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THE
**CONSTANTIN
REVIEW**

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WINTER, 1974

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The Twentieth Century is over, dead before its time, with little likelihood of any last grand construction. The need at the present moment is one of reshaping material — not so much casting it into new forms as rendering it to make it plastic. All the residue of the Modern Age is in the pot — all the artifacts since the Seventeenth Century. Much of this material, once recycled, will retain in fragments some semblance of its old form. A new epoch always thus recognizes its predecessor. The last shard of the Middle Ages disappeared in 1963; whatever that remarkable Medieval era has still to offer, permanent though it be, consists of elements cast into new forms and shapes almost untraceable to their origins. The immediate task before us is the handling of fractious new material and the blending of it with the old, as well as the entirely new material — some from the East, some wholly indigenous — but all gathered to make up the stuff of Westernism in the age ahead.

This modest journal undertakes that task of gathering, as we consider some of the giants who have died in the last dozen years, some of the new movements (such as the one to restore the feminine to a participatory role), and some of the basic arts which define a folk. The attempt is to establish a commonality of lore, countering the discrete nature of the Modern period, which placed each person in an isolated cell. Technology, science, the communications media, and consequently the arts have all worked toward this isolation. The novel, for example — the most characteristic art form of the age — by the act of printing isolated the audience from the performer. So, too, did the cinema and its extension, television. The invasion of the academies by programmed learning has done much to remove the teacher from the student. The present solution, which is our objective here, is the act of criticism. The critical act is not likely to lead in any direct way to the shaping of a new age; but in working upon the available materials, it is performing the preparatory task.

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T. S. Eliot's Poem of Amplitude

At the center of almost all the criticism of *The Waste Land* has been a fascination with the unusual technique of the poem. Yet this most discussed aspect of a work that stands at the heart of twentieth-century literature has at the same time been the least understood. The publication of Eliot's long-lost drafts (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971) makes convenient a needed reexamination of the bold but still mysterious experiment of *The Waste Land*.

The poem of the drafts differs in many respects from the published version. In particular, there are two modifications of the drafts which are of a technical rather than a purely critical nature. First, several extended passages in the original are absent in the poem as finally printed. These passages, comprising nearly one-third of the original poem, are syntactically and formally less concentrated and intense than most of what remains. Two of these passages were deleted by Ezra Pound, to whom Eliot submitted the manuscript for editorial assistance. The others were omitted by Eliot himself. The second specific technical difference between the drafts and the finished poem has to do with the question of unity. As Bernard Bergonzi (*Encounter*, April 1972) observes, "If Eliot's original design had a unity it was of a very loose kind, for the work that he brought back from Lausanne was essentially a set of poems." Other significant disparities in the two versions are to be observed, but the two I have mentioned alter, at least to a degree, the *form* and the *mode of operation* of the poem; hence I refer to them as technical differences.

Donald Gallup has written an illuminating article (*Atlantic*, January 1970) concerning the Pound-Eliot relationship, in which, after an exposition of the discrepancies between the published poem and the drafts, he concludes: "Pound's major deletions in the central poem seem to reflect a lack of sympathy with some of the experiments that Eliot was trying to carry out." Gallup, perhaps the only American authority on the drafts, contrasts Pound's and Eliot's theories of poetry in an attempt to explain why Pound was not sympathetic to Eliot's innovations. Gallup quotes a statement from Eliot illustrative of the poetic theory informing the poem of the drafts:

. . . in a poem of any length, there must be transitions between passages of greater and less intensity, to give a rhythm of fluctuating emotion essential to the musical structure of the whole;

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. . . in the sense implied by that context, it may be said that no poet can write a poem of amplitude unless he is a master of the prosaic.

Gallup mentions "experiments" only in the plural. But there is one experiment which contains all the rest — that is, Eliot's attempt to write a modern "poem of amplitude." Pound took the poem to be a long lyric, and, because he edited it with this misunderstanding, almost all critics have taken it in the same way. For Pound the essential quality of the lyric is concentration. He disliked the looseness of certain sections of the drafts. After he finished his maieutic chore, Pound wrote to Eliot, "The thing now runs from 'April . . .' to 'shantih' without a break. That is 19 pages, and let us say the longest poem in the English language." We may see in this comment Pound's approval of both the large technical modifications he effected: the more intense, direct movement of the poem now bereft of the "prosaic" passages, and its more concentrated, apparently lyric unity which enabled him to describe it as the longest poem in English. It is the longest poem in English only if it is a lyric; in fact, however, it is not.

Still, it is not easy to determine exactly what *The Waste Land* is. The multiple points of view suggest a drama, and many critics have pointed out the dramatic character of the poem. But there is no stage, nor any common dramatic action to unify the poem. The "characters" hardly affect each other; in fact, there are no characters at all, only voices. The movement of the poem suggests narrative, and sections of what is more or less narrative are to be found in the drafts. But the movement of the poem is too vague to be a real action. Its agent and protagonist are unclear. Pound excised a passage that all commentators on the drafts have regarded as very decent narrative (concerning the wreck of a fishing vessel off the New England coast). Although the drafts make Eliot's intention clearer than it is in the published poem, they still do not elucidate his intention thoroughly.

