is to be fed and so prosper.

More interesting is the first objection, the notion of "being ready." At the root of this phrase and of many difficulties with marriage—whether of the initial decision to marry or the later and sadder one of divorce—lies one particular problem: that of identity (we seem hounded by these once worthy, now sadly jargonized words for which we can find no alternative). It is the problem which Tolstoy addresses so marvelously in *Anna Karenina* where he treats marriage as an identity-giver, and which has become especially important with the rise of "Women's Liberation."

The refusal to commit oneself to another in the name of finding or perhaps preserving one's identity has today become commonplace. We wonder at those men and women who are not interested in a career, in contributing to the GNP—and who prefer to stay at home with a family. We assume they are less complete, more reliant upon others for their identity, less self-possessed. An unattached woman with a promising career is respected because she is "free," dependent on no one and able to "be herself." A married woman with a child (although we are taught to pay lip service to the "homemaker") is considered a mere adjunct of her family who is unable to "realize her full potential." If talk of "finding oneself" is passé now, it is only because such ideas have found almost universal acceptance. We act as if this "self" were out there somewhere, ready made and awaiting discovery; or if we have already "found" ourselves," we suppose we must guard our findings assiduously to preserve our own sacred "individuality."

The obvious mistake in all this is the understanding of the self as something apart from what defines it. We are always defined by others. We do not and cannot define ourselves. An internal search for identity is doomed to failure, because our sense of reality is so entirely bound up with others that we cannot be sure of anything on our own. Alone, we are capable of endless self-doubt. The inner dialogue arrives at no conclusion and will trap us in circles if unaided by an external presence. We are in fact known and know ourselves by the company we keep.

The fear of losing oneself in marriage, of denying one's identity by joining it with another's, is groundless. If we are inescapably defined by others, the question is not whether we wish rather to identify ourselves by our mate than to maintain independence and individuality, but whether we choose one alliance over another. The choice against spouse is not a victory for self, but only the decision to be defined by other and inevitably larger groups: proponents of the ERA, Moral Majority members, Soho loft-dwellers, Visa-Card carriers. We are all constantly defining and redefining ourselves by membership in various organizations. But insofar as our definition of self is acquired solely from such groups, we have forfeited any claim to some special unique identity.

Commitment to a single other gives one a specificity, an individuality not achievable by participation in a variety of groups. The statement, "She is the one who married A__ B__" is manifestly more specific than "She is a lawyer." There are, to be sure, thousands of lawyers. There is only one wife of A__ B__. Equally, the single most specific statement A__ B__ could make about himself is "I am the one who married C__ D__." Neither of them thereby become mere adjuncts of the other. Rather, they have defined themselves with utter specificity and so possess their selves most securely. The fear of commitment in the name of self is mere self-deception because we are bound to "find ourselves" in others in any case, and because if we are really concerned about individuality and differentiation from others, we will always be most individual when we ally ourselves with *one* other.

Let us return to the phrase, "being ready." One must grant its occasional legitimacy. Until we begin to make sense of the many larger identifying groups and claim membership in some rather than in others, it might well be folly to attempt the conclusively defining decision: the choice of a spouse. But to procrastinate indefinitely is, quite literally, self-defeating. It is frightening to marry, consciously to choose and declare one's ultimate definition. And it is easy to understand why so many have happily taken advantage of society's relaxed attitude toward living together. If we can avoid decisions, by all means let us do so, but let us admit that we do so out of laziness and fear, not out of a lofty sense of self-fulfillment.

It is a radical step to risk defining oneself by a single other, but it offers wilder possibilities than any other alliance. To marry is not to surrender one's own individuality but to join it with another's to create something radically new and unpredictable. Much has been made of the security of marriage. I have never desired that sort of security; it is precisely the larger insecurity, the increase of possibilities and the risk of creation, that entices me.

Finally, we must address the third of those initial objections. Why bother with

the "piece of paper" which is the evidence of a public promise? If we have promised faithfulness to each other, what does it matter that society know? After all, is it not a private affair?

In fact, the promise of marriage is anything but private. As marriage is the most profound commitment between two persons, so its public declaration is the most profound action we can perform in the world of men. The public promise to love is the remarkable merging of the private with the public, of the individual with the universal, of the world of thought with the world of action. For in the public sphere, action rules, in the private, thought. To assume that one can promise love in private is seriously to misunderstand the nature of promise. Promise is action and therefore an *essentially* public undertaking. It is through promise that a lasting love—a love "till death us do part"—is made possible, precisely because we are thereby transferred from the private, unsure, and always vulnerable world of thought to the public, strong, and definite world of action. Public promise frees us from dependence on our "feelings," which are dark and easily swayed. We are set free in the clarity of action.

Faithfulness to one person and its public avowal are essentially one and the same. If it is through promise that faithful love is made possible and promise is a public event, then to promise faithfulness *is* to declare it publicly. Moreover, the problem we have with the "piece of paper" is precisely the same problem we have with commitment. Both stem from a fundamental misunderstanding of identity. I have already discussed the fear of losing oneself in marriage. Unwillingness to make public avowal is the same fear taken one step further. It is again the attempted separation of self (although this time "self" includes the loved one) from the external world. It is to forget that we are always defined by others and so are inescapably public. When I marry, my definition is radically altered and must necessarily affect my relationship to my other "definers"—the public. Denial of "the piece of paper" can only be futile evasion.

Prevailing contemporary opinion maintains that the private is somehow more "real" than the public. Again, this implies a misunderstanding of "public." The public-private dichotomy is that of action and thought, and it is, after all, action which shapes thought, which gives it final definition. We are all of us a strange mixture of public and private, but to assume that the one is more profound, more "real" than the other, is to misunderstand the distinction.

