



Column

ON ENCOUNTER's twentieth birthday, it is difficult not to think of the changes that have occurred since its first number appeared. It was a time when, in General Mihailovitch's phrase, "the gale of the world"

was blowing very hard indeed; 1953 was a year when to many people it seemed possible, and some people hoped, that not only would Europe die but that all the values she had created in her long and tragic history would die with her.

I myself do not think that was an exaggerated view. Europe had been so exhausted and debilitated by the war, both materially and spiritually, that it was still difficult to see how she could survive it, or any longer provide a home for the European spirit of intelligence, innovation and discovery which had been the source of its past greatness. Nor could it be transported abroad, to New York or Moscow or wherever else might offer its hospitality. There it could only live as a displaced person, a bird in a gilded or an iron cage, an émigré forever looking over its shoulder at what had been left behind. European man, one of the most extraordinary and creative products of evolution and history, has made his abiding resting place in Europe, adorned with all its magnificent memorials of the past yet only alive so long as it has the promise of a future, and it is there that he will live or die. About 1953, there were many who believed that he was there to die, and that all that could be done was embalm the corpse, and bury it as decently as possible. There were also many who were not sorry if this were so, especially those militant spirits mobilised in Europe's great fifth column, the communist parties of the West; they were waiting for the death of Europe.

I do not know how later historians will judge the Europe of twenty years later. Some no doubt will say that the corpse survived after the soul had fled, like a zombie responding mechanically to impulses dictated from outside himself. Looking at Europe today, I do not think this is a very likely hypothesis. Others will say that the soul itself had suffered a fundamental transformation, in which its vices survive and its virtues have vanished. I think this may be possible, though I do not think it is true. And there are even some who would dare to say that Europe in

1973, firmly based on her newly recovered affluence and prosperity, is now ready to be launched into one more dizzy flight into the unknown by which she has always been attracted and from which she has always won her greatest triumphs. I think this is a dream, though it is one I would gladly share.

BUT WHATEVER THE VERDICT, I think that no one would deny that in 1973 Europe still remains a possibility as the breeding-ground of a particular species of human being who may still make the unique contribution to the future that he has done to the past. To hold that possibility open was, in the Europe of 1953, almost more than could be hoped for. Twenty years later the possibility exists, even though we still cannot say that it will become a reality. But for the possibility itself we should be grateful.

ENCOUNTER could not claim to have made a major or decisive contribution to the changes by which Europe has recovered the possibility of existence. In such matters deeds count rather more than words, written or spoken. *How many divisions has the Pope?* is always a sensible question to ask ourselves when we put our trust in the word or the idea. But so far as words and ideas do count, ENCOUNTER, together with its European collaborators, *Der Monat* in Germany, *Preuves* in France, *Tempo Presente* in Italy, can claim to have promoted, to the best of its ability, the defence of European values at a time when they were in danger of being extinguished, to have held open lines of communication, both within Europe and between Europe and the United States, when there were many who would have liked to see them closed, and to have adhered to the principle that, where ideas are concerned, neither the *argumentum ad hominem* nor *ad bacillum* is permissible.

This is not, of course, a position which assures a mass circulation nor which flatters the illusions of crowds. But it is nevertheless a position which has enabled ENCOUNTER to survive successfully for twenty years, and for this perhaps both its readers and its contributors have some reason to congratulate themselves.

I HAVE BEEN READING, with great pleasure and interest, Jean Lacouture's admirable life of André Malraux, recently published in Paris.¹ One could not pay the book a higher compliment than to say that it is worthy, and rises to the level of its subject, whose life, like his work, has been a mirror of his age, even if that mirror has sometimes been a distorting one; the images it has reflected have not, for that reason, been any less dazzling.

¹ *André Malraux: une vie dans le siècle*. By JEAN LACOUTURE. Editions du Seuil.