The only poem written prior to *The Waste Land* to which it bears any significant technical resemblance is Tennyson's *Maud: A Monodrama*. *Maud* is also a "poem of amplitude," with sections of varying intensity, and a vague narrative movement. Likewise, the unity of *Maud* is loose. The poem is broken into three parts, further subdivided into separate sections. These smallest parts, although they stand somewhat on their own, cannot really be lifted out of the context of the poem. In the same manner the imagistic, lyric passages of *The Waste Land* seem to be able to stand on their own, but in fact they can not. Tennyson himself said in his *Memoirs*, "No other poem . . . has been made into a drama where successive phases of passion in one person take the place of successive persons." The dramatic operation of *The Waste Land* is the exact opposite of that of *Maud*. In Eliot's poem successive phases of passion in one person are articulated through several different persons. Rather than the one character taking the place of the many, the many take the place of the one, not as substitutes but as aspects of this central character's experience. The original title of the drafts was *He Do the Police in Different Voices*. The reference is to a paragraph in Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, Chapter XVI, in which it is explained that a certain character named Sloppy mimics different voices as he reads the crime stories of the newspaper. Similarly, the voices in *The Waste Land* are impersonations. The omniscient figure behind the poem seems to be the poet-creator himself, as it normally is in a play. However, this figure (not

Tiresias, for the part cannot comprehend the whole, as the ancients might have argued here) is a *persona*, a "mask," that is, another point of view. The drama actually occurs within this arch-persona, and only implicitly in the poem. I make the comparison between Eliot's poem and Tennyson's because it assists one somewhat in coming to grips with what *The Waste Land* is. We still do not know what to call it.

Eliot himself may never have really understood what he was doing in *The Waste Land*. Less than a year after he completed the poem, he wrote to Richard Aldington, "As for *The Waste Land* that is a thing of the past so far as I am concerned and I am now feeling toward a new form and style." It is certain that Pound did not sympathize, did not recognize, what Eliot was after. Circumstances prevented Eliot from giving to his bold experiment sufficient thought for it to come fully to fruition. Instead the finished poem, though brilliant in many respects, is nevertheless a distortion of an only semi-developed idea. Karl Shapiro (*The Death of Literary Judgement*) has written, "The proof of the failure of the 'form' of this poem is that no one has ever been able to proceed from it, including Eliot himself. It is, in fact, not a form at all but a negative version of form." Parts of *The Waste Land* have been influential indeed; the "guarded style" and ironic tone of the poem affected an entire era. But the form and basic mode of operation of the poem as a whole have not been so influential, even though these aspects were the poem's real innovations. It is curious that Tennyson's *Maud* has likewise been neglected, though several poets (among them Browning, himself a master of point of view) admired its conception. The failure of the form of *The Waste Land*, a failure to which Shapiro attributes its lack of continuance by other poets, is due to nothing other than a thorough obscurity of technique, resulting from the attempt to make the poem something it was not.

It has long been assumed that the technique of *The Waste Land* is peculiarly and exclusively suited to the topic and historic context of the poem. Any poem written by a master has about it a sense that the technique is uniquely appropriate to the subject. But the drafts demonstrate that, far from inventing a new technique merely to suit his subject, Eliot was reworking almost every one of the constant techniques and forms of literature: lyric, elegy, drama, narrative, irony, satire, and so on. Paradoxically, by showing more clearly the constant technical devices in *The Waste Land*, the drafts clarify the radicality of the experiment of the poem: the writing of a modern poem of amplitude. It is true that the drafts are only less cryptic than the published poem. But if they are studied closely by poets and critics with any degree of intuition, perhaps Eliot's experiment can be picked up again and carried on.

—William Porter

In Memoriam Gabriel Marcel

"It is of such a reverence that I want to awaken an echo in this time of universal sacrilege, when some of the most vigorous minds which have been known in France for the last twenty years really seem to imagine that blasphemy . . . can become the cornerstone of philosophy and politics. This is a fatal illusion . . ." Thus did Gabriel Marcel, who died last October in Paris at the age of eighty-three, once characterize the basic intention of his philosophy.

If Marcel had simply been a creature of his milieu, he might have become one of those vigorous French philosophers of blasphemy, for he was born, in 1889, into an unbelieving family and grew up in an agnostic intellectual world. But he found his way to the Catholic Church in 1929, and became one of the greatest French Christian thinkers of our time.

Marcel's thought (which is also expressed in his plays) protests against the "problematization" of human life committed by the scientific, technological mentality. According to his famous distinction between problem and mystery, a problem is something which, unlike a mystery, does not involve one deeply and personally, something to which he is related as a detached spectator, which motivates no marvelling and which admits of a solution. Marcel is constantly trying to show that human life does not consist only in problems, that much of it cannot be seen rightly if approached "from without"; he is constantly trying to rehabilitate a sense of its mysteries. This concern is part of the reason why Marcel is known as an "existentialist" philosopher.

But a still more important feature of Marcel's thought is that in it the metaphysical nihilism and pessimism of much of modern thought is overcome. While it cannot justly be said that Sartre, for example, simply reduces man to what can be known about him through natural observation, it is nevertheless necessary to point out that he is a metaphysical pessimist, proclaiming an absurdist view of human life. Thus he holds that all human relations are necessarily forms of either masochism or sadism. But Marcel, on the contrary, has taken seriously the themes of fidelity, hope, and communion both with a human "thou" and with the divine "Thou". The "world" of Marcel's thought is the opposite of the isolation and self-destruction of despair. It is a world suffused with hope (something very different from mere optimism), and thus is completely opposed to certain other contemporary philosophies which are also called "existentialist."

But in rejecting pessimism Marcel does not mean to hold that man enjoys complete fulfillment and happiness in his present condition. Marcel rather has the Platonic intimation that the world in which we live is a world "here below," whose real light comes from a higher world which man is ultimately destined to enter, though at present he can only glimpse it. Marcel thus says of man in his present condition, that to be is to be *en route*, to be a traveler toward eternity, that man at present is *homo viator*. It must be emphasized that Marcel is speaking even here as a philosopher and not as one who is presupposing the truth of the Christian revelation.

We can perhaps see more clearly these and other features of Marcel's thought if we follow him in the development of a specific line of thought. In the first of a series of six

lectures at the University of Dallas honoring Marcel shortly after his death, Josef Seifert presented Marcel's thought on the question of the immortality of the soul, a theme central to Marcel, and one which had preoccupied him since he was a child.