Serious participation in public affairs is increasingly rare. Indeed, we assume those who do pursue public life to be either crazy or crooked. More and more we desire only to be left alone, free to pursue private happiness. It seems no coincidence that this is the same time in which the fear of, or perhaps studied disinterest in, marriage is also so prevalent. Confusion about identity is at the root of both. Only when we fully understand that the self is not a separate entity, that we can never be wholly private, will we risk commitment to the other—whether an individual or a group.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the public-private division is our ability to transcend it. We do so daily but nowhere more completely than in marriage. In marriage, the profoundly private—love—becomes public. The indefinable is defined and so ensured. We receive our ultimate identity by the choice of spouse even as our love is identified through unconditional promise. For in marriage conditions are surrendered. We promise a love " 'till death us do part," a promise made possible precisely in the making, because it is the knowledge that love *must* last which allows it freedom and the chance to grow, and because promise as action allows love to transcend the problems inherent in its own realm of the private. That we are at once so entirely divided and yet able to transcend such division is most miraculous. The possibility of promise is, after all, something we share with no other creature. Let us not surrender the distinction.

KARI JENSON

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THE HOLOCAUST MISSION: July 29 to August 12, 1979

At the end of 1978 President Carter established a Commission on the Holocaust. It was charged with the task of proposing an appropriate memorial to the Jewish victims of the Nazi regime. There was an element of retroactivity in the president's decision, a reaching out for the five million dead whose very identity as Jews was not readily recognized by the United States at a time when they were being subjected to a systematic process of destruction. Now they were to have a monument under official U.S. auspices to recall the days when they died alone.

The drafting of such a recommendation is quite an undertaking and the work was to be carried out by (1) a small staff consisting of a part-time director, full-time deputy director and full-time assistant, (2) the "President's Commission" itself—a large body of twenty-four members chosen from the public, plus five from the Senate and five from the House of Representatives, and (3) an advisory board almost as big as the commission. To finance the half year or so of deliberations and planning, a modest budget was allocated to the commission by the Department of the Interior. Commissioners and advisory board members accepted no fees and their official travel outside the United States was to be billed to them personally.

Most members of the commission as well as the board were Jews, a number of them survivors. The most conspicuous profession in the group was the clergy (Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic), albeit one that was drawn mainly from academic life. There was an obvious tilt to the northeast, although several members had come from Georgia. A number of commissioners could be described as prominent in public or cultural life. Few, very few, were young.

I had little inkling or knowledge of the consultations which led to the creation of the commission and the selection of its membership. No doubt I was approached because I had devoted about three decades of research and writing to the Holocaust, but I have long been accustomed to working in solitude. No wonder that in one of the

first telephone calls informing me of the commission's existence I was admonished not to turn down an appointment if I should be requested to serve. I would be needed because the memorial was to be more than mute stone; it was to contain records, books, films, and it was to be a depository of such materials in order that one might progress beyond remembering the imperfectly known to know what was imperfectly remembered.

This was the offer I could not refuse. To my surprise, virtually all of the commissioners espoused the idea of a "living" memorial, a building in which one could meet, learn, and think. More than that, there was to be an endowment to aid researchers with fellowships and grants. Of course, most of the funds for this program would have to be private. We would not only have to recommend a broad framework, but we would also have to think about the means.

During an early meeting, mention was made by the director of a journey abroad, to visit some of the principal sites in Poland and the USSR where the Jews had been killed and to survey hitherto unavailable documentary holdings in the archives of these countries. This mission preoccupied me from that very moment; it filled my mind long after it was over.

I had never been in Poland or the USSR; I had never visited Auschwitz, Treblinka, or Babi Yar. Something—not only lack of money—had kept me from traveling to these places. I had "seen" them, of course, in German documents. It is in those files, thousands and tens of thousands of them, that I had wandered and it is there that I had encountered "planet Auschwitz" and the "concentration camp universe." Eventually I had become familiar with these phenomena, their terrain, logistics, and operational characteristics. Yet in essence they remained mysterious to me and inexplicable.

"No one who has not been there can imagine what it was like." How often had I heard this phrase from survivors. Its implications could hardly be overlooked: those who had not lived through the experience would not be able to recreate it, even if they studied the original records or examined the old barbed wires. There is no way one can be in Auschwitz anymore; it is not a concentration camp today, but a museum. Nor can one be in Treblinka, it is a sculpture. One cannot be in Babi Yar either, it is a monument in a park. What then could one recapture in those surroundings? What could we do there now?

The survivors on the commission were to be our guides. The Holocaust mission was in the first instance their journey. At the opening meeting of the commission in Washington, a procedural point had been raised by a Christian member. He said that survivors should always speak first. He was gently overruled by the survivors themselves who preferred to follow a proper American alphabetical order, but here, on the grounds where they had been the outcasts of mankind, orphaned or widowed in a single night, they were to be at the head of the procession.

The undisputed spiritual leader was Elie Wiesel, once an inmate of Auschwitz, now the chairman of the commission, "prophet-like," mesmerizing, saying at every occasion not merely that which must be said to a host, but also those things that for most of us would have been unutterable, and saying them in the morning, the afternoon, or the night. Fluent in French, English, Hebrew, Yiddish (not to mention Hungarian), this gaunt figure moved among us, sleeping little and eating almost nothing.

We almost did not go. The Soviet Union issued visas to us on the Saturday prior to our scheduled Sunday departure, and it denied entry to the part-time director of the commission as well as to a member of the advisory board. (Both had visited the USSR before and had apparently been in contact with dissidents.) The detailed itinerary was a series of last-minute arrangements that must have been put together with the assistance of extraordinarily diligent officials of the Department of State and embassies abroad. The group was large. Though it included fewer than half of the commissioners and advisory board members (none at all from the legislative branch), there were wives, reporters, and invited guests, some of them financial supporters of remembrance projects. At the many ceremonies at graves and monuments, the cameras would sweep across this crowd which numbered between fifty and sixty.