Malraux's life coincides exactly with the life of the century; no man has been more a man of his own age or has entered more passionately into its tragedy and into its hopes. M. Lacouture tells us the story of this life in great detail, and also with great objectivity, a considerable feat considering that he has had to rely on three entirely different and frequently conflicting kinds of sources, first the facts, so far as they can be discovered, second the legend which Malraux himself has helped to weave about them, and third their reflection in the mirror of Malraux's novels.

This is not the place to recount the events which, for many people, as for their hero, have become a legend; this can be safely left to M. Lacouture. But there is one incident which has never ceased to fascinate me, and it is worth retelling even if it has been told before, in at least three versions; by Malraux himself, both in fiction, in *La Voie Royale*, and in his *Anti-Mémoires*, which is itself a kind of fiction, by his first wife, Clara Malraux, in her admirable autobiography, *Nos Vingt Ans*, and now by M. Lacouture, who tries to do justice both to fiction and autobiography, which are notoriously undependable sources, and to the verifiable facts.

THE STORY BEGINS with a young married couple, Clara and André Malraux, in the Paris of 1921, still enjoying the benefits of the post-war boom. Both partners to the marriage are highly intelligent and both greedy for the new experiences available in such variety to emancipated young people in the Paris of that time. André, twenty-one, is a poet and a dandy, after the fashion of Baudelaire, and he has the intensity, the looks and the charisma which fascinate Clara, the highly sophisticated twenty-year-old daughter of a rich German-Jewish immigrant family from Magdeburg. André, who likes to make a mystery of his lower middle-class origins, makes his living by supplying booksellers and publishers with rare editions of pornographic books. He also gambles on the stock exchange, with such success that in the inflationary conditions of 1922-23 he is able to whisper in Clara's ear, in the darkness of the cinema, which they both adore, that they are very nearly millionaires.

But alas! André's winnings have been invested in a Mexican gold mine, which had a no more stable existence than a castle in Spain, and one day André has to tell Clara that they are ruined. "But all the same," he adds, "I hope you don't expect me to work." For he has a plan for restoring their fortunes. On the pilgrim's road that led from Flanders to the great mediaeval shrine of St James of Compostella in Spain there was a series of magnificent cathedrals which have

been preserved for posterity, but once there must certainly also have been many smaller churches and chapels no less beautiful and no less rich in votive offerings. "What do you mean?" says Clara, who finds it difficult to understand what relevance this has to their ruined fortunes. "Well," says André, "on the royal road that leads from Siam to Angkor-Vat in Cambodia, there are magnificent temples which are today admirably preserved and catalogued. But there must certainly be many smaller ones lost in the jungle which no one has ever seen. So it's quite simple. We go to Indo-China, find a little temple, take its statues, sell them in New York, and live happily on the proceeds for several years."

One of the splendid things about the story is that the young Clara Malraux has no doubt at all that this is a perfectly sensible way of recouping their losses. André, already a connoisseur of Chinese art and a devoted visitor to the Musée Guimet, knows it all; the voyage out, the route, the temple, the equipment required, the dealers to sell to in New York, where prices are high, and it does not occur to her to doubt the genius that lies behind her youthful husband's idea. The young couple sell their last remaining possessions to raise funds for the expedition, take ship to Indo-China, and on a bullock-cart driven by an Annamese servant take the royal road to Angkor-Vat. And there, in the jungle, overgrown, abandoned, they find the temple of their dreams, its walls encrusted with the carvings of the smiling gods and goddesses whose rest has been undisturbed for centuries, and with chisels and saws they cut them from the walls and pack them in the camphor-wood chests they have brought with them, for transport down to the river and shipment to New York.

IT IS A FAIRY TALE COME TRUE. What young couple ever found a more fabulous road to fortune? But alas! in the eyes of the law, the Malraux treasure was, quite simply, loot. The unauthorised export of art from Cambodia was forbidden. At the first port-of-call on the river, French colonial police boarded the Malraux' ship, arrested the happy couple, already congratulating themselves on their success, confiscated their booty, and charged them with the theft of State property.