Early in his lecture Dr. Seifert presented one of Marcel's answers to the materialists who argue that, because there is no sensible sign of continued existence after death, one must conclude that a (human) person is destroyed at death. This argument presupposes that if something is not knowable in the way that material bodies are knowable, then it does not exist; this presupposition Marcel brands as scientific dogmatism of the worst kind. But if Marcel were to stop here, he would have moved only to an agnostic stance on the question of immortality.

The central thesis of Seifert's lecture was that, according to Marcel, one who loves another understands that love "promises" or "demands" the immortality of the beloved and the eternal permanence of the bond of love with him. If the beloved person were annihilated at death, and the bond of love broken forever, this would be not simply disagreeable, but a "metaphysical scandal"; it would be a specific kind of absurdity, to which the right response would be despair.

Seifert elucidated Marcel's meaning by presenting a distinction which is not to be found in Marcel's thought but which clarifies it, a distinction between two different senses of absurdity. Something can be absurd if it lacks all meaning, if it is simply chaotic; or it can be absurd if it is indeed meaningful, but broken off before completed. If one is given only half a sentence, there is not an absence of all meaning, as when noise occurs. The lack of meaning comes rather from the failure of the sentence, once begun, to come to an end. This is the meaninglessness or absurdity with which we would be confronted if the death of the beloved were the last work: the deep meaning begun in love would be denied the completion it demands.

It begins to appear what an abyss separates the metaphysical demand for immortality in love from a subjective childish whim which flees from reality into a dream-world; and how unserious the objection is which would reduce this metaphysical demand to such a subjective whim.

Now Marcel goes on to say that human love has a certain "trustworthiness" which entitles one to believe its promises of immortality. While this believing has an element of boldness and of choice for the beloved, it is anything but arbitrary. It is objectively supported by the trustworthiness of love. Dr. Seifert emphasized that the total justification of this choice for the beloved requires not only the thought of the trustworthiness of love, but also the thought of a good God who cannot deceive His creatures, as He would deceive them if this trustworthiness were an illusion, and the promise of immortality never fulfilled.

It seems that men in every age, but perhaps especially in the present age, are easily drawn into a worldly and superficial attitude in which they would not find it metaphysically scandalous to think that a beloved person is simply annihilated at death, and would not be aware of betraying him in accepting his annihilation. They easily fall into the habit of looking upon a death as just another limitation on man, such as that he cannot fly by nature, or that he cannot concentrate on many different things at the same time. The great merit of Marcel's meditation on love and immortality is that it leads us to a depth in which we awaken to the understanding that, while there is indeed no metaphysical

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demand in human nature to be able to fly, there is a metaphysical demand in human love to endure forever, and that we would be unfaithful to a beloved person in resigning ourselves to his being destroyed by death.

And it is altogether characteristic of Marcel's thought that it helps us thus to overcome worldly and superficial perspectives and to awaken to the mysteries of being. It reminds us of our status as *viatores*, as travelers toward a higher world, and admonishes us to faith and hope.

—John Crosby

Today's Woman

After several years of faithful attention by the media, the women's liberationists persist in boring a good part of the American public. Americans have been told that women are denied their rights, frustrated in their desires, and forced into a mold that the male has cast for his own pleasure. Discrimination, women are now informed, is their companion, denying them, like ghetto residents, their self-determination. Finally, every listener, man or woman, understands from Dr. Joyce Brothers and Ms. Barbara Walters that equality between the sexes is the only remedy to all the ills of a masculine culture passed down through history and infecting today's woman. To win, protect, and advance her rights, to become fully a woman, it seems she need only become fully a man.

The irony of it is that, far from being *avant-garde*, women's liberationists are actually quite backward. They are culturally deprived in a real sense. Their attitudes, based on the mystiques of external success, individual freedom, and social equality, come from the death throes of the modern world view. According to this outlook, man is an isolated creature who must achieve in the face of hostile society his "human rights" to absolute personal freedom, demanding the removal of as many external restraints to that freedom as possible. Modern man is highly aggressive, rational, and goal-directed.

But we are now in what has been called the post-modern era, in which the aim of both the individual person and of society is no longer the ordering of experience toward the achievement of a rational end. The aim now is simply to cope with the fragmented and disparate information which is the fabric of daily life. Though it may seem, then, that liberation movements are the current fashion, they are simply the last manifestations of a cultural attitude dating from the Renaissance. Paradoxically, the women's rebellion against domination by a masculine society is itself masculine and domineering in intent and method.

What they have gained by their efforts is the trappings of masculinity. They have won the right to the dull jobs that men have borne for them in the past. A woman taxi driver is now not an unusual sight, and mail carriers often turn out to be female. More daring positions have also in some instances been opened to women. For example, in Montgomery County, Virginia, women may now ride hook-and-ladder fire trucks and enter flaming buildings with axe and hose.

Women have rejected, too, the courtesies which were formerly their portion in feminine roles. Instead of maintaining the traditional relationship of gentleman to lady, they have preferred to level all intercourse to a person-to-person basis.

In Greek myth is to be found the story of a young woman whose excess of competitive masculine pride defeats itself. Atalanta, a maid of Arcady, won all the trophies that her father, disappointed in a daughter, could have expected from a son. She was sleek and muscular, an excellent huntress like her patron, Artemis. Following the cult of this chaste goddess, Atalanta disdained traditional courtship and feminine bonds and contrived a stratagem to discourage or eliminate her suitors. Believing that in manly activities no man was her match, she promised to marry the first suitor to defeat her in a

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foot race. But for the cleverness of one of her challengers, she should have succeeded. But her vision, limited to the track directly in front of her, was diverted by her challenger's dropping an apple of pure gold off the beaten path. The young man was not assured victory with the first apple dropped at her feet, nor with the second, thrown just a little to the side; she swiftly stooped and lost neither her ground nor her goal. But Atalanta was lured from her single-mindedness only by the gleam of the third apple cast far off into the green. It is significant that the suitor's victory in the race was inspired by the goddess of love, Aphrodite, who delighted in humbling maidens that rejected her powerful charms. Atalanta's athletic feats and her free days in the forests of Arcady were ended. She submitted to marriage, and to her traditional feminine role.