Only after we had left the United States did I understand the multiple purposes of the mission. We would not only have to absorb much that we would encounter during our hurried visits and meetings; we would also have to impart information to others. Our foreign hosts in Eastern Europe would ask us what we meant when we said the word "Holocaust" and we would devote more time than we had anticipated to answering that one question above all.

Poland

Today Poland is a homogeneous society. Unlike the Polish state of 1939, the present republic has no substantial minorities. The territories inhabited by Ukrainians and Lithuanians were yielded to the USSR, and from the western provinces, acquired after the war, the Germans were expelled. The Jewish community, once 3,300,000 dispersed in the large cities and smaller towns, now numbers 6,000. Ninety percent of the prewar Jewish population were killed in the Holocaust; most of the remainder survived as soldiers, refugees, or forced laborers outside or inside the destructive arena, and these people have since moved to other countries, mainly to Israel and the United States.

The three million Polish Jews who succumbed to German destruction represent nearly three-fifths of all the Jewish dead. Moreover, Poland (as defined by the boundaries of 1939) is the graveyard not only of those three million, but also of a million more transported there in special trains from several countries of German-dominated Europe.

Before their final destruction, the Jews of Poland were incarcerated in hundreds of ghettos, large and small. Near some of these ghettos the death camps appeared. From these ghettos the Jews were moved out to the gas chambers where they were killed along with the other Jewish deportees from the northern, western, and southern portions of the continent.

Few are the traces of Jewry in the physical panorama of contemporary Warsaw. As we stood in front of the monument—cast in heroic proportions—of the Warsaw ghetto fighters, I glanced at the ordinary apartment buildings erected by the Polish government on the former ghetto site. They were already showing signs of wear. I knew

that the old quarter was no more. For several years I had been one of the editors of the diary kept by the man who was Chairman of the Jewish Council of the Warsaw Ghetto, Adam Czerniakow. Again and again, I had consulted a map of the T-shaped walled ghetto, some ten full blocks at its widest and twenty blocks long, which housed well over 400,000 people in three or four story buildings. After the deportations, and the battle ignited by the armed resistance of the last ghetto inhabitants, the SS razed the Jewish quarter lest Warsaw regain its prewar population size. Now that there are Polish houses where the ghetto stood, it is difficult to visualize its former boundary even at the *Umschlagplatz* through which the official ghetto exports and imports passed and from which more than 300,000 Jews were taken to Treblinka.

On the first day we visited also a Polish monument commemorating the Polish struggle against the Germans. At that ceremony picked Polish troops stood by and the American ambassador was present as we placed flowers at the foot of the memorial. The Polish People's Republic does not deny the Holocaust, it does not obscure the fact that Jews died as Jews, but it will remind the world of the Poles who died as Poles, and it will present the two fates in a formula suggesting parity. Repeatedly we heard a statistic indicating that three million Polish Jews and three million non-Jewish Poles had died as a consequence of the German occupation. The Polish toll—casualties in battle, deaths in camps, and fatalities in epidemics—was calculated a long time ago and may well be reexamined by experts, but when Polish Justice Minister Jerzy Bafia referred to this "Golgotha" as a trauma that after thirty-five years was still being felt in every walk of life, I believed him without need for any substantiation.

For Czeslaw Pilichowski, Director of the Main Commission for Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Poland, the double disaster inflicted on Jews and Poles by the same implacable foe was more than a matter of juxtaposition. He cited a poem, "To the Polish Jews," by Wladislaw Broniewski, which contains the verse "Our common home has been wrecked and the blood shed makes us brothers, we have been united by execution walls, by Dachau, Auschwitz, by every unmarked grave, every prison bar." I took down these words and almost memorized them; they rang in my ears longer than any others expressed in these official meetings.

Yet I knew that during our century, Jews had endured misery in Polish society. It is hardly an unknown story and in the American Jewish community it has shaped sentiments much less mellow than my own. I could imagine a reaction in America to what we were hearing in Warsaw that day. It would be said in our country that Poland is embracing its Jews, now that they are gone, as much as it was rejecting them when they were still alive. In the extreme form of this view, Poland has been the antisemitic nation par excellence, discriminating against the Jewish population before the war, welcoming German actions against Jewry during the conflict, and all but expelling the remnant thereafter. I myself have always attempted to assess evidence of Polish hostility toward the Jews in the broadest possible context. Long before the Holocaust, there was little tranquility for Jewry in several countries of Europe. After the German invasion of Poland, the ghettoization process instituted by the occupation authorities resulted in a reallocation of Jewish housing and Jewish trading to the Polish sector. The Poles profited, if that is the word, from a Jewish misfortune. The Germans set up also their death camps on Polish soil, not, however, to take advantage of any Polish hospitality, but to reduce costs, particularly of transportation. There was no central Polish authority under German rule and it is not Poland that destroyed the Jews—this deed was performed by Nazi Germany.

Still, I could not ignore the circumstance that for the remaining handful of Jews, life in Poland had become difficult and even oppressive. Only a few days after our stay in Eastern Europe, I was to meet a middle-aged Jew in Denmark who had emigrated from Poland nearly a decade ago. I asked him what his profession had been before his emigration. He was a major in the Polish army. Had he retired? No, he had been dismissed abruptly in 1967, one week after the outbreak of the Six-Day War between Israel and the Arab states. No doubt, the reasons for the action against him were linked to foreign policy issues, but I could not help being troubled by his experience and the similar dilemma faced by other Jews in the Soviet Union. The problem is the age-old lesson so ingrained in the mind of the Eastern European Jew that eventually he will suffer, not for a religion he does not practice or a Zionist cause he does not espouse, but for the fact that in the eyes of all those around him he remains unalterably a Jew.