There the fairy story really ends. But while it lasted it had a marvellous combination of innocence, adventure and crime, the babes-in-the-jungle, treasure-island quality of a children's dream. What followed was a return to reality of a somewhat grim kind, while Clara and André awaited the result of the judicial proceedings against them, at first in the best hotel in Phnom-Penh, then, after their money had given out and Clara had attempted suicide, in hospital, where

she went on hunger-strike and in a coma heard Malraux whisper to her: "Don't despair. I shall end as a d'Annunzio!"

After her hunger-strike, Clara was declared to have acted under the influence of her husband and permitted to return to Paris, where she energetically organised a campaign of protest against his continued detention. In September 1924, *Nouvelles Littéraires* published a petition for his release, which was signed by some of the most brilliant names in France, including Gide, Mauriac, André Maurois, Edmond Jaloux, Charles Du Bos, Louis Aragon, Jacques Rivière, Max Jacob, André Breton. Malraux himself, quoting the petition a few months later, added the name of Anatole France to the list of signatories.

In October 1924, Malraux received a year's suspended sentence and returned to Paris.

Malraux, however, also brought something else back with him which was to have more lasting effects; that is to say, an identification with the cause of the people of Indo-China in their struggle against white colonialism. The sequel to his visit to Cambodia was that, after a few months in Paris, he took ship to Saigon, there to help found and co-edit a newspaper, *L'Indochine*, dedicated to the cause of anti-colonialism in Indo-China. The paper did not survive for long, but his experiences as its editor provided Malraux with his only direct contact with the Chinese revolutionary movement. He was never, for instance, as is generally believed, and as he himself later claimed in a letter to Edmund Wilson, "a commissar of the Kuomintang in Indo-China and later in Canton."

Malraux's early experiences in Indo-China form a curious and fascinating introduction to his fabulous career. Who would have guessed that the young aesthete and dandy who set out in 1923 to loot a Khmer temple would one day end, via the Spanish civil war and the French underground, as a Gaullist Minister of Culture?

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I AM SORRY TO SAY that Encounter games are not something like *Times* crossword puzzles or *New Statesman* competitions which have been devised to amuse this magazine's readers. They are, in intention at least, rather more serious than that, being both a form of psychological therapy and a form of big business, with 750,000 customers in the United States and a turnover of millions of dollars a year.

A fascinating account of them is given in *The Encounter Game*, by Bruce L. Maliver,

Ph.D.,² a qualified American psychologist. Although it is full of interesting information I still find it rather difficult to explain what encounter therapy is because, like other forms of psychological treatment, it is rather weak on the side of theory, and offers little of interest in the way of doctrine, especially any doctrine which can be empirically or experimentally verified.

The best I can say by way of enlightenment is that encounter games rest on the belief that there are levels of experience which we have suppressed from consciousness with the result that we live in a state of emotional deprivation which is the source of profound unhappiness. Even worse, perhaps, it may affect our business efficiency and thus reduce the Gross National Product. In order to relieve this disastrous condition we must "get in touch with our feelings", "experience heightened awareness" and "get rid of hang-ups". The language of encounter games is a warning of what kind of world we are about to enter. But the distinctive feature of encounter games is that we can only cure ourselves of our unhappiness through group experience, in which we directly play out to and for each other those subliminal feelings and sensations which are the source of our discontents. Not for the Encounter patient the introspective isolation of the psychiatrist's couch; we need to join with others in crying, screaming, shouting, shrieking aloud the consuming passions by which we are devoured because we deny them, and to shrieks and cries we need to add physical contact with the members of one's encounter group, touching a breast here, a thigh there, or making whatever contact is needed to achieve the release of repressed emotion. To the question, *What must I do to be saved?*, the answer is quite simply that you must express yourself and everything else shall be added unto you.

It is rather dismaying to discover that in the United States such a diagnosis of our emotional discomforts should have won the support, not merely of large business corporations, but of government agencies, school authorities, and drug rehabilitation centres, though no doubt public money is needed if encounter games are to reach the poor, as a two week course, or "workshop" can cost \$450 a head. I do not expect any general improvement in the level of mental health in the United States as a result of such expenditure. But there is one group to which I think encounter treatment might be well adapted, and that is the staff of the White House. They might as well get rid of their suppressed emotional drives on each other as on the unfortunate citizens of the United States.