Should we simply assume with the liberationists that in her marrying and mothering, Atalanta reduces herself? It is true that she is, so to speak, no longer her own man. Humbled, she must cease competing against Nature's creatures and begin participating in the creative process of Nature herself. Her spiritedness quieted, she soon shares her very blood with the life in her womb. She moves, not fleet-footed atop the earth, but along with the rhythm pulsing underneath it. Her new-found power is not narrowly rational like the path and goal directing her final race. Rather, her new power consists in the strictly non-observable ability to "make herself at home in the hidden world of others." (Edith Stein)

This ability to know things from the inside, as Karl Stern demonstrates in his book *Flight from Woman*, comes from intuition, a faculty available not only to women, but to all human beings. Like the knowledge that poetry gives, the intuitive faculty gives a knowledge by connaturality, based on one's shared creaturehood. Those who attribute knowledge only to the strictly rational faculties persist in a flight not only from womanhood, but also from humanness.

Around the turn of the century, feminism seemed to be a more worthy enterprise than it is now. It helped then to bring about the acceptance of woman as a determining part of the political body, a position which she had not enjoyed previously.

But the important question for contemporary woman is not whether she is equal to men politically or genetically, but whether she will use her truly feminine power to make those it touches better — that is, not simply successful, but more whole, more humanly complete, in the face of a chaotic flood of experience. What does a woman do with the understanding which she carries inside her? Does she creatively order the souls of the lives around her? Or does she merely keep running to her next destination and then, when she arrives, slap herself on the back with "You've come a long way, baby?" If so, we can only hope for the prospect of her getting sidetracked as did her older sister, Atalanta.

—Virginia Lombardo

Bachelors

A growing tendency to attack the masculine principle has been underway in our society for some hundred years. Norman Mailer has labeled the Anglo-Saxon male the most singleminded, fanatical, and destructive force the world has ever known. In the face of this sort of charge, along with the complaints and recriminations of the Women's Liberationists, it seems important to re-examine the traditional way in which the sexes have defined themselves in Western culture. One could maintain, with some justification, that the "tradition" of human behavior is to be discerned more fully in the mimetic form of a great writer than in the findings of sociologists or historians. In our time, William Faulkner has peopled his comic masterpiece *The Snopes Trilogy* with a veritable spectrum of masculine archetypes, which he portrays by means of unmarried male figures or, as he himself calls them, "bachelors."

In the trilogy, bachelorhood is presented analogically by a hierarchy extending from Flem Snopes, who coldly maneuvers everyone toward his selfish ends, to V. K. Ratliff, whose life is one of total dedication and service to others. Each bachelor is defined in some way by the nature of his renunciation of the magnificent Eula Varner. From the age of thirteen, Eula attracts the admiration and longing of every helpless male who sees her. But she distains the lust as well as the disgust of the men of the village simply because she exists on a different plane than common mortals. As Ratliff sees her, Eula is a goddess who has descended upon the nameless village of Frenchman's Bend; her origin is from "one blind seed of the spendthrift Olympian ejaculation." Eula is called Venus, Semiramis, Lilith, and Helen, all divine or semidivine women. It is around Eula that the various kinds of bachelors in *The Snopes Trilogy* gather, defining the wholeness of the human person in their response to her powerful femininity.

Eula's extravagant beauty is only a source of scandal to the niggardly, such as her bachelor brother Jody Varner, who proposes to be a guardian of her "virtue." Jody finds his sister's magnificence offensive because it makes her uncontrollable. He interprets as promiscuity her obliviousness to his narrow world, failing completely to accept the tremendous power which her physical splendor commands. Jody's bachelorhood — conceived in fear of the feminine force — is a quality pusillanimous, uncreative, against nature, as is the usury he learns from his father.

The second bachelor Eula encounters is Labove, her teacher in the one-room schoolhouse of Frenchman's Bend. Labove tries to achieve rational, fiercely masculine control over his own person and the world around him. He runs his classroom as he runs his soul, imposing a violent order on his pupils as he does upon his passions. But when Eula enters the classroom, the academic order is devastated. Within his own person masculine and feminine qualities are already at war with each other, because each serves only to remind the other of its insufficiency. His excessive control is an attempt to solve the imbalance by overwhelming the feminine qualities. But Eula embodies a femininity which is invincible. She creates an insufferable tension, and he finally attempts to take her by violence. This act represents the self-inflicted violence of his attempt to destroy the feminine in himself. After his abortive encounter with Eula, he finally recognizes his

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bachelor state as the lonely, injured, incomplete condition that it is.

Surrounded by bachelors such as these (and they represent the attitudes of most of the men in the community), Eula has no model by which to judge the true hero in case he should come. She settles momentarily for someone who seems at least willing to sacrifice a bit of flesh for her sake though not to become one flesh with her. Hoake McCarron, a young dandy from out of town, courts Eula and even breaks an arm defending his right to court her. Through his courage he wins her favor for one night, long enough to beget a child; but he is not strong enough to marry her. He flees Frenchman's Bend, knowing that he can never withstand her power.

Hoake's inability to endure is the immediate occasion of Eula's betrayal to still another bachelor, Flem Snopes, who gives her a nominal marriage and a name for her bastard child. Eula's husband Flem is paradoxically the furthest from her, because he does not recognize her: he knows only that she is valuable to others and so can be used as currency. His ownership of her, absolute but impersonal, represents what is most to be feared in the married state. But it results in a terrible kind of bachelorhood, as Flem acknowledges his single state in condoning his own cuckolding by Manfred deSpain. Ratliff realizes that Flem's passionless soul is too lost for even the devil to claim.