Our hosts placed stress on the Polish agony during the war, and they implied that since those trying days Jews and Poles have had much in common. They also reminded us of the help that ordinary Poles had given to endangered Jews in the course of the German occupation. This chapter in the history of Polish-Jewish relations was emphasized in speeches, books, and exhibits. I had occasion to look at some of the evidence—it was documentary. In German parlance, Poles who had extended shelter or sustenance to Jews were guilty of *Judenbeherbergung*, a crime for which the penalty was a swift death. The Germans had the habit of posting the names of Polish men and women who lost their lives for such activities.

We had a great many meetings. Addresses were given, points made, themes stressed. At the end of a long day, I would walk alone in Warsaw. Once, before midnight, I saw a Polish family placing flowers on a plaque at the entrance of a park.

We have moved from cemetery to cemetery, said Elie Wiesel later in Jerusalem, and everywhere we went we found a strange beauty. This observation about localities in which masses of people were killed expressed in quintessence a thought I had during our visit to Treblinka.

We had traveled to the site of the death camp in the stifling heat of a Hungarian bus. On the way, a survivor pointed out to us the small Jewish towns that had once existed nearby. We passed old wooden houses, rode over a narrow bridge, and saw old freight cars at a railway siding—a deportation train preserved there by the Polish government. I wish we could have approached the camp by rail, as the deportees of 1942 had come, but we were arriving on a very warm day at the end of July, at a time of year when the first of the Warsaw

ghetto transports were being hauled into this killing center. Though the distance is not long, the Jewish victims had been moved much more slowly than we, and they must have jumped out of the cars with forebodings and partly in shock, but also with some sense of physical relief. Did they notice the sky and the trees? It took but two hours for the deportees to be deprived of all their personal belongings and to be walked the incredibly short distance to the chambers where they were gassed.

A small German guard force, augmented by Ukrainian auxiliaries, killed three quarters of a million Jews in Treblinka on a virtual assembly line. Several hundred Jewish inmates employed in maintenance and facing certain death rebelled in August 1943. Few were the survivors of the break, but those Jews who did not escape from Treblinka did not outlive the camp. In the end, the bodies in the mass graves were exhumed. All the installations were razed, and a Ukrainian farm was established on the site to restore its pastoral appearance. Only a cobblestone path, built by prisoners, was left where Treblinka had existed. After the war, the Polish government laid down concrete ties, arranged as a symbolic railway track, and set up hundreds of jagged stones, each representing a Jewish community, around the stone memorial. For this construction, the entire terrain was used on a scale of 1:1, in the place where it had all happened. A guide pointed out that after every heavy rain, tiny bone fragments are disgorged by the earth and mix with pebbles on the ground. Involuntarily, one or two visitors bent down to pick up what might have been such relics, only to drop them quickly. I was still gazing at the woods and I thought I heard the whine of heavy trucks in the distance. Where is the highway, I asked? Where are the trucks going? There is no highway and there are no trucks, I was told. I was hearing the famous Treblinka wind moving through the trees.

Much farther from Warsaw, to the southwest, was Auschwitz, the most lethal place in Nazi Europe. One million Jews died there, as well as several hundred thousand Poles, Russians, Frenchmen—all the nationalities in the orbit of the German army and the German Security Police. Auschwitz was a complex of three camps: the main one, or Auschwitz I, which housed the administration as well as a large number of inmates; the killing center of Birkenau, designated Auschwitz II; and the industrial camp, Monowitz, or Auschwitz III. The entire cluster was photographed repeatedly by allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944.

Auschwitz I is still intact. Its barracks stand where they were, a reconstructed gas chamber may be viewed, and the crematory is in working order. The death camp of Birkenau is almost bare; the tall smoke stacks of the crematories are gone, but near the railway track one may climb over the ruins of the largest gas chambers ever built.

Adjacent to Auschwitz I is the city of Auschwitz with its large railway yard. Houses now filled with children are ranged along the edge of the former camp. Every day the inhabitants of these buildings may look out of their windows and see the roofs of barracks.

We stepped in, wearing our tags with the emblem of the United States and the legend "President's Commission on the Holocaust." The main entrance crowned with iron grill work still proclaims the slogan *Arbeit macht frei* (work makes free) and a smaller sign at the side says *HALT Ausweise vorzeigen* (Halt—show identification). The walkways and buildings were those of a permanent military fort, but that appearance was deceptive. On iron bars still flanking the street on which we were walking, men had been hanged. Individual buildings, which the Germans called blocks, were put to unique concentration camp uses: in one, surgical experiments were performed, in another prisoners were pushed into a cage and starved to death. Between two of the barracks there was an alley used for shootings. The windows of the building to the left had been filled so that prisoners housed there could not see the executions. To the right, however, no such precautions had been taken, since the only inmates kept there were the condemned, waiting their turn.

Each of the buildings is part of the Auschwitz museum. I went to see the exhibits of old shoes, eyeglasses, prosthetic devices, utensils, and luggage left behind by the Germans because of their unsuitability for shipment to the Reich. I saw a hallway filled with photographs of Polish prisoners, young men and women, who were brought here in 1942 and 1943. Each of them looked healthy, for their pictures were taken on the day of arrival. For each the SS had noted also the date of birth, and the date of death. Most had lived only a few months in Auschwitz. I peered at these photographs, one or the other adorned with fresh flowers left by Polish friends or family. I wanted to find some young man who had been as old as I was at that time. The search did not take long. My contemporary, born a few days before me, was dead as a teenager in Auschwitz even before my schooling in New York was interrupted by the war.

