

Its own complicity. I can keep in mind
 So much at all events, can always find
 Fallen humanity enough, in stone,
 Yes, in the medium; where we cannot own
 Crispness, compactness, elegance, but the feature
 Seals it and signs it work of human nature
 And fallen though redeemable. You, I fear,
 Will find you bought humanity too dear
 At the price of some light leaves, if you begin
 To find your handling of them growing thin,
 Insensitive, brittle. For the common touch
 Though it warms, coarsens. Never care so much
 For leaves or people, but you care for stone
 A little more. The medium is its own
 Thing, and not all a medium, but the stuff
 Of mountains; cruel, obdurate, and rough.

Donald Davie

Solitary Travel

Breakfasting alone in Karachi, Delhi, Calcutta,
 Dacca, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Colombo, Cape Town,
 But always under water or glass, I find
 Such a beginning makes the day seem blind.

The hotels are all the same, it might be pawpaw
 Instead of grapefruit, different flowers on the tables,
 But the waiters, coffee-coloured or yellow or black,
 All smile but, should you smile, give nothing back.

And taking coffee alone in the indistinguishable airports,
 Though the land outside be empty or man-crammed, oven or icebox,
 I feel the futility of moving on
 To what, though not a conclusion, is foregone.

But the Customs clamour, the stamp is raised, the passport
 Like a chess game played by mail records the latest
 Move of just one square. Which is surely seen
 By the black bishop and the unsleeping queen.

And so to the next hotel to the selfsame breakfast,
 Same faces of manager, waiter, fellow-traveller,
 Same lounge or bar whose test tube walls unfold
 The self-indulgent disenchanted old.

Time and the will are frozen. If I could only
 Escape into icebox or oven, escape among people
 Before tomorrow from this neutral zone
 Where all tomorrows must be faced alone

Louis MacNeice

Richard L. Walker

Chairman Mao

and the Cult of Personality

AT THE tenth anniversary celebrations of the Chinese Communist régime in early October 1959, a special chorus of more than five hundred voices, including representatives of China's national minority peoples, was joined by a full Western-style symphony orchestra in a setting of unmatched splendour to perform the song that has almost supplanted the Communist national anthem:

*The East shines red,
The sun rises,
China has brought forth a Mao Tse-tung.
He plans blessings for the people,
He is the great saviour of the people.*

The performance was a fitting symbol of the fever-pitch the cult of Mao had reached at that time. In proclamations and verbose statements for the anniversary all the top leaders hailed the infinite wisdom and supreme achievements of Mao Tse-tung. Liu Shao-ch'i and Chou En-lai (Number Two and Three men in the ruling Communist hierarchy) emphasised Mao's absolute leadership and supreme qualities. The chorus of praise included a special article on the Party in the *People's Daily* of September 28th, 1959, by Liu Lan-t'ao (Alternate Secretary of the

Secretariat of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee). Liu's article indicated the extremes to which the official sanction for the cult of Mao has gone in the most populous country in the world:

Comrade Mao Tse-tung is the most outstanding exponent of the heroic proletariat of our country, the most distinguished representative of our superior traditions in the entire history of our great nation, a beacon in our country's road to Communism, and the most outstanding contemporary revolutionist, statesman, and theoretician of Marxism-Leninism. He has creatively enriched the treasures of Marxism-Leninism on a series of important questions. . . .

The 600 million or more people of our country have placed in him their hopes for their own happiness and future and considered him the incarnation of Communism and truth and the symbol of invincibility. The influence, wisdom, and experience of Comrade Mao Tse-tung and the system of thought created by him by combining Marxism-Leninism with the actual practices of the Chinese revolution are the most valuable treasures of our Party and people. The warm affection for the Party leader is in full conformity with our ardent love for our Party, class, people, and great motherland.

The parallels between the Stalin cult in the Soviet Union, which Khrushchev laid bare before the world, and the now full-blown Mao cult in China are sufficiently precise to give pause and to occasion real caution and concern throughout the world. As in the case of Stalin, the Communists have had tremendous success in projecting abroad an image of an amiable and smiling Mao Tse-tung, a dedicated Communist to be sure, but flexible and popular among the people. The image has been an unchanging one; few people have paused to consider the impact of a long period of supreme

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