Manfred deSpain the mayor of the town of Jefferson willingly gives Flem all that he asks in return for Eula's favors. Like McCarron he is a playboy bachelor, making a mockery of marriage by flaunting his affair with Eula. Manfred accepts woman as a natural principle but is ignorant of the deeper encounter she may bring. deSpain represents in another form that excessive masculinity which sees the feminine only as something to be controlled. As embodying an unmitigated masculine force, he is "incorrigible and invincibly bachelor and threat."

Gavin Stevens is the "gentleman" bachelor. His courteous treatment of Eula as a "lady" allows and encourages her to act as a full person rather than as a principle. He too feels her terrible power and submits to it, not in an attempt to overwhelm her, but rather in service to all that Eula *is*, asking no return but her welfare. Though the virtues of the gentleman, his honor and sense of guardianship, are masculine in nature, his action is informed and given wholeness through the feminine. His "courtesy" is the active witness of his habitual openness to the feminine and to being itself. Unlike the other bachelors, Gavin would like nothing more than to be a husband; but we are told that "circumstances, conditions insisted on his continuing celibacy despite his own efforts to give it up." His bachelorhood stands for a life of what he refers to as his "holocaust." The only reward his patient loving sacrifice wins is the privilege of being a sort of guardian angel to the community in friendly coalition with V. K. Ratliff.

Gavin's commitment to bachelorhood makes possible the growth of the characters of both Eula and her daughter Linda. But most often Gavin acts in humble ignorance of the broadest consequences of his actions, which must be enlightened by V. K. Ratliff, his best friend and partner in protecting Jefferson from Snopeses. Ratliff, who gives the final evaluation of the drama surrounding Eula, is the most complete bachelor of all. His celibacy, like that of a religious monk, is not a sign of separateness and incompleteness, but of community and abundance. Ratliff is a man of action, taking full relish in manly activities, politicking, bargaining, discussing the various crafts and skills by which man tends to his work in the world. Yet Ratliff also appreciates and responds to the feminine.

As a sewing machine salesman he is constantly in contact with women and knows their lore. A keen observer of human nature, he appreciates the gossip sessions of women as well as the terse, yarn-spinning gatherings of men. Ratliff, too, responds to Eula and sees all that she is. He becomes perhaps her only friend. His life is not a rejection of the feminine but the fullest acceptance of it. His celibacy is a freedom to act in terms of the heavenly state when men will no longer marry or be given in marriage. His life is one of personal devotion to all the community, a devotion possible only in charity.

—Mary Mumbach

Culture and the Teacher

Culture shapes men in their beliefs and ideals. Any civilization, especially one democratically founded, stands or falls by the culture that forms its people. Education to culture, that formal restraint of passions and appetites, prefixes men's concerns, ambitions, and sensitivities to higher values. In the West, that qualified formation in values derives not from propaganda, imposed upon citizens of a state, but from a tradition of belief, a cultural inheritance sustained and transmitted by heirs sensitive to it and sufficiently conscientious to realize through it their obligations. In the United States that tradition exists in institutions quite apart from the political. This system works to the good of all, since the highest goal of man's reason and imagination transcends the confines of political necessity.

However, the separation of a people's cultural forces from its permanent political institutions posits a tremendous faith in a culture's ability to endure and blossom in successive generations. From a theoretical standpoint, such a separation serves to stabilize political institutions; but the manner of life in those institutions, if it is to be directed toward higher values, paradoxically requires a strong, cultural testament.

A heritage of values can be transmitted only through the religious and mythopoeic "presences" of a culture. Man's literary and historical accounting of himself, his cultural institutions, and the legacy of faith and wisdom bequeathed to each person, impose a responsibility to hand them on. To move men to assume their responsibility or, as the word suggests, to move men to *respond* to their tradition, tasks the finest rhetor. Such a persuasion makes blossom in men a subtlety for ethical and aesthetic discriminations and refines barbarians into gentlemen of conviction. Unfortunately, an egalitarian society tends to level all values in its "abstract rage," its obsession with the idea of democracy itself. Hence, the importance of culture and gentlemanly refinement cannot be overemphasized in the task of impelling men to perceive and vitalize a hierarchy of values.

The responsibility of cultivating an appreciation of the wisdom of the past is borne by the conscientious teacher. Although that cultivation encounters manifold obstacles, the project should not be compared to conquest. Even in an "open society" the teacher, shored up by an imposing heritage of letters, need only point to the true teachers and what they have to say. The most gentle persuasion moves a student to those "old books." After that, the genuine masters need little help.

The personal benefits of this undertaking elude the accountant's eye; but, to extend a Socratic metaphor, as a diver can stay submerged longer in each successive dive and so bring back greater treasure upon each return, so one who leads the initiate to the rich offerings of the past, surfaces each time with still greater wisdom and insight. The teaching profession is not lucrative, but because some persons so value culture and wisdom as to deem their pursuit worthy of material sacrifice, they bear witness to that value, and become *exempla* for their students. In this way the sincere teacher testifies to the validity of a hierarchy of beliefs and values by his dedication to the tradition embodying them. The best teachers lure their pupils through their personal examples, so

informing them with the importance of the heritage of Western thought as to instill a real passion for certain values and truths about human nature.

Education to facts alone makes man competent to cultivate the earth. Education to culture makes him a gentleman and steward of creation, and therefore responsible for the ethical quality of his work. The wisdom of the past sets the criteria for his decisions and value judgments; it reveals the mark against which he discovers what he ought to be and not merely what he can determine himself to be. Education to anything less than the highest considerations of man distorts practical training because it severs man's capacities from his goals. Political ordering of the human community and technological management of nature are tasks bestowed upon man; they are inherent in his very nature. But to abandon cultural considerations plots a tragic course, for thus is denied that moderate restraint which recommends man at his highest. When men are imbued with the virtues and values of their tradition, and schooled in a moderation toward the pursuit of wisdom, only then can they be called free. Only then are they fully men.