In Birkenau, standing on earth, sand, and what may have been ashes, I attached myself to a Polish young lady of noble beauty and refined features who explained the history of the camp. She was obviously a professional historian and I admired her grasp of complex information. She was preparing an album of German SS photographs of Auschwitz and I promised her aerial photographs from our own archives.

Our group was about to be divided, some to visit an old synagogue in nearby Krakow, the others to stay in Auschwitz. Just at that moment I began to feel an unmistakable pain, a cramp brought on by a kidney stone which I must have formed. I am prone to this malady when there is too much heat and not enough water to drink. The pain always worsens and then I need morphine for relief. Obviously, I should have left immediately to see a physician in Krakow, but instead I raised my hand to join those who chose to remain in the camp. I returned to the barracks, the old shoes, to the photographs of the dead Poles, to the alley, to the cells. I wanted to stand where the present pontiff had knelt in prayer. My pain subsided, my muscles relaxed, and at the end of the day, I knew that I would have no need of drugs.

There was to be one more visit to a cemetery in Poland, a real one in Warsaw. By now, I had run out of time—time to look at documents in the Jewish historical institute, and time to survey the land behind the tombstones where 80,000 Jews, dead of emaciation and disease, had been buried during the ghetto days. I wanted to see only one grave, a regular large slab half hidden in the growing thicket of weeds. It is the resting place of Adam Czerniakow, the chairman of the Warsaw Jewish Council, who took his life upon the outbreak of de-

portations after he had failed to save his people.

The Soviet Union

I was startled when Elie Wiesel, the chairman of our commission, called a meeting of the group in the open environment of a dining room of our Warsaw hotel to discuss the advisability of proceeding to the Soviet Union in the light of the refusal of visas to the director of the commission and to a member of the advisory board. So far as I was concerned, that issue had been settled before we left our homes in the United States—we would go. Much to Wiesel's dismay, several of us spoke up to reiterate the earlier decision. Exhausted by a full day, we reassured him in a sluggish manner that at some appropriate time in the future we would express our outrage to protest the Soviet action. Only one member of our group, Bayard Rustin, understood immediately that Wiesel was attempting to elicit our outrage on the spot in order that he might use it for yet another attempt to obtain the visas. I was too concerned with the possibility that he might actually abandon our original plans to be of help to him. For me, the visit to the Soviet Union was essential, if only because we *had* been admitted as members of an official Holocaust commission. Already my head was filled with burning curiosity. *How* would we be received? *What* would be said to us?

The director of the commission, Irving Greenberg, was not in Europe. Perhaps he had expected an immediate statement of solidarity from the membership. The advisory board member whose visa was also denied, had come with us as far as Warsaw. He had in fact been instrumental in arranging the entire journey. It was his miserable travel bureau we all had to use. Now he conceded defeat: he wanted us to continue without him. He only asked that we would say one prayer for him at Babi Yar and another in the Moscow synagogue. His voice breaking, he sat down, but then rose again to apologize for having displayed his feelings so openly. Now he wanted to give us a reason for leaving him behind. He had been a member of a partisan unit in Eastern Europe during the war. There was an iron rule in the unit that a wounded man would be shot by his comrades lest their mission be jeopardized. I liked Miles Lerman. This former partisan and current oil distributor personifies the character traits I have come to associate with survivors. They are men and women with fast reactions, high intelligence, great endurance, and an extraordinary capacity for regenerating their lives from the impact of shattering experiences. When I saw Lerman again in Copenhagen, barely a week after our meeting in the Warsaw hotel, he was talking to all of us, full of inquiries and plans.

I was not prepared for the Soviet Union. As a political scientist, I should not have been surprised by anything, not the standard of living as exemplified by the merchandise in a department store, nor the restrictions so evident in the mere absence of foreign non-communist newspapers in the lobbies of our hotels. I knew of the Soviet belief that distant goals require constant sacrifices: for capital formation and industrialization, many consumers goods are not produced; for the stability of the regime, intellectual and physical mobility is curtailed; and for the sake of unity in the Soviet Union, the separate memories of constituent nationalities, including the Holocaust that befell the Soviet Jews, must be submerged. What I had not quite expected was backwardness in so much art, architecture, and historiography, that stale conforming manner in which Soviet designers and writers are casting the aesthetic qualities of life. Hence I was taken aback also by the counterpart of this stylistic retardation in the formula ridden answers of bureaucrats to central questions about the Second World War and the Holocaust which had transpired in its course. The approach of Soviet officialdom to the meaning of history is fixed and rigid; the encounter of these men with us could be no different.

In Poland, we had not only been warmly received; we were given assurances that the Polish archives would be open to American researchers interested in the German occupation. Poland holds a large quantity of German documents, particularly records portraying the destructive scene at a local level. Much that occurred in the final hours of Polish Jewry and of other Jews deported to Poland is reflected in these files. The USSR also possesses documents of German occupation authorities, not to speak of contemporaneous Soviet correspondence dealing directly with the German onslaught and its effects on the civilian population. I was interested in these materials, though I realized that access to them would be a major problem. Not only would a segmentation of occupation history into Jewish and other subject matter be unwelcome in principle, but such sorting requires an examination of all the German records in detail. We know enough about these documents to expect any report, whether by German SS offices, civilian overseers, military government, railroad directorates, or economic agencies, to contain information about a variety of events—the production of wooden carts and the shooting of Jews might be described on a single page. Moreover, the researcher might be particularly interested in comparisons and contexts; he might wish to investigate the German "racial ladder" and the placement of various groups in this scheme, or the role of native auxiliaries in German service, or the psychological repercussions of shootings on White Russian or Ukrainian communities. It would be inherently impossible for Soviet authorities to permit foreigners the pursuit of information about any aspect of the Jewish catastrophe without allowing them some insight into the entire fabric of Soviet society at a time when it was undergoing its greatest stress.