² *The Encounter Game*. By BRUCE L. MALIVER, Ph.D. Stein & Day, \$7.75.



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All good wishes to **Encounter** on its 20th birthday. We are pleased to have assisted in its creation. Since that date we have added these authors to our list:

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The Recantation of Henry Redhead Yorke

A Forgotten English Ideologist—By MELVIN J. LASKY

I HAVE received a number of challenging letters from historical scholars, here and abroad, which take issue with some of the evidence and a few of the conclusions I offered in my two recent articles on "The English Ideology" (ENCOUNTER, Dec. 72–Jan. 73). Was the devotion to moderation, prudence, and gradual reform so exclusive? Was there not a genuine revolutionary Left on the far extremes of the English political and intellectual scene? And would this not at least indicate that all men are equal before the revolutionary temptation, and that neither the nature of the English language nor the evolving national temperament could upset the universality of the dream of utopia and revolution? But even if this were so, the very isolation and lonely futility throughout modern English history of the handful of revolutionary ideologues, unable to rally an intellectual élite which could conceivably deepen existing social conflicts, would surely suggest how difficult, if not impossible, it was for certain images and ideas to take root and to grow in such uncongenial soil. Nevertheless, I felt sufficiently prompted to return to the literature of the 1790s, especially the great State Trials held in the shadow of the French Revolution, and to search for figures and configurations which might further illuminate the peculiarity of the English Ideology. I must confess that on second reading of the historical sources a number of worthwhile things emerged, particularly in connection with the almost forgotten life and work of Henry Redhead Yorke, perhaps the most flamboyant figure agitating in the wings of the English political stage.

If, as I have been arguing, the English radical reformers were in no sense genuine revolutionaries, this is not to say that they were not visionaries or, to use Henry Yorke's phrase, men of "Utopian artistry." One passage, written by two

of the more militant spirits of the day (Maurice Margarot and Thomas Hardy, in August 1792), is worth rescuing from the volumes of the State Trials as an example of how even so sober an institution as representative government, so humdrum in its ideological appeal for centuries now, once had the charm of a Parliamentary Utopia.

... Too visible are the numerous encroachments on our rights, too common the insolence of office, the venality of magistracy, the perversion of the laws, the letting loose the military on every occasion, and those occasions eagerly sought. The subject's complaints derided—the one part of the nation turned into spies and informers against the other—the—but wherefore more? Is here not enough to prove beyond a doubt, that while we boast the best constitution, the mildest laws, the freest government, we are in fact slaves!

Yet, fellow-citizens! Numerous as are our grievances, and close rivetted and weighty the shackles on our freedom; reform one alone, and the others will all disappear. . . .

Soon then should we see our liberties restored, the press free, the laws simplified, judges unbiased, juries independent, needless places and pensions retrenched, immoderate salaries reduced, the public better served, taxes diminished, and the necessaries of life more within the reach of the poor, youth better educated, prisons less crowded, old age better provided for, and sumptuous feasts at the expense of the starving poor less frequent. Look not upon this, dear countrymen, as an enthusiastic vision; but rather let us together take a calm and reasonable review of such an honest parliament assembled. . . .¹

The vision, then, was not of a good and perfect society, but of a better social order; the utopia was, if you will, calm and reasonable rather than total and ecstatic. Indeed, after almost two hundred years, during which time social and economic conditions have been vastly transformed, this programme could be repeated and put out as the relevant manifesto for most reforming political parties in the West at the present day! The forms of hope—or, perhaps, the structure of what I have called the Utopian longing—would appear to have remained a constant among all

¹ *The Trial of Thomas Hardy for High Treason* (Sessions House in the Old Bailey, 28 October–5 November 1794), in *State Trials* (ed. Howell, 1818), p. 385.