—Victor Gallerano

Watergate: A Disquisition on Practice

To a certain degree, it is right and useful for journalists to approach Watergate as though it were explicable in no other terms save ambition, *hubris*, and petty political miscalculation. The virtues arising from such a practical consideration of political phenomena are caution and suspicion, which provide a necessary armor against error and hasty innovation. It is perhaps natural for the practical mind to be skeptical of theoretical insights. Partaking as it does of an intractability which serves as a guardian against error, it supposes that the truth in particular circumstances consists only of practical maxims excusing moral weakness and establishing fallibility as the norm in politics. The danger is, however, that the intransigence of pragmatic minds may be carried too far, degenerating into obstinacy, perverseness, or disingenuity. Thus, though it cannot be pretended that theoretical principles of moral and political knowledge have the same degree of certainty as those of mathematics, nevertheless, candid men should be disposed to give principle some weight in the consideration of political problems.

To begin a theoretical consideration, then, one must say that Watergate is peculiarly the crisis of the presidency. Its origins are to be discovered in an endeavor to alter fundamentally the nature of the executive office of the United States government. The history of the present executive of the United States is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having as their object the transformation of the executive department from a coequal branch of government to a supreme or monarchical one. To prove this charge, let facts be submitted to candid men. —He has impounded Congressionally appropriated funds. —He has sanctioned the creation of a secret domestic espionage force, the White House "plumbers." —He has kept Congress, particularly the Senate, uninformed on key foreign policy considerations. These actions, coupled with the demeanor of the present executive in his relations with the Congress, not only are imprudent, but encroach upon specific constitutional grants of power to the legislative branch.

Feeling the diminution of its constitutional powers under the constant pressure of the executive office, Congress has sought through the Senate Select Sub-committee on Watergate to restore to the three branches of government a semblance of balance and to engender in a recalcitrant executive the proper deference due to Congressional authority. Those who would argue that the Senate Select Sub-committee on Watergate violates the doctrine of separation of powers suffer from a critical lack of discernment. When one recognizes that separation of powers consists of giving to each department sufficient constitutional means of defense against encroachment, and to those means connecting the personal ambitions and motives of every man in each department, one can perceive in the Senate committee the quintessential operation of the principle of separation.

The object of the Senate Select Sub-committee on Watergate would be served if the present executive were to be forced to retreat within the proper limits of his department as delineated in the Constitution. If at times the object of the committee seems less modest, then we must attribute this overzealous quality to that personal ambition which is itself a vital element of separation of powers. The question at hand, as yet unresolved,

is whether the present executive can be driven into assuming proper limits through the extraordinary criticism exerted by the Sub-committee in concert with the mass communications media.

Perhaps the character of the present executive does deny efficacy to criticism. Abraham Lincoln has described very clearly the behavior of such a man in the following passage from his speech on temperance:

Assume to dictate to his judgment the justice of your cause and he will retreat within himself, close all the avenues to his head and his heart; and though your cause be naked truth itself, transformed to the heaviest lance, harder than steel, and sharper than steel can be made, and though you throw it with more than Herculean force and precision, you shall no more be able to pierce him, than to penetrate the hard shell of a tortoise with a rye straw.

If this description does apply to the present executive, we shall be left with a president whose understanding of the principles of the American regime is dangerously deficient and whose deficiency in political wisdom has caused his grasp to exceed the limits of his office. The present executive is powerfully opposed by a mass communications media whose belligerence increases daily. The representatives of the media in this instance know their cause to be morally virtuous. To this moral virtue is connected personal ambition. Can any reasonable man expect present criticism to abate?

The final question, consequently, becomes: Can the present executive, in the face of protracted and vicious hostility, effect the sheer technical mastery necessary to the governance of this republic? Candid men will readily assent to the proposition that this republic requires an energetic executive. Energy in government is essential to that security against external and internal danger and to that prompt and salutary execution of the laws which are, by definition, the basic requisites of good government. Energy will not return to the executive until such time as the President retreats within his proper limits. Whether, through improvements in his administration, the President can regain that energy is not yet ascertainable. If he cannot, Americans must either resolve to suffer bad government while it is sufferable, or be done with the present executive by using constitutional means to remedy the situation.

—Mark Livingston

On Raku

Raku is not merely a method or a kind of pottery. It is a complete attitude toward the making of pottery. It stresses the participation of the potter in the creative process, allowing the inherent qualities of the material (clay) and the effects of the process (fire upon clay) to be evident in the finished pot. Just as the raku potter has been personally engaged in the shaping of the clay and the firing of it, the owner and user of raku wares is also caught up in the "life" of the artifact, for he sees the evidence of the making process (the shaping and the firing) in the form of the pot itself.

The idea of raku pottery was first articulated in Japan in the sixteenth century, in the work of a Korean immigrant potter named Chojiro. By the granting of a gold seal from the warlord Hideyoshi with which he might mark his pots, Chojiro became one of the first recognized individual potters. The word "raku," which was inscribed on this seal, means "ease" and "contentment." Previously pottery had been a corporate enterprise requiring many artisans. One man would throw the pot, another would trim it, still another would glaze it, and finally a team of itinerant laborers would arrive to fire the kiln.

Raku tradition remained in Japan until the twentieth century when Bernard Leach, an Englishman who had studied the making of pottery in Japan and China, brought back to the West, along with his thorough understanding of Eastern tradition, both the craft and the art that is raku. Until this time raku pottery had been primarily associated with a specific ritual not culturally meaningful outside of Japan: the Tea Ceremony.