Tactically, there was yet another problem, one which affects all attempts to effect exchanges of knowledge with the Soviet Union. The United States is an open society, our libraries and archives are accessible to all visitors without any stipulation of reciprocity. What Soviet or East German researchers want to know is given to them without restrictions; for what we attempt to find out, we have no more to give. In Kiev, on our first night, walking with Bayard Rustin, I voiced the thought that one argument—the only argument—might be the point that it would be in the interest of the USSR to open its shelves to us, that in the United States there was little appreciation of the Soviet agony or the Soviet contribution in the Second World War, that findings made by American researchers in the Soviet Union would carry more weight in our country than the selection and presentation of topics by Soviet historians and

journalists. Rustin was without question the most astute and experienced member of our mission, and what he said to me that evening in Kiev was somewhat as follows: "I hope you do not mind, my friend, my telling you that you are naive."

Kiev has the appearance of a new city. Before the war, its population was 900,000; now the number is 2,150,000. From September 19, 1941, to November 6, 1943, Kiev was in German hands. As soon as the city had been captured, a unit of the SS and Police, *Einsatzkommando* 4a, ordered the Jewish inhabitants by means of wall posters to assemble for "resettlement." They were taken to a ravine at the city boundary where the *Kommando,* a small company-size unit augmented by detachments of German Order Police, massacred them in a three-day shooting operation. The count was 33,771 Jewish dead. When, in the spring of 1942, the commander of *Kommando* 4a, Paul Blobel, received a visitor from Berlin (Albert Hartl), he pointed to the mass grave, explaining that the Jews were buried there. Now, more than three and a half decades later, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Kiev City Soviet of Peoples' Deputies welcomed the Holocaust commission to the city, and Soviet guides showed the recently built memorial to the American visitors.

I do not know what route the bus was following from our hotel, but the ride seemed very short and when we arrived at the ravine called Babi Yar I immediately asked how far we were from the center of the city. Barely two miles was the answer. I could not help wondering then how many people, including the victims themselves, must have heard the rifle shots and machine-gun fire. Babi Yar is a moon shaped depression in the earth, covered with grass and surrounded by trees. Raised on a ridge that is jutting into the center of the dish is a Janus-like monument. Facing the street are heroic figures, while on the far side one may see the tormented faces and contorted bodies of Soviet citizens, including women and children. I talked to the designer of the memorial who explained that the Germans had shot captured partisans here and helpless civilians there; the sculptor had kept that geography in mind when he shaped the monument. I knew that, unlike Blobel, the Soviet planners of the memorial made no mention of Jews. Our commission had brought a wreath of flowers with streamers commemorating Babi Yar as a Jewish tragedy and laid it down at the foot of the pedestal on which stood the partisans of stone. The cantor sang, and I disengaged myself from the coil of people around him, stepped back twenty feet and looked up at the crown of the monument. Two Soviet photographers rushed towards me and took pictures of me at close range.

We were leaving Kiev for Moscow on a Friday afternoon and I did not think that we would have meetings until Monday. No sooner, however, had we arrived when several of us were asked to go to the headquarters of the Moscow Writers Union, a building which in furnishings and atmosphere reminded me of a typical student center at an American university. It was old and nondescript; on several of its floors people were sitting, reading, eating. Our delegation was headed by Wiesel and included the theologian Robert McAfee Brown, as well as *Time* magazine book review editor Stefan Kanfer, not in his capacity as a correspondent covering our mission, but as a novelist pressed into service at the spur of the moment to match the formidable array of literary talent assembled on the Soviet side. To our surprise, the Soviet chairman introduced the members of his group by citing their military records. Two had evidently received high decorations and another had risen from private to major. "When you introduce us," I whispered to Wiesel, "you may say that I was a soldier." "An officer perhaps?" Wiesel asked quickly. "No, just a soldier." Kanfer did not stir. He is a veteran of the Korean conflict. Wrong war.

The Soviet delegation consisted of eight people; half of them were Jews. Were so many Jews assembled as a courtesy to us? The idea was unsettling. As if to read my mind, one of the Soviet writers referred to himself as a member of a minority—he was a Russian. Later, the Soviet chairman showed us two large tablets listing the names of Moscow writers killed in action. Half were Jewish names, he explained.

We were eating a full meal, the best I was to be served in the Soviet Union, and we were assured that we could have every course without concern—the food was completely kosher. While we were dining, each of us spoke, not as one would in an official meeting with formal agenda, but to say something personal. One of the Soviet writers (the one who had risen from private to major) was Anatoli Rybakov. This is what he told us.

He had grown up, of Jewish parents, wholly assimilated into Russian culture. He did not attend religious services and he knew no Yiddish or Hebrew. His eighteen novels had no Jewish content. One day, however, he wanted to write a short story in which the two protagonists, a man and a woman, were Jews. He wanted his story to be about love, not merely the romantic love of young people who had just met, but also the mature love of a husband and wife after they had lived with each other for many years. He decided that his young man should have migrated to Russia from Switzerland in 1910, that he should have met a young woman, married her, and stayed on through the First World War and the Revolution. To show them growing older, he had to continue the story to 1941 and the German assault. He had spent three years in research to construct a locality in which his couple might have lived. By then his story was becoming a novel. He had to place them into a ghetto and inevitably he had to construct the ultimate scene of a German shooting operation. It troubled him greatly that the Jews went to their deaths with apparent docility, but he was convinced that they had no recourse and that they died with dignity. After the publication of his novel he had received hundreds of letters assuring him that he had been right in his portrayal.

Wiesel spoke of his concern about Babi Yar. Having been there only that morning, still agitated by the experience, he had to point out that it was painful to see the monument without an inscription identifying the victims as Jews.

There are monuments and there are monuments, the Russian chairman replied. When, for example, his friend, Yevgenij Yevtushenko, wrote a poem "Babi Yar" explicitly dwelling on the Jewish fate, that verse was a monument. Who could tell which of the two monuments, the one of rock or the other on paper, would last the longer?

The Saturday morning was devoted to an appearance by the commission and its guests at the Moscow synagogue. I declined to join the group. Religious observances make me uncomfortable and the political overtones of that particular visit disturbed me. We had come to the Soviet Union as a commission of the president and our mandate was the Holocaust. For me there was no other purpose, but I realized that many of my colleagues did not share my single-mindedness. Our very presence in Moscow on a weekend was no accident; the Saturday in the synagogue had been planned to show support for Soviet Jewry. Later I was to learn that Elie Wiesel had asked for a private moment after a meeting with Procurator General Roman Rudenko to present a list of four incarcerated dissidents to the Soviet official. Wiesel is a deeply sensitive man and he could not bring himself to remember the dead by forgetting the living. I myself was thinking about unknown, Russified, and atheistic people whose lives in the Soviet Union are increasingly filled with questions and quandaries.

On Red Square, of all places, I was to have an unexpected encounter with one nameless individual. It was evening and four of us, still wearing our tags, were standing there. He came up to us and in halting but intelligible English said that he knew about our arrival from broadcasts on the Voice of America. His age was about twenty-nine and he was born in a small town far from Moscow of a Jewish father, long dead, and a Russian mother, still living. Some time ago he had moved to the Soviet capital with his Russian wife. By profession he was an engineer and he was working in his field, but lately he was contemplating emigration. "Why?" I asked. "Because I want freedom." Did he have access to military secrets in his job? Yes, he said, and that is why he was seeking employment in a position not requiring knowledge of such information. Once he had made the change he would stay for a period of three years. Two of my companions immediately handed him their cards, but he would not give us his name. Who was he? Why did he approach us? Was I becoming paranoid for asking what his purpose may have been?

Before the commission had left the United States, I had insisted on an opportunity to meet with a representative of the Soviet archival administration. I had familiarized myself as well as I could with the organization and holdings of the Soviet archives by reading the standard work on that subject by the American Sovietologist Patricia Grimsted. In her substantial volume, there is no mention of captured German documents. I would have to inquire about their location and availability in the course of our discussions in Moscow.

The chief of the Soviet team of archivists was the deputy director of the Main Archival Administration, Vaganov. I pressed the attack for the American group, supported at every turn by my friends who were eager to widen any opening and exploit any breach. The Main Archival Administration, said Vaganov, had no German documents. It had no documents at all dated after 1940. Furthermore, there was no "fond" or collection identified as German documents as such. Where were they then? I asked. Did the Defense Ministry retain possession of them? Documents dated after 1940, said Vaganov, were being kept by whatever ministry was the appropriate custodian in accordance with their subject matter. In that case, I asked, when would documents dated 1941 or 1942 be transferred by ministries currently keeping them to the Main Archival Administration? There was a key, said Vaganov, according to which transfers were being made; the schedules varied on the basis of different criteria. The Main Archival Administration did not know when documents would be handed over by the Ministry of Defense. Was he saying, I asked, that he had no German documents? The Soviet Archival Administration, said Vaganov, *may* have documents needed for investigation of war crimes. One or another document *may* be found in the files of an Archive in Byelorussia or the Ukraine. We should consult the volumes of the Soviet history of the Second World War for sources. We should avail ourselves of the existing system of cooperation between the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and US academic bodies if we wished to utilize a Soviet Archive.

Even before our queries to the archivists were over, a larger group of our commission had begun a meeting with Soviet historians. We joined our colleagues to talk with members of the World War II Section of the Institute of the History of the USSR in the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The Soviet chairman was V. A. Kumanyov, but the most active discussant at the Russian end of the table was the military historian of World War II Alexander Samsonov. It is Samsonov who challenged our mission and everything we stood for. In pursuing a study of the Jewish disaster, he said, with World War II as a background, we were reversing reality and standing history on its head. As a Marxist he had to conclude that the Fascist assault on the USSR was an attempt to conquer the world. In the wake of this aggression, Jews were killed, Russians were killed, Ukrainians were killed. The Fascist plan was to wipe out entire peoples, including all of the Slavic nations. He himself was a Bylorussian and more than thirty years ago he had seen with his own eyes the devastation visited upon the area that was his home.

Several of us replied to this argument. We said that the Jews had been the victims of German actions from 1933 to 1945. The ghettos were established on Polish soil in 1940 and when German armies suddenly struck at the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, the Jews were facing mass death. We were not unmindful of the fact that in German plans the Slavic populations of Eastern Europe were destined for rapid enslavement and ultimate extinction. Yet as Soviet forces turned the tide of war in the titanic battle of Stalingrad, the invader's vision of the obliteration of the Slavs was dissipated in the retreat. The Jews, however, were being killed until the end; their annihilation became reality, and European Jewry, as we once knew it, is no more.

Kumanyov now joined the debate. There were differences of opinion, he said, particularly about Nazi policy vis-a-vis the Jews in the total constellation of German planning. To Kumanyov the destruction of the Jews was just an experiment which was to lead to the annihilation of others. Thus he agreed in part with Samsonov, in part with us, but he had to add that if we were to look at the Holocaust in an isolated manner, we would weaken our common struggle against Fascism.