Paul Soldner, a "ceramic sculptor," appropriated to his own artistic endeavors the essence of the raku tradition described by Bernard Leach. Soldner, who more than anyone else is responsible for the recent rise of interest in raku, has described his particular approach as "the discovery of things not sought." He stresses the human and accidental qualities of the firing and forming processes and contrasts them with the mechanical perfection possible today, when technical knowledge and mechanical skill have been so developed that a flawless and symmetrical regularity can be guaranteed. This same situation was also present in the sixteenth century. Then, as now, stoneware and porcelain had reached a height of technical refinement; so raku is prized for its asymmetrical, simple qualities.

Essentially, raku pottery is formed by hand. Chojiro is reported to have hand-built his pots, a process which is regarded as the traditional method. But raku can also be thrown on the wheel. In the throwing of the raku pot, the emphasis is upon what the potter's hands do with the help of the wheel, rather than upon the mechanical forming that the wheel can do with the help of the hands. After a preliminary firing to drive out the moisture in the clay, the pot is usually glazed in a low-temperature kiln. In the application of the glaze, the potter avoids any formal patterns which could detract from whatever spontaneous subtleties might simply appear. Glaze should evoke the sense of melted clay and detract neither from the simple and direct form of the pot, nor from the nature of the clay from which the pot is made.

Raku kilns are notoriously inefficient, and there is seldom any attempt to make them

otherwise. In keeping with the spontaneous, and therefore frequently uneven, application of the glaze, the kiln does not often fire evenly from front to back. The time of the firing is variable and ungauged. In the technique used by Paul Soldner, the temperature is found to be best if it is not too hot — about 900°. For then the potter can reach in with either tongs or poker and shift pots during the firing to positions more advantageous for particular effects. In this direct control of the firing, the potter must not only understand the nature of his materials but also know all the aspects of the particular process with which he is working.

The potter's feeling for his clay must be intuitive so that he may immediately take advantage of accidental opportunities. After the glazes melt, the pots are promptly removed from the kiln. They might then be placed in a container of leaves, sticks, or grass which chemically react to the melted glazes, darkening certain areas of the pot, causing subtle changes of tone, or leaving imprints on very fluid glazes. These effects, which Soldner achieves, challenge both the potter's manual dexterity and his presence of mind. If they are not prudently restrained as well as exploited, the effects can overpower the original form of the pot.

Paul Soldner's process is simply one kind of raku. It is not to be taken as a rule. If the potter allows it to become merely a means of firing pots quickly, the result is no different from the simply decorative and functional pottery in common use. Since otherwise creative potters have narrowly emulated the works of Paul Soldner, raku has become overdefined, losing its original breadth and vigor. They will *not* discover "things not sought," but will produce simply the ordinary things dictated by popular taste.

—Lawrence Kaster

Epithalamion

1.

The king who made the moon his queen, and gave
his cold bed to her, beside the ocean

knelt down alone to plead with Poseidon,
sovereign ruler of both wind and wave

and all the nations scattered in the flood.
There in the dark he made this orison:

“O Earthshaker! That I may earn Your favor
provide me with a sacrifice whose blood

and burnt flesh will honor You.” Then with dread
Minos beheld the eastern sky labor

and give birth to her first, most brilliant son:
Across the sea a fiery carpet spread

and great Poseidon strode upon it. Round
His shoulders had a shining bull been slung.

2.

Covetous Minos thought to cheat the god
and hid the wondrous beast from sight and sound,

thieving him from the sacrificial pyre;
but subtle Poseidon recognized this fraud.

In His terrible wrath He raked the hearth
of Pasiphae, enkindling there a fire,

a fierce, dry, unnatural appetite
fast inside her, like the pit of the earth

which burns eternally, both new and old
creation being drawn to its bite.

Likewise was the moon-queen drawn to the white
bull, conceiving thus a savage star. Pulled

from her loins by Dedalus' devotion,
the Minotaur flamed forth to shame the night.

—William Porter

Hieros Gamos

We built a lake house with windows all around
to celebrate our marriage — twenty-five years.

On our porch we measure sundowns
and teach our
naughty children how to live.

I know about his business trips.
I see him:
Strolling with his easy smile
Through the nymphal offices,
Grazing thighs.
The grinning delinquent
he returns, fondling and begging.
My anger is insatiable for a week.

Then I remember the time
he dangled me off the porch,
screamed of the mortgage, and said:
“It took you ages to get this high!
How long will it take you to fall?”
I lost one diamond earring in the bushes.
And the children.
I’ve done my best, but
all are his fierce darlings.
Two girls have the pluck of salamanders,
one brawl-loving lout!

I sit secure and keep quiet.
Because I know

That proud snowy head has to rest some time.
Better on my broad lap after all,
than on some upstart girl’s
who’s never seen the sunset flung upside-down.

—Wendy Walls Hook

For a Celebration at Epiphany

The winter lures our songs of grief
 and tempts the demon to our eyes.
 Earth, still failing, cries
 for seed invisible and poor
 under the frozen floor.
 To us in hurtful night
 the beast-head comes — familiar sight
 inscrutable and mute, whose horror lies
 unransomed by our tears.
 We are not eased by visions born
 in dreams, or by the breath of fear —
 till time itself is healed, we mourn.

The Magi, our desiring fools,
 once searched the signs and spied
 a fire, which all the certain tools
 of craft and rule then verified
 to old and waiting eyes:
 "For Zion's peace a child is come
 whose wild and truant blaze confounds
 the glory of the day. Our hearts incline
 to him who bears this last design
 of spheres, of secret kingdom."

To Israel they come to seek His throne —
 Israel, His bride abundantly bought
 through many years, whose heart is stone,
 whose gaze withdraws from Him,
 veiled from the Holy One.
 The people have a king; he rules alone.
 Should another come?
 The scribes ponder, fumble in the laws;
 their words clatter like dry bones.
 The old promises are quite forgot,
 the hopes grown precious in the glare of Rome.
 They cannot see the sign for which they sought.