We left the Soviet Union that afternoon. The first of our two last stops was in Copenhagen, where we paid tribute to the Danish people for their singular rescue effort of October 1943 which resulted in the

clandestine transport in small boats of almost the entire Jewish population of Denmark to safety in Sweden. Our journey ended with a depleted group in Jerusalem where our Israeli friends were worried that the Holocaust Commission would not succeed in isolating itself from the urgings of nationalities with martyrological claims of their own. At Yad Vashem, Israel's Remembrance Authority, a display had been prepared of original documents. One was the last notebook of Adam Czerniakow (the chairman of the Warsaw Jewish Council) opened to the last entry. My colleague, S. J. Staron, and I had worked with typewritten transcriptions and a facsimile edition of the diary; only now did I notice that at the moment of Czerniakow's suicide, hours after his final entry, the notebook was just about full.

On September 27, 1979, the commission assembled in the Rose Garden of the White House for a presentation of its report to the president. Elie Wiesel spoke in front of the microphone, as President Carter stood at his side, erect and motionless, looking off into the distance. Was he listening to the words? Was he thinking about one of the many crises with which he had to deal?

Wiesel, still thinking of Babi Yar, remarked that this massacre had occurred just thirty-eight years before. The world had looked on then and in the following years, as the Holocaust swept across the European Jewish communities.

The president responded, commending us for our work and the journey that in itself was an act of memorialization. Then he recalled the omissions of the time when the world had looked the other way.

It was in the middle of the afternoon, and for the president, not yet the middle of his working day. He is like a prisoner, I thought, always under guard, pressured by every summons. That day he had given us an hour. Could it be that he had already devoted more time and thought to the Holocaust than his predecessor during the war, Franklin Roosevelt, had managed while the Jews were dying?

It is natural, I said to myself as I was walking in the streets of Washington that night, for me to feel slightly depressed. Not because of those who would deny the Holocaust, or those who would dilute it, or the others who would forget it—I understand them all. If I did not feel all that well, I was merely experiencing the reaction I always had after some concluding ceremony. What I had to do now was to plan my research. There were documents I had to read, particularly the records in the Polish archives, and I would have to travel again soon. Next year, in Auschwitz.

RAUL HILBERG

Professor of political science at the University of Vermont, Raul Hilberg wrote *The Destruction of the European Jews*, (Chicago 1961), which will appear in a revised expanded edition in 1983 (Holmes and Meier). With Stanislaw Staron and Josef Kermisz he edited *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow*, (Stein and Day 1979). "The President's Commission on the Holocaust," after its final report, was replaced by "The United States Memorial Council."

FROM OUR READERS (Continued from page 2)

colleges, do likewise. Several of them who had never heard of St. John's asked me about it after reading the *Review*, and you can bet that they read the article about the *New York Times* versus *Pravda*, not the one about Plotinus.

I am not berating the article about Plotinus or any other such article; I enjoy reading them, too. But I think that the new editorial policy you have in mind will upset the admirable balance (between the two types of articles I gave examples of) that the *Review* has maintained over the last several issues. The general public, and most alumni, will have no incentive to read it because nothing will grab their attention. Offer them something that they suspect will interest them, though, and they might read the rest of the issue as well.

There is a case of such a publication as you seem to want the *Review* to become; in fact, it is none other than the *Review* itself in the days when it was called *The College*. As I recall, I seldom read it, and none of my non-St. John's friends I showed it to ever did. It had the same tone as the professional journals that tutors and alumni who have gone on to become college professors write in: a cut above the competition, but nonetheless plodding and addressed to a much too narrow audience. Of course, articles that lack pizzazz, like great books that lack pizzazz, often have important things to say. However, a whole magazine full of them makes for a whole magazine unread. You tutors, who develop great patience for texts as a part of your job, tend to forget this.

"The disciplined reflection which is nurtured by the St. John's Program" (I quote the statement of editorial policy) is also nurtured elsewhere besides St. John's, and on other matters besides those investigated in the program. Let the *St. John's Review* continue to reflect the best efforts of the whole republic of letters, not just those of the small citadel that is our college; that is the best way to communicate the intellectual liveliness of St. John's to those outside its campuses. If you do not, the *Review* will become another one of those magazines read only by those who write for it.

KURT SCHULER '81

The following is the Instruction Committee's statement of editorial policy which the writer cites:

Editorial Policy For The St. John's Review

The *St. John's Review* exemplifies, encourages, and enhances the disciplined reflection which is nurtured by the St. John's Program. It does so both through the character most in common among its contributors—their familiarity with that Program and their respect for it—and through the style and content of their contributions.

Contributors are, for the most part, members of the greater college community—tutors, alumni, and visiting lecturers

(continued inside back cover)

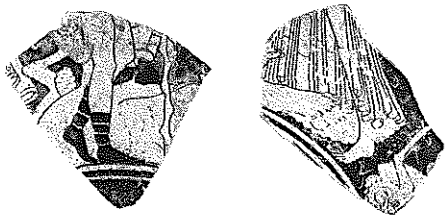
—and others who are friends and critics of the Program. Appropriate submissions by those less familiar with the Program are welcome.

For the most part, contributions do not observe the usual limits of research scholarship, nor do they use its apparatus. On the other hand, however, they do not display the easy generalization and simplification of popular journalism. Rather, under the discipline of the liberal arts, they aim at the immediacy and directness characteristic of intelligent fundamental inquiry.

Contributions aim to provide their readers with a representation in print of the continuing study and free discussion which is fostered by the Program and by which the tutors, alumni, and students of the College live and work: the interpretation of texts of worth and power and the consideration of deep and troubling issues. Although the perennial character of the concerns nourished by the Program often lends contributions a certain distance from current practical affairs, a thoughtful investigation of a present political problem is not inappropriate. From time to time, original works of the imagination are presented.

As it represents the St. John's Program, the *St. John's Review* espouses no philosophical, religious, or political doctrine beyond a dedication to liberal learning, and its readers may accordingly expect to find diversity of thought represented in its pages.

Error:
This picture in Philip Holt's article (page 58, Summer 1982) appeared upside down:



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