Outlanders know the star, the tall light
 which led lost bondsmen once before
 in dark wandering, and made the desert bright.
 These hardly know what beacon shines

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so fiercely in the West,
what reign intends this sign
that pierces all their rest.
Their alien hearts have little lore
to love, not Eden, nor the fine
debut of Moses to adore.
No Deborah or David have they heard;
nor prophet eloquent with doom,
nor exile-voiceless by cold streams
has taught the ancient passion of His word.
Yet the Garden is like Gethsemane;
the Temple is not far from Calvary.
History is poised as they implore
Jerusalem for the Lord of Time.

At Bethlehem, bewildering town,
the poor walls crumble into dust to feed
the soil wherein the new seed lies.
Unfathomably small the throne is found
at which we worship with these kings
and with the meeker guides who heard
quick angels blast them from their dreams.
Our hearts batter at the bright ring
and pledge this son who breaks from the deep skies;
He brings the immediate Word. Let us inform
the season with our songs of praise
and let the grief be done.
Now all our winter wrongs and shadowed days
shall find a ransom in the spring,
and all the love that we can raise
is answered in the king of kings.

—Eileen Gregory

The Jailbreak

Wicked Cora broke from jail last night:
so the sun rose forge-bright
in a blood-dusky sky this morning;
so the sweet-weighted bees stayed long
from their hive
and licked, all day, high in the meady orange trees;
so the stuck sow would not die,
but hanging, groaned,
as a spotted litter streamed forth
from out her wire-bound thighs.

Wicked Cora broke from jail last night.
She whispers across the evening corn fields,
the pearly plants breaking
into curled fruit beneath her feet.
Oh this wicked Cora, loosed from jail:
she holds the weather in her hands,
brings the myrrh-heavy rains
and the sucking drought,
brings both gifts like cock and hen
tucked and trussed under each arm.

—Mary Johnson

Missing Manuscript

He bruised tympani.
I fondled violin.
We attempted symphony;
but of the brilliant score
I find only noted sin
crammed behind a drawer.

—**Sherri Monique Werne**

The Revenant at the Class Reunion

As a wave whitens, about to roll
And break in the unquiet gulf of day,
I will hop a plane from Phoenix or Seattle.

Back to where the bald eagle
Flies with a silver trout in his beak
I will drive from the west or hitchhike,
Razor and toothbrush wrapped in my shorts,
My arm tattooed with the Rosy Cross.

As the whitecap hangs on the unquiet day
And hotels disappear in the sand
They'll saunter across their old beach,
Arms linked in the old way.
Arrogant, slim, they'll call me over,
Their eyes blue and green coquinas,
Their hair as yellow as sea oats.

They'll say how young I seem to be,
How well I look — hardly dead at all.

And they'll smile with thirty-two teeth apiece
As eaglets gobble sweet trout
In the pine tops, and the wave never breaks.

—Thomas H. Landess

**The Drowning of the Escaped Convict
in the River Lethe**

Along the banks of that white sigh
you staked your tent.
You emptied your wallet of moldy rye
and tinny hooks into its flow,
and caught many flat sweet fish
which you cooked over blue coals
that sang high and fine, like flutes,
or boys in church,
under the black rind of star-seeded night fruit.

You slept, dreaming of iron bars that melted
like women's nerves under your feel.
Soon dawn shivered her fingers to stir
the stiff spines of fir and beech,
turning shadow into tree, into ruddy bending curve.
You woke, you breathed once, loud, in a final way —
the wave of hound's bay
curling into a halo of sound around your ears —
those homing sirens of bluetick, bloodhound,
prized mongrel, all come so near.

And, as a man pushed to move
by the rush-blood of love or fear or both —
you came quiet, heavy as a bear, smooth —
squatted, dipping your hands by rote
movement to wash the crime and chase, like sticky honey,
from your touch, in these fast windy waters.
Then into the depth you moved, bright as money:
thighs, mouth, and your fugitive eyes that burned
like sovereigns bartered
for innocence; innocence from last things wrought,
bought in these fast windy waters.

—Mary Johnson

Nebelweben

Der Nebelweber webt im Wald
ein weisses Hemd fuer sein Gemahl.
Die steht wie eine Birke schmal
in einem grauen Felsenpalt.

Im Winde schauert leis und bebt
ihr daemmergruenes Lockenlaub.
Sie laesst ihr Zittern ihm als Raub.
Der Nebelweber webt und webt. . .

—Christian Morgenstern (1871-1914)

Mist in the Forest

Mistweaver in the forest weaves
for his fair spouse a snowy shift.
She stands within a craggy rift,
a slender birch with curly leaves.

Her dusky foliage softly heaves,
the wily wind has come her way.
She lets her trembling be his prey.
Mistweaver slowly weaves and weaves.

—translated by **Waltraud Bartscht**

What Solitudes?

—for Pablo Neruda

Where does your spirit walk now?
Among the old flea market stalls,
admiring, as you did before,
each window frame and cup and key?
Or in the city's public gardens,
wondering at each creature's cage
and passing schoolboys in a band?
Do you stand outside a station, in a crowd
of faces charged with ready fear,
waiting for the tunnelthrust of steel?
Or have your worker's dreams become,
like greywhite steam of trains,
the smoke of poems burnt
at home in Isla Negra?

Can you bear remembering
the rocks and beaches there?
The steady swell of sound,
the sudden flowers
sprung from imprints of your cane?
Could you really have returned
to see your boats and angels wrecked
and your mosaic fish unscaled?
To watch Matilda weeping
in your rushweave chair,
and secretly to touch
her mountainhardened feet?

No, your final residence
must be among those ancient heights,
those steps of ruins roughly cut,
your city built of native stone,
impure, worn
by seawinds
and by condors' wings.

—Maryam Bethell

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